



DEAN OF DIVINITY

The College proposes to elect a Dean of Divinity who will be a fixed-term Official Fellow of the College and a member of the Governing Body. The Dean of Divinity must be either an Anglican priest or a priest of a church in full communion with the Church of England, and must have completed at least one curacy. This is a Career Development post with a fixed term of seven years and is not renewable. It is intended to prepare its holder for later responsibilities in the Church of England or comparable roles in other institutions. It will give the postholder the opportunity to become an intrinsic part of a diverse and flourishing academic institution and choral foundation, developing skills that would be valuable, for example, in leadership roles in church, cathedral, diocese, and/or educational environments.

The Dean of Divinity acts as a pastoral adviser to the whole College community of staff, students and academics and is responsible for all services in the College Chapel. Applicants should have an Honours degree, wide pastoral experience, and excellent interpersonal skills.

Candidates who would like to discuss this post and find out more about joining Magdalen should contact the President of the College, Dinah Rose, KC (dinah.rose@magd.ox.ac.uk), or Mark Williams, Informator Choristarum, (mark.williams@magd.ox.ac.uk). Queries about the application process should be addressed to Rachel Mehtar, Fellows' Administrator at Magdalen (dd@magd.ox.ac.uk) All enquiries will be treated in strict confidence and will not form part of the selection decision.

About Magdalen

Magdalen College was founded in 1458 by William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor, on the site of the Hospital of St John, just outside Oxford's East Gate, near the centre of the modern city. Its top priorities are academic excellence and the fostering of a supportive and inclusive community, and it is committed to the tutorial system as a personalised and intellectually challenging method for undergraduate teaching. It also seeks to provide an outstanding environment in which graduate students may flourish.

In any one year there are approximately 400 Magdalen undergraduates and 270 graduates. The College prides itself on the welfare provision it offers its students, Magdalen's staff now including a Dean for Welfare, a College Counsellor, and a College Mentor for Students, among many others with welfare responsibilities. The Governing Body of Magdalen consists of the President and 71 Fellows, including Professorial Fellows, Tutorial Fellows, and Fellows by Examination (Junior Research Fellows), of whom a number reside in College. Approximately 160 members of staff are employed in a range of professional and operational roles across the College. The President of the College is Dinah Rose, KC. Further information is available on the College website at: <https://www.magd.ox.ac.uk>.

Magdalen College Chapel is among the most active in the University of Oxford, with fourteen statutory services a week during Full Term. It is especially well known for its Choir, which was established by the Founder's statutes of 1480 and is one of the five ancient choral foundations in Oxford and Cambridge.

The Choir plays an important part in the College's religious, educational, and cultural life, and enjoys an international reputation for excellence. The objects of the College under the Statutes include "to further study, learning, education and research" and "to provide for public worship through the provision, support and maintenance of a Chapel and Choir".



The Post

1. The Dean of Divinity will be a fixed-term Official Fellow of the College and a member of the Governing Body (a Charity Trustee), and will hold the Fellowship in respect of the office of Dean of Divinity. No person may hold the office of Dean of Divinity who is not either an Anglican priest or a priest of a church in full communion with the Church of England.
2. The Dean of Divinity acts as a pastoral adviser to the whole College community of staff, students and academics, working closely with the Welfare Team; the Dean of Divinity therefore needs to be available, if necessary, outside normal working hours.
3. The Dean of Divinity is responsible for all services in the College Chapel. The current arrangements include choral services six days a week during Full Term, sung by the College Choir on the Foundation of the College. The Choir consists of Choristers who attend Magdalen College School and of undergraduates (Academical Clerks) of the College, and of a small number of professional singers (Stipendiary Clerks); it is directed by the Informator Choristarum, a Tutorial Fellow of the College, who is supported by an Assistant Organist (who is a member of staff) and two Organ Scholars (undergraduates). On some Saturdays (usually five or six in each term) Evensong is sung by the Magdalen College Consort of Voices: this is a mixed choir made up of the same altos, tenors, and basses of the College Choir, with sopranos singing the top line. Choral Evensong or Evening Prayer, in the formal “cathedral style”, is sung every day in Full Term except Monday. Compline is sung by two cantors at 9pm on a Tuesday during Full Term. On Sunday the Sung Eucharist is celebrated at 11am. Currently, a short homily is preached by the Dean of Divinity or one of the assisting clergy or a member of the Fellowship at the Sunday morning service, and there is a pattern of regular visiting preachers at Choral Evensong on Sunday evenings. The ability to attract interesting speakers for Sunday evening services, as for the two sermons before the University hosted by Magdalen each year, would be an advantage in the post.
4. In addition to the choral services, the Dean of Divinity conducts such other services as may be desirable to meet the needs of members of the College. The said services are currently Morning Prayer every day from Monday to Friday. In vacations it is expected that some services will continue for the benefit of those who remain in residence, but the organisation of these is at the discretion of the Dean of Divinity. The Dean of Divinity is responsible for organising funerals, memorial services,

baptisms, and weddings in the Chapel. In general, these are held only for members of the College and children of Fellows and staff. There are also up to three services per year in the vacations which are held before Gaudy dinners for old members. Other events are held in the Chapel at the Dean of Divinity's discretion. This permission would not normally be withheld for College music events or services, or for events requested by Magdalen College School, Oxford. The Dean of Divinity is expected to take part in the May Morning Ceremony each year.

5. The work of the Dean of Divinity is supported by one or more assistant chaplains. The appointment of all chaplains is agreed in consultation with the Chapel and Choir Committee and subject to approval by the College. The current team of Chaplains includes a part-time Assistant Chaplain, part-time Fellows' Chaplain, and a number of Honorary Chaplains, all of whom are priests working in the vicinity of Oxford or employed in other roles in the University or Magdalen College School. There are also two Founder's Chaplains, who are lay people drawn from the Fellowship, and who undertake Founder's Prayers at ten Evensongs per year. It is the Dean of Divinity's responsibility to ensure that all services in the Chapel are led by the Dean or one of the chaplains.
6. The Dean of Divinity provides pastoral support to members of the College, irrespective of their own beliefs or lack thereof, and will also provide opportunities for students and others to explore ethical issues, their own beliefs, and the Christian faith. The Dean of Divinity also organises meetings of the Addison Society which provides a forum for members of the College to discuss ethical, social, and religious issues with a distinguished speaker. A Confirmation service is held in Chapel once a year. The Dean of Divinity traditionally offers the opportunity for Confirmation preparation – a round of classes each year – to the Choristers.



7. There is no formal junction between the post of Dean of Divinity and Magdalen College School, but it is expected that close co-operation is maintained when needed. The School uses the Chapel on a number of occasions each year and a good working relationship with the Master, Chaplain, and other School staff is important. There are friendly ties between the College Chapel and local churches, chapels, and religious communities, as well as the Diocese of Oxford. The Bishop of Winchester is Visitor of the College. In addition to local support, he can be consulted by the Dean of Divinity on any matters concerning the Chapel and its work.
8. The Dean of Divinity has some administrative functions. These include acting as Secretary to the Chapel and Choir Committee and the Livings Committee, administering with the Informator Choristarum the procedures for examining and admitting Choristers and proposing candidates for College Livings and the preachers of the two University Sermons which are held in College each year. 'The Dean of Divinity acts as Secretary of the Magdalen College Trust, which meets once per term in order to award small grants to a wide range of charitable organisations. They are also ex officio a member of the Tutorial Board and of the Cases Committee. The Dean of Divinity may be asked to join other College Committees. The Dean of Divinity is supported by a full-time Chapel Administrator, and the Informator Choristarum by a full-time Choir Administrator. A part-time vergers is present for all choral services in the Chapel.
9. The Dean of Divinity is not required to undertake any academic teaching, but may teach as opportunity permits, receiving payment for undergraduate tuition in accordance with standard procedures. Magdalen College is a very friendly, lively, diverse, and interdisciplinary research environment with the highest academic standards. The Dean of Divinity would be encouraged, if appropriate, to benefit from this and to pursue their own research interests.
10. The Dean of Divinity will hold a licence from the Bishop of Oxford and conduct services that are authorised or allowed by the Canons of the Church of England. Services in the Chapel are held according to the provisions of the Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship.





Selection Criteria

Applications will be judged only against the criteria which are set out below. Applicants should ensure that their application shows clearly how they believe that their skills and experience meet these criteria, and should ask their referees to address these criteria in their letters of recommendation.

The College is committed to fairness, consistency, and transparency in selection decisions. Members of selection committees will be aware of the principles of equality of opportunity, fair selection, and the risks of bias. There will be both female and male committee members wherever possible.

If, for any reason, you have taken a career break or have had an atypical career and wish to disclose this in your application, the selection committee will take this into account, recognising that not all career paths are linear.

Selection criteria:

Essential

Applicants must:

- be a Priest of the Church of England, or of a Church in full communion with the Church of England, with the completion of at least one curacy;
- have an Honours degree;
- have wide pastoral experience and excellent interpersonal skills.

Desirable

It may be an advantage if applicants have:

- the ability to sing as part of the Chapel services;
- engagement with academic research and/or teaching;
- experience of a second curacy, a first incumbency in a parish, or a similar post.

The selection committee recognises that candidates may contribute to these goals in different ways and will use its professional judgment, based on the evidence available, to decide how successfully candidates could make such contributions, bearing in mind the specified needs of the College.

Candidates invited for interview will be asked to submit (a few days before the date of their visit to the College) the text of a short sermon or homily, either pre-existing or newly-composed, that would be appropriate for a congregation including students, academic colleagues, and members of the public. There will be an interview with the selection committee, and candidates will be invited to meet members of the Chapel & Choir department in an informal setting.



Terms of Employment

The Dean of Divinity will be paid a stipend between £53,754 and £63,285 p.a., depending on experience, plus a pensionable and taxable Tutorial Allowance of £9,386 p.a. and other allowances. If required, College accommodation may be made available for an appropriate rent. The Dean of Divinity will be entitled to partake of the Common College Lunch and Dinner free of charge, and will be eligible to join, or to remain a member of, the Universities Superannuation Scheme.

The College also offers a Housing Loan Scheme to assist in house purchase.

The Dean of Divinity will have access to an entertainment allowance. In addition, the College operates a scheme whereby Fellows' research costs (including travel and books) can be reclaimed, up to a current maximum of £2,500 per annum. Newly appointed Fellows will also have an allowance of £1,400 for computer equipment in the first year of employment, and £500 per year thereafter (the equipment must be purchased by the College and remains the property of the College, to prevent its becoming a taxable benefit to the Fellow). There is also a Research Fund to which the Fellow can apply for particular expenses, and a fund for projects, organised by Fellows, which are of specific benefit to students of the College.

The College provides for maternity leave on a basis that exceeds the statutory provisions. Employees are eligible for 26 weeks' maternity leave on full pay, followed by 13 weeks of leave on Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) and 13 weeks of unpaid maternity leave: this is a day one entitlement. Magdalen has a priority claim on a number of places in the University nurseries. Arrangements are available for paternity leave, shared parental leave, and adoption leave.

The Fellow will have the option of participating in a contributory private healthcare scheme.

All reasonable interview expenses will be reimbursed. Following the offer of the position, appointment will be subject to (a) satisfactory completion of a medical questionnaire, (b) provision of proof of the right to work in the UK, and (c) an Enhanced DBS check (and the College may require periodic updated disclosures during the period of office).

It is hoped that the successful candidate can start on 1 January 2027, or as soon as possible thereafter; the successful candidate will need to have taken up the post by 5 April 2027.

This is a Career Development post; the tenure of the office and of the Fellowship will be for seven years from the date of appointment and will not be renewable. There is a three-year probationary period.

5. Equality

Magdalen College is committed to Equality and Diversity. Further information can be obtained on the College website at: www.magd.ox.ac.uk/equality/.

6. Selection Process

Applications for this post will be considered by a selection committee containing representatives from the Governing Body of Magdalen College and also an external member who is ordained. The selection committee is responsible for conducting all aspects of the recruitment and selection process; it does not, however, have the authority to make the final decision as to who should be appointed. The final decision will be made by the Governing Body of Magdalen College on the basis of a recommendation made by the selection committee. No offer of appointment will be valid, therefore, until and unless the recommendation has been approved by the Governing Body and a formal contractual offer has been made. For the purpose of making its decision, the Governing Body of Magdalen College will have access to the dossiers and references of short-listed candidates.

To apply, visit our recruitment website and click on the Apply Now button within the role. Please contact HR (hr.academics@magd.ox.ac.uk) if you have any questions about the application system. Applicants need to apply online, submitting a detailed letter of application and a full curriculum vitae by Friday 4 September 2026.

Applicants should ask three referees to email their references directly to Magdalen Dean of Divinity applications (dd@magd.ox.ac.uk) by the same deadline without further prompting. In accordance with the Magdalen College Choir Child Safeguarding Policy, the references must satisfactorily address the question of the applicant's suitability for work with children. Candidates who wish to approach a referee or referees only if they are being called for interview or are in receipt of a conditional offer are asked to state that explicitly in their application.

Interviews are expected to be held in person in late September.

7. Data Protection

All data supplied by applicants will be used only for the purposes of determining their suitability for the post, and will be held in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the College's Data Protection Policy, which can be found at www.magd.ox.ac.uk/other-policies/data-protection/.



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