

Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life (OCRPL)
Dr Christopher Sugden, Chairman of the Board of Trustees
Dr Prasad D R J Phillips, Interim Executive Director
Unit 1, Fordbrook Business Centre/Marlborough Road
Pewsey, SN9 5NU
United Kingdom

July 7, 2026

Dear Chris and Prasad:

Greetings from ECTE.

The ECTE Accreditation Commission (AC) in its June 30, 2026, session deliberated on the Review Report related to a focused review of OCRPL, March 17-19, 2026.

Your additional representation relating to suggested actions by the Visiting Evaluation Team has been received and was part of the deliberations by the AC.

The AC has noted several major decisions which alleviate several concerns related to compliance.

After careful consideration, the AC voted not to withdraw accreditation but to uphold the status as “under review” and mandate an accelerated timeline for the next cyclical review of the institution and its programmes.

Standard A.1.2 Legal and Fiscal Status:

The VET recommends to the AC that the outlined changes related to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees be accomplished, completed and documented in OCRPL’s additional representation. This needs to include the following elements:

- The Board of Trustees formally accepts the offer by the current chairperson to resign from the Board, at least until the investigations by British Police and the UK Charity Commission have concluded (documentation: minutes).
- The Board of Trustees formally confirms that the Deputy Executive Director acts as the chief executive officer of OCRPL (documentation: minutes).
- All public-facing information and internal documentation (including organisational charts and website content) are aligned with these decisions and clearly reflect the resignation of the chairperson and the new leadership structure.

These actions would be strengthened significantly by submitting a plan by the Board of Trustees towards filling the role of Executive Director permanently should the investigations not be concluded with the outcome expected confidently by OCRPL or by the time of the next cyclical review by ECTE (whichever occurs first).

AC assessment

- While the former Chairperson of the Board of Trustees has stepped down and is no longer a Board member with voice and vote, she still serves as a consultant to the Board of Trustees (per additional representation and OCRPL website). While this action addresses the suggested recommendation from the VET, her new role as consultant to the Board of Trustees is judged by the AC as not acceptable until the ongoing

investigations are completed and the allegations against her are found to be unsubstantiated.

- The appointment of the Interim Executive Director has been noted as an important step towards compliance.

While this change is reflected on the OCRPL website, supporting documentation (excerpt of Board Minutes) was not provided, to include information regarding succession planning.

The AC mandates an update with supporting documentation (excerpt of minutes) after the July Board meeting of OCRPL, during which further decisions related to leadership and succession planning are expected (no later than July 30, 2026).

- Alignment of public facing information
 - regarding Interim Deputy Director is completed.
 - Regarding the listing of former Board of Trustee Chairperson as consultant to the Board of Trustees - see above.

Standard A.2.1/A.2.2. Governance

The VET recommends to the AC that the transition by the former PhD Programme Director and (at time of Report still listed) member of the Executive Commission to serve as a member and Secretary on the Board of Trustees must be completed and documented in OCRPL's additional representation by June 15, 2026. This needs to include the following elements:

- Alignment of all public-facing and internal documentation (including organisational chart and website content) to reflect his role as a member of the Board of Trustees, holding no role in operations.
- Provision of a plan, with a defined timeline not extending beyond the current academic year, for the transfer of any remaining operational responsibilities, including those related to the Executive Committee and the PhD Programme.

AC assessment of actions:

- The former member of the Executive Commission now serves as Board of Trustees Chairman.

While he is no longer a member of the Executive Council, he still serves in operational roles (member of the Academic Council and – per website information – as leader of the PhD programme).

The AC understands OCRPL's argument that UK regulations do not forbid executives on boards with voice and vote. However, European Standards and Guidelines and thus the ECTE Standards and Guidelines require a clear separation of governance and leadership/management.

This separation has not yet been achieved.

- A plan by the Board of Trustees towards filling the role of Executive Director permanently while the investigations are ongoing or by the time of the next cyclical review by ECTE (whichever occurs first) was not submitted.
- To maintain ECTE accreditation, further decisions regarding the current Board of Trustee Chairman are needed and these must be fully implemented and documented

no later than November 30, 2026. This includes a timeline for the transfer of any remaining operational responsibilities, including those related to the Academic Council and the PhD Programme.

The AC declines the VET suggestion to review and assess the implementation of the financial policy reporting via the Annual Progress Report in 2026.

The AC mandates by **unanimous vote**

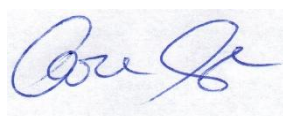
- An update after the OCRPL Board of Trustee meeting in July with supporting documentation no later than July 30, 2026, related to leadership decisions and succession planning.
- An Interim Report submitted no later than November 30, 2026, addressing the remaining concerns, including all aspects mentioned above.
- Maintain the “under review” status of the institution until the cyclical review is completed.
- The following timeline for the cyclical review is mandated by the AC:
 - Pre-submission feedback of SER no later than March 2027
 - SER submission no later than April 2027
 - Site visit no later than June 2027
 - AC Decision no later than November 2027 (to ensure time to work on potential requirements by January 23, 2028)
 - Current accreditation valid to January 23, 2028

OCRPL is free to apply for the cyclical review earlier than the timeline indicates.

I am available for a conversation regarding the timeline towards June 30, 2026.

Thank you in advance for confirming receipt of this letter.

Sincerely,



Carmen Crouse
Accreditation Director