

# **Curate Training Handbook**

(IME2)

## **Part 1**

### **Overview of Curacy, Training Elements, Notes for TIs, and Review Process**

June 2023



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

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## **Corporate Confidentiality Policy**

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, any communication (verbally or in writing) with one member of the team (Sponsoring Bishop, Diocesan Director of Ordinands, Curate Training Officer, Curate Training Programme Officer) can be openly shared with the other members as considered necessary or appropriate.

If a TI or curate wishes to communicate something with the understanding that it will not be shared, this must be made clear from the outset, and does not apply to any safeguarding issues.

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## Forward by the Acting Bishop of Peterborough

Curacy is a gift from God and his Church to enable you to grow into the ministry which we all share. It is an opportunity to learn, to experiment, to practice, to fail and try again.

My Curacy in the Diocese of Southwark was such a memorable time and prepared me for future roles. The warmth and reassurance given to me by my TI and the Parish gave me room to try, sometimes fail, but always opportunity to develop and grow.

It is my hope and prayer that you find your curacy a positive and encouraging experience.

The training you receive today is much more advanced than when I was a curate. It has been developed to assist you as you grow within your curacy. The Curate Training Team support you through the breadth and depth of your curacy using specific training modules designed to support the training and practice given by your TI.

Please enjoy your curacy, work hard, be receptive to those who seek to serve you through training and support. Pray for growth in wisdom and insight for those you serve now and in the future.

+John

*"What makes the Church is the dynamic rhythm of communicating the gospel with the world and deepening Communion with one another in Christ"*

*(From "Kingdom Calling" by the Faith & Order Commission 2020)*

# Introduction

Welcome to the 2023 edition of the Curate Training Handbook. It is intended to be used by both curates and training incumbents as a guide and source of information, from the curate's ordination as a deacon until the end of curacy. Divided into two parts, Part 1 contains general information for curates (which TIs are encouraged to read), detailed information about the review process, and general information for TIs (which curates are encouraged to read). Part 2 contains various documents and forms to help in supervision and the review process. Relevant documents are also to be found on the website.

This Handbook continues to reflect the basic structure of curate training which was put in place a few years ago, combining parish experience, supervision, training days, portfolios, and a rigorous review process. This structure has enabled curates and TIs alike to have a clear understanding of what is required at each stage of the process. Curate training continues to be structured around parish and training days, supervision, and annual reviews, but there is also flexibility for those on a 'non-standard' curate pathway to flex their training to suit their ministry and context. More information on this is provided in the sections about attending training days and developing curate portfolios.

One aspect of curate training is its focus on specific themes which are re-visited year-on-year, with a different perspective each year. One of these, looking at 'Working with Children and Young People', is part of a very important focus within the diocese, and there will be an additional requirement to reflect on this theme in the curate portfolio.

Curates are assessed at all stages of their curacy in the light of the Church's National Formation Criteria. These were developed to be used for assessment during both during IME1 (initial ministerial education phase 1, before ordination) and throughout IME2 (curacy). As theological college assessments broadly follow the Formation Criteria, these should be familiar to most curates. These are referred to throughout Part 1 of the Curate Handbook and are to be found in full in Part 2.

Both Part 1 of the Handbook and Part 2 include key dates for curate reviews over the next year. Dates for the review of final year curates reflect that they are due to be signed-off at Easter (2024) to look for a position of greater responsibility. Dates for the review of first year curates reflect that their review leads towards a recommendation for ordination as a priest. Reviews for second year curates (or years 3 and 4 for those on a 5 year curacy) follow the timelines of final year curates.

If you have any questions at all about the Handbook or the process for review and assessment, please do get in touch. In the meantime, everything you will need for the coming year should be in this Handbook.



# The Ordinal

Throughout ministry, it is helpful to continue reflecting on the content of the Ordinal which underpins ordained ministry. Below are excerpts from the Ordination of Deacons and the Ordination of Priests, with the scriptural footnotes provided by the study edition of the Common Worship Ordination Services.

## The Ordination of Deacons

Deacons are called to work with the Bishop and the priests with whom they serve as heralds of Christ's kingdom. They are to proclaim the gospel in word and deed, as agents of God's purposes of love. They are to serve the community in which they are set, bringing to the Church the needs and hopes of all the people. They are to work with their fellow members in searching out the poor and weak, the sick and lonely and those who are oppressed and powerless, reaching into the forgotten corners of the world, that the love of God may be made visible.

Deacons share in the pastoral ministry of the Church and in leading God's people in worship. They preach the word<sup>1</sup> and bring the needs of the world before the Church in intercession. They accompany those searching for faith and bring them to baptism. They assist in administering the sacraments; they distribute communion and minister to the sick and housebound.

Deacons are to seek nourishment from the Scriptures; they are to study them with God's people, that the whole Church may be equipped<sup>2</sup> to live out the gospel in the world. They are to be faithful in prayer, expectant and watchful for the signs of God's presence, as he reveals his kingdom among us.

## The Ordination of Priests

Priests are called to be servants and shepherds<sup>3</sup> among the people to whom they are sent. With their Bishop and fellow ministers, they are to proclaim the word of the Lord and to watch for the signs of God's new creation.<sup>4</sup> They are to be messengers, watchmen<sup>5</sup> and stewards<sup>6</sup> of the Lord; they are to teach and to admonish,<sup>7</sup> to feed

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<sup>1</sup> cf 2 Timothy 4.2

<sup>2</sup> cf Ephesians 4.12; 2 Timothy 3.17

<sup>3</sup> cf Ezekiel 34; John 21.16; Acts 20.28; 1 Peter 5.2-4

<sup>4</sup> cf Matthew 16.3; 2 Corinthians 5.17

<sup>5</sup> cf Ezekiel 3.17, 33.7

<sup>6</sup> cf 1 Corinthians 4.1

<sup>7</sup> cf Colossians 3.16

and provide for his family, to search for his children in the wilderness of this world's temptations, and to guide them through its confusions, that they may be saved through Christ for ever. Formed by the word, they are to call their hearers to repentance and to declare in Christ's name the absolution and forgiveness of their sins.

With all God's people, they are to tell the story of God's love. They are to baptise new disciples in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>8</sup> and to walk with them in the way of Christ, nurturing them in the faith. They are to unfold the Scriptures,<sup>9</sup> to preach the word in season and out of season,<sup>10</sup> and to declare the mighty acts of God.<sup>11</sup> They are to preside at the Lord's table and lead his people in worship, offering with them a spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.<sup>12</sup> They are to bless the people in God's name.<sup>13</sup> They are to resist evil, support the weak, defend the poor, and intercede for all in need.<sup>14</sup> They are to minister to the sick<sup>15</sup> and prepare the dying for their death. Guided by the Spirit, they are to discern and foster the gifts of all God's people,<sup>16</sup> that the whole Church may be built up in unity and faith.

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<sup>8</sup> cf Matthew 28.19

<sup>9</sup> cf Luke 24.27,32

<sup>10</sup> cf 2 Timothy 4.2

<sup>11</sup> cf Psalm 145.4

<sup>12</sup> cf 1 Peter 2.5; Hebrews 13.15,16

<sup>13</sup> cf Numbers 6.22,27

<sup>14</sup> cf 1 Thessalonians 5.14; 1 Timothy 2.1

<sup>15</sup> cf James 5.14

<sup>16</sup> cf 1 Peter 4.10

## Curacy: An Overview

Curacy marks a new beginning and a precious time of life, full of changes, challenges, and the privilege of living out our calling. In Peterborough Diocese, we aim to make this as enriching a time as possible, laying further foundations, after theological college, for lifelong learning to which all in ministry are called.

### Common Tenure in Curacy and Training

Most clergy appointments in the Church of England are subject to the Common Tenure legislation which came into being in 2011. Curacies are no exception, but they differ from other parish positions in being time-limited for the purpose of training (3½ years for full-stipendiary curates and up to 5 years for SSMs, full-time stipendiary pioneer curates, and MSEs). Under the terms of Common Tenure, it is the responsibility of the curate's diocese to provide a programme of training to enable the curate to 'proceed to a post which can be held permanently under common tenure either as an assistant or as incumbent status minister', and the end of a curacy 'should include a formal process of assessment to determine whether it is appropriate for the curate to proceed either to a post of assistant minister or that of incumbent.'<sup>17</sup> This underlines the importance both of curate training under Common Tenure, and the shared commitment of all involved in it: Curate, TI, Bishops, and CTO.

### Aims of Curacy

Overall, the main aim in curacy is to prepare clergy to be sufficiently skilled, experienced, resilient, and spiritually engaged to embark on the challenges and opportunities of the next stage ministerial life beyond curacy. For most, this will be a position of greater responsibility in parish ministry and/or in pioneering contexts, sector ministry, or secular employment. Every curacy will therefore continue the work of formation for ministry which has already begun and will develop and foster new skills and experiences which will inevitably include developing good habits in ministry; learning about the life of the parish from a different perspective and reflecting theologically in a new way. For some, this will also be a time of integrating considerable life experience with new life and learning as a curate, and for all there

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<sup>17</sup> Ministry Division Code of Procedure: Reports on sponsored candidates, arrangements for first appointments and assessment at the end of curacy, section D. [https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/code\\_of\\_procedure.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/code_of_procedure.pdf). For further information on Common Tenure, see <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/common-tenure-faqs>

will be the challenge of going through the significant transition of ordination, and all that this entails for identity and self-understanding as well as moving to a new parish.

## Character, Disposition and Relationships

Whilst new skills and experiences will certainly form a significant part of curacy, it will be underlying dispositions, character formation, and spirituality which will provide the strongest foundations for ministerial life. In line with the principles of the Church's Formation Criteria (which form the backbone for assessment during IME1), a strong emphasis during IME2 is on 'inseparability of character from understanding and skills', and the recognition that 'knowledge, understanding and skills are secondary to Christ-like character.'<sup>18</sup> As ministry takes places within relationships, and disposition is more likely to be 'discerned' than 'measured', relationships will play an important role throughout the whole of curacy, not only in terms of support, but also to help shape and shine a light on character and disposition, and to provide a range of voices who can offer feedback, and can stretch and challenge the curate. With this focus on character, disposition, and relationships, the intention is to help resource and prepare curates to work in a range of contexts, drawing, with God's grace, on self-understanding, maturity, insight, and careful reflection, as much as on skills and experience.

## Key Relationships in Curate Training

Curate training would not, of course, be possible without the curate(!), but there are other key figures who play a significant role in the process not least the curate's family, friends, and other supporters, who may be accompanying the curate throughout this time. The Training Incumbent (TI) is also a very significant person in the process, and their relationship with the curate will be an important source of challenge and support. Other members of the parish, some of whom will have been consulted before the curate's arrival, will also be significant in offering support and feedback.

Beyond the parish, the diocesan training scheme is enabled and supported by the Clergy Training Officer (CTO), the Curate Training Programme Officer (CTPO), a number of Assistant Curate Training Officers (ACTOs), and others involved in the programme, such as the team of experienced Portfolio Assessors (PA). Last but not least, the Bishops take seriously the support and training of curates, and relish seeing curates grow and thrive in ministry. They are involved throughout the whole of

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<sup>18</sup> Formation Criteria for the Church of England

[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiEpMv-6qXcAhXqK8AKHcujCrAQFggqMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.churchofengland.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2F2017-10%2Fformation\\_criteria\\_for\\_ordained\\_ministry.pdf&usg=AOvVaw1jZp86fmgF8A-7P3jQIIWL](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiEpMv-6qXcAhXqK8AKHcujCrAQFggqMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.churchofengland.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2F2017-10%2Fformation_criteria_for_ordained_ministry.pdf&usg=AOvVaw1jZp86fmgF8A-7P3jQIIWL)

curacy, and will specifically meet curates at key moments such as ordination, pre-priesting reviews, and the final 'sign-off' from curacy.

## A Shared Commitment to Flourishing and Encouragement

All involved in this process share a commitment to the process of preparing curates for ministry in God's Church. If it is to be a process of flourishing and encouragement, as well as challenge, this will require honesty and a willingness to tackle difficulties as they arise.

For TIs, this will mean a willingness to provide a context in which inexperience and mistakes are acknowledged as a natural part of learning, and it will mean a commitment to supervision, reflective space, and encouragement for theological reflection. For curates, this will mean a willingness to submit to the process of learning, acknowledging areas for development, being prepared to grow in faith, self-understanding, experience, skills, and relationship building.

This shared commitment also means that any difficulties need to be addressed as soon as possible. If support is needed beyond the curate/TI relationship, this can be easily accessed by contacting the CTO, and together every effort can be made to move things forward. Ultimately the Bishop's decision is final on all matters that cannot be resolved by mutual agreement of other parties involved.

## What happens when there is a difficulty in a curacy?

Whilst the aim is for every curacy to be a season of flourishing, growth, and profound formation, inevitably there will be challenges along the way, including in the curate / TI relationship. If this happens, the process will be as follows:

- The curate and TI should talk to each other and air the issues honestly and thoughtfully before they become too difficult to raise. Supervision is the obvious time for this, but it may be in another suitable context.
- If the curate needs to think the issue through with someone before raising it with the TI, the curate should contact the CTO. The CTO is always prepared to listen and discuss an issue, and wherever possible to discuss how and when to explore the issues with the TI. Each situation is unique to the people involved, but many issues have been encountered by others before, and the CTO can help draw in advice and perspectives from others to assist.
- If the TI needs to think the issue through with someone before raising it with the curate, the TI should contact the CTO. The CTO may encourage you also to draw on the sources of support outlined below in the section 'Training and Support for Training Incumbents'.

- If the difficulty between curate and TI raises significant personal issues which need help and attention, the CTO may direct you to draw on the resources and support of The Revd Nicholas Gandy, the Diocesan Pastoral Care and Counselling Adviser ([nicholas.gandy@btinternet.com](mailto:nicholas.gandy@btinternet.com)). If mediation is appropriate, this can also be arranged.
- If the difficulty becomes entrenched, such that either curate or TI consider the curacy might be better continued elsewhere, please note that this is a decision made by the sponsoring bishop in consultation with senior colleagues in the Bishop's Management Group – just as it was when arranging the curacy in the first place. This takes time. The sponsoring bishop will need to understand the circumstances, and be satisfied that the steps above have been followed.
- If a new placement for curacy for placement is agreed in principle, the DDO will explore options and advise the sponsoring bishop. This may involve conversation with the curate and current TI to understand what would make for a better future.
- If a new curacy is agreed, the CTO will pastorally support the curate, and the DDO will pastorally support the current TI. The sponsoring bishop, having spoken with both curate & current TI, will agree changeover dates and provide a statement to be read on an agreed Sunday. In some circumstances the TI may appreciate it if the CTO or DDO are present, or are the ones to make the announcement, and this can be arranged. A short period of time out from ministry for the curate might be appropriate to take place between the ending of the original placement and the start of the new one.
- The review and assessment process (outlined below) gives information on how to work with difficulties which arise during this process.

The important thing to know is that there will be support and, if in doubt, contact the CTO.

## When a TI is unavailable on a short-term basis

Each case will be looked at individually, but in general this is the practice which would be followed:

### **Sabbaticals**

A TI is expected to take into account the impact on a curate when applying for a sabbatical and is to comment appropriately on the sabbatical application. The TI will be asked to recommend nearby clergy who could supervise and be available to the curate during the sabbatical period. The CTO will discuss the recommendations with the sponsoring bishop and ask the preferred clergy person whether they are willing to take the curate on. Once there is a positive response, the curate will be approached to ensure that they are also happy with the proposed person.

## **Sick leave**

For short-term periods of a TI's incapacity, the curate should contact the rural dean and/or to the CTO for any necessary support. If the time of leave continues for more than a month, the CTO will discuss with the curate whether a more formal arrangement should be put into place, liaising with the sponsoring bishop for whom may be suitable.

## **Vacancy**

Should a TI leave the benefice/parish during the curacy, the CTO will discuss with the sponsoring bishop and the DDO whom could be approached to act as TI for the curate until such time as a new incumbent is appointed. The fact that a curate is in place will be taken into account during the interview and appointment process. If the vacancy period becomes protracted, it may be best for the curate to be moved to a new benefice/parish. The curate will be consulted and their own views given full weight in regards to any move.

## **Leaving Ministry**

There are rare occasions when either the curate or the diocese will decide that the curate cannot continue in ministry. Although each case will have to be approached individually, the following will be borne in mind:

- Every effort will be made to ensure that the curate's difficulties are not connected to either the locale or the TI/others in the curacy benefice. This may mean a new placement for curacy, as outlined above.
- Support will be offered for any personal issues, initially through The Revd Nicholas Gandy, the Diocesan Pastoral Care and Counselling Adviser ([nicholas.gandy@btinternet.com](mailto:nicholas.gandy@btinternet.com)).
- The financial impact from leaving ministry upon the curate and family will be considered, with an appropriate financial package and timescale for vacating the curacy house agreed between the curate and the diocese. The curate, if eligible, may draw upon outside resources such as a representative from Unite's Faithworker Branch.

## **The ending of a curacy**

A curate who, coming to the end of their title post, is considered by the Bishops to have completed all the necessary elements of their curacy and is ready to move onto the next stage of ministry, will be 'signed off' and able to apply for a new position.

The Bishop's 'sign off' will take place at the end of March of the final year (that is, the third year for a curate who is on a full-time stipendiary pathway, or fourth year for self-supporting curates (SSM), ministers in secular employment (MSE), or ordained

pioneer curates (OPM).) The curacy will not need to end until the date specified in the Statement of Particulars (received by each curate at their ordination).

## SSM/HfD curates wishing to finish in three or four years

Although acknowledging that many SSM/HfD curates come with extensive experience in both secular work and lay ministry, the Bishops must be satisfied that a curate has gained enough experience in an ordained role before sign off for incumbency. If an SSM/HfD curate seeks sign off in a time period shorter than five years, this should be indicated during the first year of curacy so that regular discussion can take place between TI, curate, and the Clergy Training Officer. The curate will be expected to attend all of the diocesan training days as well as the Wisdom in Ministry retreats.

During the review process in the second year, the ACTO/CTO will discuss the possibility of sign off in year three or four with the TI and curate at the review meeting. The reviewer's report will assist the Clergy Training Officer and Bishops in their own assessment of the curate's progress. Any gaps in training or ministerial formation will be highlighted and these are to be addressed in the third year. If the curate wishes to finish in three years, at the end of the third year, the curate is to submit a portfolio and undertake a further review meeting. The TI, curate, ACTO, Clergy Training Officer, and Bishops will discern between them whether sign off can be agreed. If another year is felt to be necessary, any gaps in training or ministerial formation will be highlighted and these are to be addressed in the fourth year.

If the curate wishes to finish in four years, then the portfolio and review meeting will occur in year four, involving the parties as above. The same procedures will be followed.

## Applying for First Post of Responsibility

In all instances, the sponsoring bishop must be consulted before any application is made. For posts outside of the diocese, applications can only be made after the curate has received notice of successful sign off. This follows the final review and is usually post Easter in a curate's third year for those on full-time curacies. Those who are SSM, HfD, or a Pioneer normally have a five-year curacy with a final review in year four.

For posts within the diocese, the archdeacons meet with the DDO, CTO, and CTPO in November or December to talk through final year curates and which vacancies might suit them. Early in the New Year, the archdeacons will speak to the curates to talk through possible posts. With the approval of the sponsoring bishop, a curate can look at a diocesan post and apply before Easter, with the understanding that an appointment is subject to successful sign off and continuing attendance at training events.



## The Main Elements of Curate Training

### Curate Pathways: Honouring different callings and contexts

The aim in this Diocese is to provide a robust 'core' training which fosters character, disposition, and relationships (see above), and also provides enough flexibility to honour the different pathways of individual curates and the ministry to which they have been called. Broadly, there are four different pathways. Their focus or length may differ (the final decision on which will always be made by the Bishops), but all clergy in the diocese are considered to be of equal value, irrespective of pathway; all are called according to their unique gifts, and according to circumstance. The pathways are:

- **Potential Incumbent (or equivalent):** Usually full-time and stipendiary. Curates on this pathway are normally expected to serve no less than 3 and up to 3½ years. The parish will be the primary context and focus of ministry.
- **Potential Incumbent / Pioneer:** Usually full-time stipendiary. Pioneer curates are expected to serve 4-5 years in a curacy. Pioneering initiatives within a parish will be the primary context and focus of ministry.
- **Assistant / Self-supporting Minister (SSM):** Usually offering a specified amount of time in parish ministry. SSMs are expected to serve 4-5 years in a curacy, depending on the amount of time offered in the parish. On rare occasions, an SSM may serve a 3-year curacy, if they are able to commit a significant amount of time to the parish and attending training events. The parish will be the primary context and focus of ministry.
- **Minister in Secular Employment (MSE):** Sponsored to exercise ordained ministry in the workplace and also serving in a parish. MSEs are expected to serve a curacy lasting from 3 to 5 years. The workplace will be the primary focus and context of ministry, though as with all curates, ordination will be to a specific parish.

### The Training Incumbent

The relationship between curate and TI is widely understood to be a very important element in any curacy; ordinands discerning the parish in which they will serve are generally advised to focus on the relationship with their potential TI more than on

geographical location or tradition within the parish.<sup>19</sup> It is this relationship which provides a model for ministry, supervision, support, and challenge, so it is vital that openness, honesty, mutual trust, respect, and a commitment to greater understanding of one another form the foundation of this relationship.

The required 'formal' elements of the curate/TI relationship include:

- Establishing the Working and Learning Agreement (WLA) early in year 1;
- Establishing Training Agendas (TA) from year 2;
- Weekly supervision sessions from the beginning of curacy;
- Taking part in the curate's annual review process.

These formal requirements will go some way to setting out the expectations of the curate/TI relationship. However, it will be the overall process of praying and working together day-by-day which will provide the building blocks. The expectation is that whilst the TI encourages the curate, affirms existing gifts and fosters new abilities, the curate respects their TI's experience, judgement, and understanding.

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*For more information on different aspects of work of the TI, please see the Curate / TI Relationship section (below).*

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## Working and Learning Agreement (WLA)

The WLA must be produced by the curate and TI together shortly after the start of the curacy. It should preferably be completed by mid-September, ready to be discussed at a meeting with the CTO.

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*You will find a copy of the standard WLA and the MSE variant in Part 2 of the Handbook and on the website.*

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The WLA is a fairly lengthy document, but its aim is to provide clarity about the shape of the curacy and basic components such as supervision, staff meetings, working patterns, worship, study time, days off, and expenses. For SSMS, this should also include the amount of time (sessions or days) which are committed to the parish, and for MSEs it will include information about ministry, expectations, and support in the workplace, including input from the curate's workplace supervisor.

The WLA is more than a 'factual' document: It will also reflect commitments and expectations of both the curate and TI and will lay out suggested ways of exploring the Formation Criteria. The Agreement is not set in stone; it is likely to need amending as the curacy unfolds to reflect any changing patterns and circumstances.

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<sup>19</sup> *Vocational Pathways: Perspectives from Curacy*, a Ministry Division Report by Ruth Perrin, 2016, provides information on the TI/Curate Relationship.  
[http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/UserFiles/File/RME/perspectives\\_from\\_curacy.pdf](http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/UserFiles/File/RME/perspectives_from_curacy.pdf)

## Training Agendas (TA)

From the end of the curate's first year the TA will be used alongside the WLA to consider specific training needs.

The point of the TA is to identify gaps which need to be filled in the curate's experience; to capture specific areas of expertise which might be developed and strengthened further; and to address issues which are raised during the review process. Depending on the curate's pathway, up to five areas will be identified by the curate and TI, along with suggestions about how these may be approached.

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*A copy of the Training Agenda can be found in Part 2 of the Handbook and can be downloaded from the website.*

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## Supervision

The supervision of a curate is a structured process which enables the work, learning and support of the curate, and which helps to create and sustain a good working and training relationship between a TI and curate.<sup>20</sup>

All curacies are times of learning and transformation as curates adapt to a completely new way of life, often in a new location, and regular supervision with the TI is vital in the curate's formation, development, and ministerial practice. As curates and TIs are different individuals with different styles of learning and communication, one of the earliest training sessions for new curates is a shared session with their TI on 'Working Well Together'. This will be an opportunity to spend time understanding their own and each other's disposition and ways of working and communicating to help lay a foundation for learning and supervision.

Supervision sessions should be **distinct from diary planning** or any wider staff meeting. The requirement in this diocese is that:

- for curates whose ministry is full-time in the parish (stipendiary/incumbent/pioneer), supervision should take place weekly for 60-90 minutes, or fortnightly for 90-120 minutes.
- For those curates who are not based full-time in the parish (SSM/MSE), this may be fortnightly for 60-90 minutes, or monthly for 90-120, depending on the amount of time given to the parish.
- The frequency and duration of supervision sessions is agreed between the curate and TI, and noted in the WLA.

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<sup>20</sup> Rick Simpson, *Supervising a Curate: A Short Guide to a Complex Task*, Grove Books, Cambridge, 2011, p4.

How the time is spent in supervision is the shared responsibility of curate and TI, but it is intended to provide a context in which all areas of the curacy can be explored and reviewed. For this to be effective, there will need to be a shared commitment to maintaining regular sessions, and to providing a boundaried space which is safe enough to share difficult experiences, to reflect on things which have not gone well as much as things which are sources of celebration, and to air disagreements and differences in the curate / TI relationship. It is a space for encouragement, affirmation, and challenge, requiring honesty, openness, and attentive listening. Supervision is also the space in which preparation is done for informal assessment and formal reports.

## **The TI in Supervision**

The TI has various roles in supervision and is likely to move between them in each session. One way of thinking about this is as follows:<sup>21</sup>

**The TI as Manager:** The TI has oversight responsibility of the curate's work, including volume, content, areas and limits of responsibility. This may include reviewing frequency of preaching, aspects of parish administration, and sharing in assessment for the curate training process.

**The TI as Educator:** The TI brings knowledge, understanding and experience of ordained ministry, the life of the parish with its gifts and challenges, inhabiting the priestly/leadership role within the parish, and experiences of holding the worshipping heart of the community.

**The TI as Mediator:** The TI may, on occasion, engage with the diocese or the parish on behalf of the curate, or help them find necessary resources for ministry. The TI may also be required to protect the curates in some disputes. All of these may be areas for discussion in supervision.

**The TI as Supporter:** Caring, affirming, and championing the curate will always be part of the TI's role in supervision. This supportive role can also involve appropriate challenge and shared reflection on difficult relationships in the parish.

## **Reflection in Supervision**

Reflection on a range of events, situations, personal responses, and the discernment of God's presence will form a significant part of the supervision process. Different areas of reflection may include:

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<sup>21</sup> Please see Keith Lamdin and David Tilley, *Supporting New Ministers in the Local Church: A Handbook*, London: SPCK, 2007, pp6-8.

Theological reflection on ministry:	What has been the impact of a service/event/experience on how God's presence and activity might be discerned? How are specific occasional offices shaping my theology or vice versa?
Reflection on personal responses triggered by a ministry experience:	How was I affected by attending to a family's grief? How do I cope in situations where I do not like a parishioner?
Reflections on changes in self-understanding as an ordained person:	What does it feel like walking down the street in a dog-collar? How has being ordained shaped others' view of me and how do respond?

## The Structure of Supervision Sessions

There are many ways of structuring supervision sessions. It can be helpful by preparing to discuss a specific subject or event, and to capture key points in a brief document. You may put your own document together, including date of supervision, key points of discussion, theological reflection, action points coming out of it, self-reflection, areas of growth, and development which have emerged. Or you may want

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*Part 2 of the Handbook offers further suggestions for Supervision and a sample form for capturing key thoughts. There is also additional information (below in the section for TIs) with further information on Supervision.*

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to use one the suggested supervision formats which you will find in the Appendices. The Appendices in this document offer further suggestions for supervision and a sample form for capturing key thoughts. There is also additional information

(below in the section for TIs) with further information on supervision.

## Mission Project

In the year following ordination as a priest, curates are expected to take the lead initiative in a 9 to 12-month mission project. The aim is to have the opportunity to engage with the issues and practicalities of mission, to develop skills, to deepen theological understanding, and to integrate parish and other contexts.

The project may focus on any of a range of areas, such as: Community development (education, healthcare, social services, voluntary sector); social justice; evangelism; ecumenism; ministry in secular employment, and other faiths. How this project is

dealt with and reflected upon may differ for different curates **according to pathway**. For example, MSEs are encouraged to choose a project which relates to their work context. OPMs may find that most of their curacy could be described as a 'mission project' and so may need to select from ongoing initiatives and draw out their theology of mission.

Further guidance on the Mission Project is offered during the first year of training. Curates will be encouraged to be creative, flexible, and responsive to current and emerging changes in ministry, especially as their parish finds ways of responding to changing parochial needs.

## Group Training Days 2023-2024

These days usually provide an opportunity for curates to meet together for mutual support, learning and reflection. They include input from an external speaker, time for discussion and reflection, and a short act of worship. When we are meeting at Bouverie Court or another venue, curates are invited to bring lunch so that the group can share a meal. Getting to know each other as colleagues and friends, and supporting the whole group, is a very important aspect of these shared events.

It's hoped that all events will be in person. If these have to be shifted to online, rather than lasting from 10am – 4pm (which is the usual length of a training day), online events will usually last for half a day. Curates will be required to do some preparatory work for a training session, such as reading or reflection, and there are some events to which the TI is also welcome (and one day which the TI is specifically invited to attend, namely the 'Working Together' day which in 2023 is on the Gilmore-Fraleigh model).

As indicated in the introduction to this Handbook, curate training days will focus on different themes according to year, and there will be some themes which run through all the years, but which have a different focus in each year:

- First year training has a focus on transition to ordained ministry and laying ministerial foundations;
- Year 2 has a focus on building skills;
- Year 3 has a focus on developing some skills further and making the transition to the next stage of ministry (nb: If you are self-supporting or full-time stipendiary pioneer, years 2 and 3 may be spread over years 2-5).

The themes which run through all the years, but which have a different focus in each year, are:

- ‘Working with Children and Young People’ (to which TIs are also welcome with their curates);
- Leadership (to which TIs are also welcome with their curates);
- Models of ministry.

We usually have two reflective practice residentials each year (known as ‘Wisdom in Ministry’ residentials) in November and March, which all curates attend. These take place at Launde Abbey and last between the afternoon of Friday and the afternoon on Sunday.

Training days are considered high priority (the WLA alludes to the commitment to attend them). All curates are asked to attend all of the events which are for the whole cohort each year. However, SSMS and MSEs may flex their attendance according to availability, within broad guidelines, though any who are considering transferring to full-time stipendiary ministry should consider following the options for full-time curates wherever possible. Please see below for further information.

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*Please see Part 2 of the Handbook and the website for a full diary of 2019-20 events with additional information on each training day.*

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Please note that some training days have to be booked well in advance, including any time spent at Launde Abbey or where there is a residential element. The diocese pays for these residentials and is charged full price for cancellations of 6 months’ notice or less.

## Group Training Days: Different Pathways

Potential Incumbent / full-time stipendiary. (3 years)	Potential Incumbent / Pioneer / full-time stipendiary. (Up to 5 years)	Assistant Ministers / Self-Supporting (SSM). (Up to 5 years)	Minister in Secular Employment / Self-Supporting (MSE). (Up to 5 years)
Curates on this pathway are expected to attend all group training days. If this is not possible because of illness or other personal circumstances, they will be required to show evidence of having engaged with the topic through some additional reading (recommended by the leader of each session) and including reflections on this in the portfolio. All of the training days must have been covered in some way by the end of curacy.	Full-time Pioneer curates are expected to attend all the events for the whole cohort each year and at least two other training days. They should discuss their choices with the CTO, and explain how they will ensure the material is covered in other ways (through reading, attending a similar day during another year of their curacy, or through engagement with the Pioneer Community). All of the training days must have been covered in some way by the end of curacy.	SSM curates are expected to attend all the events for the whole cohort each year and at least two other training days. May choose to attend the days by taking time off work if necessary, or by engaging with the topic through some additional reading (recommended by the leader of each session) and including reflections on this in the portfolio. Any SSM thinking of transferring to Potential Incumbent must attend all of the training days.	MSE curates are expected to attend all the events for the whole cohort each year and at least two other training days. Many choose either to attend the days by taking time off work if necessary, or by engaging with the topic through some additional reading (recommended by the leader of each session) and including reflections on this in the portfolio



## Portfolios

During each year of curacy the curate will put together a portfolio of experiences, events, and reflections. It will be assessed by one of the team of Portfolio Assessors.

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*TIP: start your portfolio early*

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Primarily, it is meant to help capture and reflect on what has been done and learned over the year, and how the experience of ministry is shaping vocation, character, and relationships.

As such, the portfolio, which is incrementally put together with one year building on another, will hopefully remain 'live' and provide continued insight and offer a record of formation and growth. The hope is that, if put together in the spirit of attending to learning and growth, the portfolio will be experienced as a helpful process, contributing to laying solid and thoughtful foundations for ministry, and developing a habit of reflective learning and practice.

Each year, the portfolio will contain a substantial piece of written work (of around 2000 words), several written reports / reflections on ministerial experiences, some written reports, and other elements. Curates are encouraged to show their portfolios to their TIs or at least to discuss the various elements with them. This can be a very useful process of reflection and learning. If a choice is made not to share the portfolio, or certain elements of it with the TI, this should be indicated for the benefit of the Portfolio Assessors.

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*Please see the Review Process, outlined below, for the contents required in each year's Portfolio. Part 2 of the Handbook contains a suggested framework for cross-referencing with the National Formation Criteria.*

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The PAs (who will usually remain the same for a curate so that the trajectory of the curacy can be followed) will be looking for how the different criteria for assessment have been met. So that this is as clear as possible, it is important that the portfolio records how the contents relate to the National Formation Criteria. Please see Part 2 of the Handbook for a suggested template for cross-referencing the content.

The Portfolio will *not* be given a mark by the PA, but the Assessor will write a brief report and will make some helpful comments about the Portfolio, identifying strengths and gaps, which can hopefully contribute to the overall learning. As with any stage of the curate training process, if anything arises in the Portfolio which causes concern or clearly needs particular attention, the PA will be in touch with the CTO so that any necessary support or guidance can be provided.

The Portfolio will also contribute to the overall review and assessment process (see below) and so will help inform the Bishops' discernment about the curate's development.

## ‘Wisdom in Ministry’ - Reflective Practice Residentials

Twice a year the whole cohort of curates has an opportunity to meet residentially for 48 hours at Launde Abbey, in the autumn and again in the spring, usually from a Friday afternoon to a Sunday afternoon.

The primary purpose of these residentials is to provide a safe, confidential environment in which curates (in small groups and with a facilitator) can engage with their experience of ministry and share in theological reflection away from the parish context. These residentials are also great opportunities to gather together, relax socially, and get to know present and future colleagues.

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*More information is sent out about Wisdom in Ministry Residentials closer to the events, including the timetable and whether curates will be invited to offer to lead worship.*

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For some, the process of theological reflection will be relatively new at the beginning of curacy. The hope is that, as with the portfolios, these residentials help to bed-in habits of reflecting on practice. For others beginning curacy,

theological reflection will already be natural and well-practised, and we hope that those for whom this is the case will contribute from their experience as much as receive the insights of others.

## Quiet Day

Each year curates usually meet together for a Quiet Day. This may be led by one of the Bishops or other experienced diocesan clergy. The aim is that as part of the process of formation, curates should make retreat together as a group, reflecting on their individual ministries within the context of a shared commitment to the diocese. We are hoping that a Quiet Day might be possible some time in 2025.

## Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

It is a requirement that all clergy participate regularly in the area of Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults. It has become mandatory for curates to take part in C1 and C2 training (or the combined C3 training) before leaving theological college. If for some reason this has not happened, they are required to attend one of the diocesan training days. For further information about the diocesan safeguarding policies and training, please see the Peterborough Diocese Website.

<https://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding>.

# Review and Assessment

## The Review Process: Informal and formal assessment

Assessment is a natural and fairly constant part of any curacy. This is hopefully a source of affirmation as well as challenge as, week by week, new experiences help to develop new skills and ministry shapes and forms character and ministerial identity. Honest feedback and transparency are essential throughout curacy to help integrate learning and formation, and discussion and input from the TI and other members of the parish can be vital in this regular, ongoing assessment.

As well as this sometimes very informal regular assessment, there is also a requirement in curacy for a regular formal assessment and review process. As noted earlier, it is the responsibility of the curate's diocese to provide a programme of training to enable the curate to 'proceed to a post which can be held permanently under common tenure either as an assistant or as incumbent status minister.' At the end of curacy, there must also be enough evidence that curates have engaged sufficiently with the training, learning, and formational opportunities offered to be prepared to move onto their next position, and the terms of Common Tenure require that curacy 'should include a formal process of assessment' to determine this.<sup>22</sup>

Each year, therefore, every curate goes through a formal review to help them, their TIs, and the Bishops, have a clear picture of their development, especially at key points in the curacy such as preparation for ordination as a priest at the end of the first year, and towards the end of curacy.

## Criteria for Assessment

The National Formation Criteria used during the review process are:

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*The full version of the National Formation Criteria, with an explanation of its elements, is to be found in Part 2.*

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- A. Christian Faith, Tradition and Life
- B. Mission, Evangelism, and Discipleship
- C. Spirituality and Worship
- D. Relationships
- E. Personality and Character
- F. Leadership, Collaboration, and Community
- G. Vocation and Ministry within the Church of England
- H. (Pioneer Ministry, where a curate is an ordained Pioneer).

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<sup>22</sup> Ministry Division Code of Procedure: Reports on sponsored candidates, arrangements for first appointments and assessment at the end of curacy, section D. [https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/code\\_of\\_procedure.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/code_of_procedure.pdf). For further information on Common Tenure, see <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/common-tenure-faqs>

The document *Formation Criteria With Mapped Selection Criteria For Ordained Ministry In The Church Of England*, December 2014,<sup>23</sup> stresses that each of these Formation Criteria are made up of ‘dispositions’, ‘understanding’, and ‘skills.’ Each is ‘disposition-led’, which emphasises that character is the vital underpinning element of all Criteria, and is inseparable from understanding and skills:

*Formation Criteria With Mapped Selection Criteria For Ordained Ministry In The Church Of England* describes them in this way:

- **Dispositions:** Related to formational learning and character development. They represent the most important criteria: Knowledge, understanding, and skills are secondary to Christ-like character.
- **Understanding:** Related in subject matter to the dispositions, but are not an elaboration of them. They are aspirational in that knowledge and understanding is never complete: Ordinands and priests will gain greater depth and breadth of understanding as they continue to pursue and reflect on lifelong learning.
- **Skills:** Again, related to the first two categories, but not an elaboration of them. While skills and abilities reflect competence, they too are aspirational: Greater fluency will be achieved over time through the experience of exercising ordained ministry in a reflective mode

## Formal Assessment: The Annual Review Process

At the beginning of each review process, the CTO will be in touch with curates, TIs, Reviewers (Assistant Curate Training Officers), and Portfolio Assessors with information about the process. For curates in their first year, the review can seem very formal. However, the hope is always that through this process, entered into with humility and honesty, they will find their gifts, skills, and progress affirmed, as well as receiving honest appraisal of areas for development.

### Assigning a Reviewer and Portfolio Assessors

Each new curate is assigned a Reviewer (the ACTO who will be present at their review meeting and will write a report) and a Portfolio Assessor who will usually be involved in each of their annual reviews.

For new OPM curates, a Reviewer with pioneering experience, or another suitable person, will act as the curate’s Reviewer for the process.

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<sup>23</sup> [https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/formation\\_criteria\\_for\\_ordained\\_ministry\\_0.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/formation_criteria_for_ordained_ministry_0.pdf)

## Overview of Dates

Below is a broad overview of the dates and scope of each annual review process. This will be followed by the specific dates for 2023-24 and information about what is required during each of the review processes, including what paperwork is required each year, the contents of the portfolio each year, and what happens before, during and after the review meetings.

- **Year 1: April - May 2024.** The first-year review process takes place towards the end of the year, as the curate is moving towards being ordained priest (unless they are a Distinctive Deacon). This is a significant process as it contributes the Bishops' discernment about the curate's preparedness for this next stage in ministry.
- **Year 2: February and March 2024.** The purpose of the second-year review is to provide an opportunity for curate and TI to assess continued progress against the training agenda set out at the end of the first year.
- **Extended 3<sup>rd</sup> Year SSMs, OPMs and 4<sup>th</sup> years:** A review may not be required during the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year for curates who fall into this category, but may be requested by any of the curates early 2024.
- **Final Year: February and March 2024.** The final year review is a significant process as it helps the Bishops' discernment about the curate's preparedness to begin the next stage of ministry, which is usually a position of greater responsibility.

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*Please see overleaf and in Part 2 of the Handbook for a detailed breakdown of dates and deadlines for 2023-24.*

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## Key Dates and Deadlines 2024

1 <sup>st</sup> Year Review Process: April - May 2024	
Email to curates, TIs, Reviewers, and PAs outlining the review process	w/b 05 February
<i>Palm Sunday - end Easter Week</i>	<i>24 March – Sat 06 April</i>
Portfolios submitted by	18 March
Lay references and portfolio assessment by	19 April
Review meetings by	Last week April/First week of May
Training incumbent reports	Within a week of the review meeting
<i>Portfolio Assessment, Lay References, WLA, Training Agenda, and pre-review notes to be with the CTO and Reviewer at latest 48 hours before the review meeting. The Incumbent's report must be with the CTO and Reviewer before the Reviewer writes the report.</i>	
Reviewers write reports	By 13 May
Reports to Bishop	By 20 May
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Review Process: February and March 2024	
Email to curates, TIs, ACTOs and PAs outlining the review process	w/b 01 January
Portfolios in by	26 January
Review meetings	Last week of February/First two weeks of March
Portfolio assessment by	21 February
<i>Portfolio Assessment, WLA, Training Agenda, and pre-review notes to be with the CTO and Reviewer at latest 48 hours before the review meeting.</i>	
Reviewers write reports	By 25 March
Reports to Bishop	By 01 April
Final Year Review Process: February and March 2024	
Email to curates, TIs, ACTOs and PAs outlining the review process	w/b 01 January
Portfolios in by	26 January
Lay references and portfolio assessment by	21 February
Review meetings	Last two weeks of February
Training incumbent reports	Within a week of the review meeting
<i>Portfolio Assessment, Lay References, WLA, Training Agenda, and pre-review notes to be with the CTO and Reviewer at latest 48 hours before the review meeting. The Incumbent's report must be with the CTO and Reviewer before the Reviewer writes the report.</i>	
Reviewers write reports	By 11 March
Reports to Bishop by	By 18 March

## The Year 1 Review Process

The end of first year review, which forms part of the discernment as to whether the Bishops will ordain the curate as priest, is an extensive process. Below is an outline of the paperwork which needs to be submitted (and by whom).

### Paperwork to be included in the Year 1 Review Process

Year 1 Review Paperwork	
Curate submits:	<a href="#">Portfolio</a> to the portfolio assessor via email by the deadline date (for information on portfolio contents, see below). <b>The portfolio should be worked on throughout the year – extensions will not be granted.</b> The TI should ensure that the curate has time to work on the essay reflection on being a deacon.
Curate and TI discuss and submit:	<a href="#">Any revisions to the WLA Training Agenda</a> Both are emailed to CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.
TI submits:	<a href="#">Pre-review notes</a> (following on from discussion with the curate) emailed to CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.  <a href="#">Report on the curate</a> emailed within a week following the review meeting, to CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a.
Portfolio assessor submits:	<a href="#">Report on the curate's portfolio</a> to the CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. The CTO will send the assessment to the curate once received.
Lay referees:	<a href="#">2 Lay References</a> : 2 lay referees are selected by the TI and the curate. Each submits a reference to the CTO and CTO's p.a., and these will be sent on to the Reviewer.
Reviewer	<a href="#">Report</a> emailed to CTO and CTO's p.a. following the review meeting with the curate and TI. The CTO will send this on to the Bishop and to the curate/TI before the curate's meeting with the Bishop.

## Contents of the Portfolio in Year 1

The contents of the portfolio will change from year to year so that a range of areas is covered throughout the whole course of the curacy. Each year the portfolio will be read by one of the portfolio assessors (usually the same assessor will accompany a curate through curacy and will have a clear picture of development and growth).

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*For more information on the portfolio, please see above: 'The Main Elements of Training in Curacy.' See also Part 2 of the Handbook for a framework for cross-referencing with the assessment categories.*

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It is important that the contents of the portfolio are cross-referenced with the National Formation Criteria, which are each shaped according to 'disposition, understanding, and skills', (see Vol 2 p14-15) to indicate how the portfolio reflects the requirements of the Criteria. This is helpful for both the portfolio assessors and the curates, as gaps which need more attention can be more easily identified.

For the first-year portfolio, the contents required are:

1. **Brief reflections on significant events or learning experiences.** This may include a pastoral encounter; reflections on preparation for a sermon; a bible study; or any other situation.
  - Reflections should include a brief description of the issue/subject; the curate's response (related to 'disposition'); what has been learnt, and any appropriate theological reflection (related to 'understanding'); and any application coming out of the reflection (related to 'skills').
  - One reflection should be on an aspect of leadership, either on the subject of the training day for that year, or covering a different area.
  - Each reflection should be 300-500 words.

Full-time stipendiary curates:	to include 6 reflections
Full-time stipendiary OPM curates:	to include 4 reflections
Assistant / SSM curates:	to include 3 reflections
MSE curates:	to include 3 reflections

2. **Emails and messages from parishioners or others.** Messages and notes commenting on the role of the curate in any situation are a helpful source of affirmation, learning, and reflection, and help to build up a picture of developing relational and practical skills. Feel free to include complimentary notes, or any offering constructive criticism.

If you are in a context where it is not common practice to send written notes and messages, please refer to conversations with parishioners and others which have been discussed with your TI. MSEs who are exercising their ministry in the workplace,



and SSMs who are in other employment or context, are welcome to draw on notes and emails from those contexts.

3. [A log of books read](#). The log may include books of any genre, audio books, or study days attended, but must include:
  - Brief reflective comments to indicate any learning;
  - An indication of how/whether the books relate to the Formation Criteria.
4. [Entries from a supervision journal](#). This will include at least 4 entries from a journal of supervision, reflecting on key areas of learning, on what has been helpful in supervision and how they might make more of their supervision (or ways in which supervision could be otherwise improved).
5. [A diary of curate training days attended](#) and reflections on **2 of the days attended** (of 300-500 words each). These should indicate how the learning might be translated into the curate's context. **Please note:**
  - One of these should be on 'Working with Children and Young People'.
  - Any full-time stipendiary curate who was given permission to not attend a day, or an SSM/HfD curate who could not attend, should include details of relevant resources which have helped engage with the theme of the day.
6. [An essay](#). Curates will be expected to write an essay of no more than 2500 words on 'A theological reflection on your experience of ministry as a deacon'. The hope is that this will provide curates with the opportunity to continue to engage with the theology of diaconal ministry and to reflect on how their expectations of being a deacon have been affected in the light of experience. The TI should help with suggesting reading material that might help with this assignment. MSEs are invited particularly to reflect on how their ministry is being shaped by the workplace, and how their context is contributing to their understanding of diaconal ministry.

### [Additional Information for MSEs and OPMs](#)

OPM and MSE curates are encouraged to shape their reflections around their ministerial context. MSEs may find that the workplace is as significant as the parish in providing sources of reflection and insight which can be included in their portfolios.

MSEs and OPMs may also wish to include references to resources on which they are drawing to help frame and form their particular ministerial pathways, including connections with Pioneer and MSE networks.

## The Year 1 Review Meeting: Before, during, and after

At the heart of the formal review and assessment process is the review meeting, in which the curate, their TI, and Reviewer (also known as Assistant Curate Training Officer) meet together to discuss the past year and look forward to the next year.

### Before the First Year Review Meeting.

Before the review meeting, the curate and TI meet together for a 'pre-review' discussion. This will cover a number of areas, and will produce some material which needs to be sent to the Reviewer before the review meeting:

1. **Reflection on the experience, learning and development of the curate:** This is a shared discussion between curate and TI, and is likely to include a reflection on the portfolio, on how supervision is going, on training (in the parish, in other contexts, or through further education and learning) and on experience of ministry in general (in the parish or in other contexts).

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*The bullet points for the National Formation Criteria are above and a more detailed version will be found in Part 2 of the Handbook.*

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It will also include a detailed discussion of the curate's learning and development based on the National Formation Criteria. These notes are to be sent to the Reviewer, copied to the CTO and CTO's p.a., no later than 48 hours before the review meeting as they will form part of the discussion.

2. **A review of the Working and Learning Agreement** noting what, if anything has changed. This is to be sent by the TI to CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.
3. **The Training Agenda** for the coming year, which is sent by the TI to the CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.
4. **The Mission Project** which is due to be undertaken in Year 2. The portfolio should include a reflective report on the development of the mission project. All curates are welcome to seek support and advice for their work on the mission project from The Director of Mission, The Revd Canon Charlie Nobbs. This is to be sent by the TI to the CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.

The hope is that any documents sent in advance of the review meeting have been shared and agreed between the curate and the TI. Where comments are sent separately, it may be that this is pointing to a difficulty in the curacy / relationship. We are aware that it is sometimes difficult to discuss some things unless a third party is

present. If this is the case, you are encouraged to make this clear when sending information through, and to bring any concerns to the CTO, so that any difficulties are made clear before the review meeting and that they can then be discussed openly in the meeting.

### During the First Year Review Meeting

The review meeting includes the curate, TI, and Reviewer and usually lasts from 90 mins to 2 hours so that there is plenty of time for discussion.

The meeting is intended to be an affirming process for the curate, highlighting gifts and strengths and exploring areas which have not yet been attended to, or which need further attention. This is also an opportunity to discuss how the TI might be able to help in this process, and discuss the relationship between the curate and the TI.

The framework for discussion of the curate's development will be the National Formation Criteria, drawing on the pre-review notes submitted by curate and TI. Any specific issues which need to be addressed will be carefully noted, along with ways forward to address them. If there are disagreements about ways forward, this will need to be noted and will require further work.

The training agenda (drafted by the TI and curate in the pre-review meeting) is agreed and during the first year review meeting a discussion will be had about the expected second year mission project.

### After the First Year Review Meeting

On the basis of the review meeting (and also referring to the PA, references, and TI's report), the Reviewer will write a report for the Bishops, commenting on whether the curate is meeting the Formation Criteria, and recommending whether or not the curate is ready to be ordained priest. The report will be shared with the TI and curate prior to the curate's meeting with the Bishop.

The TI will write a report on their curate, also based on National Formation Criteria, and indicating whether or not they think the curate is ready to be ordained priest. The report should be shared with the curate and should not include anything that was not raised in the review meeting. The TI's report will be sent to the Reviewer, the CTO, and the CTO's p.a., and the CTO will forward it to the Bishop. If the TI considers that something needs to be communicated confidentially to the CTO, this must be done separately, with an explanation as to why it was thought necessary.

After the review, the curate will be invited to give feedback on their relationship with the TI and the parish. This is not part of the assessment, but an opportunity for

reflection. It is hoped that this will not throw up anything which has not already been discussed openly.

### Meeting the Bishop

After all the paperwork and meetings have been completed, and having received a copy of the reports, the Bishop will meet with each curate to confirm whether or not they are ready to be ordained priest. Ordination to priesthood is not to be regarded as an automatic step at this stage. The Bishop takes seriously everything which emerges from the review process, and the level of commitment shown by each curate to their training in all its forms, and pays particular attention to the ongoing formation of the character, disposition, and the capacity to form relationships of integrity in the parish and other contexts.

## The Year 2 Review Process

During the Year 2 review process, there is no requirement for the TI to produce a separate report, and no requirement for lay references (unless, for specific reasons, this is considered necessary).

### Paperwork to be included in the Year 2 Review Process

Year 2 Review Paperwork	
Curate submits:	<a href="#">Portfolio</a> to the portfolio assessor via email by the deadline date (for information on portfolio contents, see below). <b>The portfolio should be worked on throughout the year – extensions will not be granted.</b> The TI should ensure that the curate has time to work on the essay reflection on the Year 2 Mission project.
Curate and TI discuss and submit:	<a href="#">Any revisions to the WLA Training Agenda</a> Both are emailed to CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.
TI submits:	<a href="#">Pre-review notes (following on from discussion with the curate)</a> emailed to CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.
Portfolio assessor submits:	<a href="#">Report on the curate's portfolio</a> to the CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. The CTO will send the assessment to the curate once received.
Reviewer	<a href="#">Report emailed to CTO and CTO's PA following the review meeting with the curate and TI.</a> The CTO will send this on to the Bishop and to the curate/TI.
Pioneering and New Initiatives TO	<a href="#">Pioneer curates only:</a> A report will be submitted to the CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. by the Pioneering and New Initiatives Training Officer following an assessment meeting between the curate and the officer.

## Contents of the Portfolio in Year 2

As far as possible, the same PA will assess the same curate's portfolio in the second year as in the first year. And once again, the work of the PA is made much easier by careful cross-referencing of the contents of the portfolio with the National Formation Criteria. Cross-referencing is also helpful for you to see whether there are any gaps which need more attention.

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*For more information on the portfolio, please see above: 'The Main Elements of Training in Curacy.' See also Part 2 of the Handbook for a framework for cross-referencing with the assessment categories.*

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For the second-year portfolio, the contents required are:

1. **Brief reflections on significant events or learning experiences** as they impact on your ministry as a priest. These may be a pastoral encounter; reflections on preparation for a sermon; a bible study; or any other situation.
  - Reflections should include a brief description of the issue/subject; the curate's response (related to 'disposition'); what has been learnt and any appropriate theological reflection (related to 'understanding'); and any application coming out of the reflection (related to 'skills').
  - One reflection should be on an aspect of leadership, either on the subject of the training day for that year, or covering a different area.
  - Each reflection should be 300-500 words.

Full-time stipendiary curates:	to include 6 reflections
Full-time stipendiary OPM curates:	to include 4 reflections
Assistant / SSM curates	to include 3 reflections
MSE curates:	to include 3 reflections

2. **A log of books read.** The log may include books of any genre, audio books, or study days attended. Brief reflective comments should be added to indicate any learning.
3. **A diary of curate training days attended** and reflections on **2 days attended** (of 300-500 words each). **Please note:**
  - These should include reflections on how the learning might translate to the curate's context;
  - One of these should be on 'Working with Children and Young People': if the day takes place less than 2 weeks before the portfolio is due to be submitted, a reflection on the previous year's 'Working with Children and Young People' day may be submitted (if not already submitted), or a different day chosen.

- Any full-time stipendiary curate who was given permission to not attend a day, or an SSM/HfD curate who could not attend, should include details of relevant resources which have helped engage with the theme of the day.
4. [Sermon Assessments](#). The second year portfolio should contain reflections on 3 sermons preached during year 2 (i.e. from July 2022 until the review) including:

- Notes by the curates on their experience of preparing and delivering each sermon;
- Brief written comments provided by two lay people, including both positives and areas for improvement;
- Comments from the TI and reflections by the curate from a meeting following each sermon to consider what went well and what could be improved.

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*See Part 2 of the Handbook for sample sermon assessment sheets*

*See mission project above, under 'The Main Elements of Training in Curacy.'*

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5. [Reflection on the second year mission project](#). Curates are asked to provide a reflective report (of between 1500 and 2000 words) on the progress of their mission project. Please note that this project is not expected to be finished. The project may have had difficulties, limitations, and delays, or it may still be in its early stages. All of this may form part of the reflection, as will how the project relates to the wider life of the parish, and how it will be sustained (if appropriate) after the curate has moved on.

## **The Year 2 Review Meeting: Before, during and after**

As in the first year of curacy, during the second year there is a review meeting, in which the curate, their TI, and the Reviewer meet together to discuss the past year and look forward to the next year. Again, honesty and openness in this process is important to make the most of this formational and transformational season of ministry.

### [Before the Second Year Review Meeting](#)

Before the review meeting, the curate and TI meet together for a 'pre-review' discussion. This will cover a number of areas, and will produce some material which needs to be sent to the Reviewer before the review meeting:

1. [Reflection on the experience, learning and development of the curate](#): this is a shared discussion between curate and TI, and is likely to include a reflection on

the portfolio, on how supervision is going, on training (in the parish, in other contexts, or through further education and learning), and on experience of ministry in general (in the parish or in other contexts).

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*A detailed version of the National Formation Criteria are to be found in Part 2 of the Curate Training Handbook.*

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It will also include a detailed discussion of the curate's learning and development based on the National Formation Criteria. These notes are to be sent to the Reviewer, CTO, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting as they will form part of the discussion.

2. [A review of the Working and Learning Agreement](#) noting what, if anything has changed. This is to be sent to CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.
3. [The Training Agenda](#): Review the TA for year 2 and draft a new TA for the coming year; sent to the CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.
4. [The Mission Project](#) which is due to be undertaken in Year 2. This is to be sent to CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.
5. [Discussion of the curate/TI relationship](#). This is a helpful time also to review the curate/TI relationship and related areas, such as the strengths of the TI as a trainer and any ways in which TI may further help the curate (including supervision, reflection, feedback, planning time, time for family, etc). The outcome of this discussion will feed into the pre-review meeting notes.

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*See Mission Project above, under 'the Main Elements of Training in Curacy,' and under second-year portfolio.*

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As during the first year review, the hope is that any documents sent in advance of the review meeting have been shared and agreed between the curate and the TI. Where there are different perspectives expressed by curate and TI in the pre-review paperwork, these should be included. Where there are concerns from either curate or TI about any area of training or the curate/TI relationship, it is important that these are aired, and shared with the CTO. This means that any difficulties are made clear before the review meeting with a view to discussing them openly in the meeting.

### [During the Second Year Review Meeting](#)

The [review meeting](#) includes the curate, TI, and Reviewer and usually lasts from 90 mins to 2 hours so that there is plenty of time for discussion.



The meeting is intended to be an affirming process for the curate, highlighting gifts and strengths, noting progress from the end of first year training agenda, and exploring areas which have not yet been attended to, or which need further attention. This is also an opportunity to discuss how the TI might be able to help in this process, and discuss the relationship between the curate and the TI.

The [framework for discussion](#) of the curate's development will be the National Formation Criteria, drawing on the pre-review notes submitted by curate and TI. Any specific issues which need to be addressed will be carefully noted, along with ways forward to address them, and any resources needed. These need to be realistic, and will primarily come from the parish, benefice, deanery, or diocese. If there are disagreements about ways forward, this will need to be noted and will require further work.

The new [training agenda](#) (drafted by the TI and curate in the pre-review meeting) is agreed.

Occasionally, by the time of the second-year review, there may not be enough time to resolve a particular or issue or area for development before the final assessment (when this is in year three). It is important that this is discussed during the review meeting to find a way forward. In some cases (usually when the curate is on a three-year full-time stipendiary pathway), it may be appropriate, in discussion with the curate, the TI, and with the Bishop (who makes the final decision) to consider an extension to the curacy.

### [After the Review Meeting](#)

On the basis of the review meeting (and also referring to the PA), the Reviewer will write a report for the Bishops, commenting on whether:

- The curate is meeting the requirements / criteria;
- Three-year full-time stipendiary curates are on track for final assessment the following year;
- SSM curates who are aiming to complete their curacy after three years are on track for this, or whether they need to continue their curacy for a further one or two years. If this is the case, the report will indicate which areas need particular attention.

The CTO will send the report on to the curate and TI. If there are serious concerns or issues, these will be shared with the Bishop and the way forward will be worked at openly with all concerned, focusing on the key areas which have been outlined for development.

Based on the report, the Bishop will write to each curate confirming whether they are on track, or whether there is to be any delay to completion. If this is the case, the CTO will be in touch to discuss with the curate and TI on how best to proceed.

## Brief Notes on curates who are completing curacies in 4 to 5 years

For those who are expecting to have a curacy which lasts longer than three years, or where this becomes a recommendation during training, the requirements of the final year will be stretched over years 3 and 4.

In the third year the curate should attend all group training days and participate in the Wisdom in Ministry residentials twice a year and the annual Quiet Day.

The portfolio will need to be kept up to date with the required elements of the final year (see below) plus an additional 2-3 brief reflections. It will not, however, be handed in during the 3<sup>rd</sup> year but in year 4.

The curate will be asked to produce a training agenda during the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and a review meeting will take place if the curate, the TI, or the CTO feel it necessary. Pioneer curates will continue to have a meeting with the Director of Mission or Pioneer and New Initiatives Training Officer.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> year, curates will attend only those training days that are specifically for final year curates, as well as continuing to participate in the WiM residentials twice a year and the annual Quiet Day.

Once it has been agreed that the curate has entered the final phase of training, he/she should look to the section below headed 'The Final Year Review Process' which details the final assessment.

## The Final Year Review Process

The final year of curacy is likely to be a time of consolidation of skills, discernment as to the way ahead after curacy, and preparation for a new role. Hopefully, the curate now has a good sense of their ministerial gifts, be able to moderate weakness, and should have a good understanding of how character, disposition, and the ability to form relationships are shaping their ministry. The expectation is that, through experiences in curacy, they will have developed a good grasp of how they function as priests and leaders in God's Church, and through prayer and self-understanding will have developed the disposition and resources which will nurture their ministry and the lives of those among whom they have been placed to minister.

The final year review process plays an important role in helping you to discern the way forward. It culminates in a decision by the Bishops as to whether the curate is ready to move into a new position, which is likely to be a position of responsibility.

### Paperwork to be included in the Final Review Process

Final Year Review Paperwork	
Curate submits:	<a href="#">Portfolio</a> to the portfolio assessor via email by the deadline date (for information on portfolio contents, see below). <b>The portfolio should be worked on throughout the year – extensions will not be granted.</b> The TI should ensure that the curate has time to work on the essay reflecting on their growth and future ministry.
TI submits:	<a href="#">Pre-review notes (following on from discussion with the curate)</a> emailed to CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a. no later than 48 hours before the review meeting.  <a href="#">Report on the curate</a> emailed within a week following the review meeting, to CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a.
Portfolio assessor submits:	<a href="#">Report on the curate's portfolio to the CTO, Reviewer, and CTO's p.a.</a> The CTO will send the assessment to the curate once received.
Lay referees:	<a href="#">2 Lay References: 2 lay referees are selected by the TI and the curate.</a> Each submits a reference to the CTO and CTO's p.a., and these will be sent on to the Reviewer.
Reviewer	<a href="#">Report on the curate's progress to the Bishops</a> , following the review meeting with the curate and TI. The CTO will send this on to the Bishop and to the curate/TI. Final year OPM reports will also include input by the Director of Mission.

## Contents of the Portfolio in the Final Year

The following documents should be included in the final year portfolio, again cross-referenced to highlight the National Formation Criteria to which they refer.

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*For more information on the portfolio, please see above: 'The Main Elements of Training in Curacy.' See also Part 2 of the Handbook for a framework for cross-referencing with the National Formation Criteria.*

For the final-year portfolio, the contents required are:

1. **A reflection on personal development and future ministry.** This reflection is a substantial piece of work of around 2500 words. It is a good opportunity for the curate to reflect on ministry so far, and to take stock as they prepare for the future. In particular, it is an opportunity to reflect critically on:
  - Their growth and development since ordination as a deacon.
  - How they understand God's calling for their future ministry.

It can be presented either as:

- A journal in which the curate reflects over several entries and over the course of a few months, or;
- An essay, in the form of one coherent piece of work.

Whichever format is chosen, curates should demonstrate how they have grown and developed throughout their ministry. It is important to demonstrate insight into how their strengths are expressed in ministry, and to explore honestly and transparently areas where they have struggled, whether practically, spiritually, emotionally, or in forming and maintaining relationships.

2. **Evidence of work in the curate's less immediate context.** This will be expressed differently for different curates depending on pathway, but should include reflections, testimonials etc:
  - For **full-time stipendiary curates** this will usually mean evidence of working in the community, including reflection on supervision, ministry, and learning in this context.
  - For **full-time stipendiary OPM curates** this may mean either working in the community or, given that OPMs may regularly be working in the community, it may mean reflecting on engagement with the life of the parish in a different way, such as the integration of community and church life.
  - For **assistant / SSM curates** this may mean working in the wider community or on the integration of church life and the community.
  - For **MSE curates** this may mean evidence of working in the wider community of the parish.

3. [A log of books read](#). The log may include books of any genre, audio books, or study days attended. **Brief reflective comments should be added** to indicate any learning.
4. [A diary of curate training days attended](#) and reflections on **2 days attended** (of 300-500 words each). **Please note:**
  - These should include reflections on how the learning might translate to the curate's context.
  - One of these should be on 'Working with Children and Young People': if the day takes place less than 2 weeks before the portfolio is due to be submitted, a reflection on the previous year's 'Working with Children and Young People' day may be submitted (if not already submitted), or a different day chosen.
  - Any full-time stipendiary curate who was given permission to not attend a day, or an SSM/HfD curate who could not attend, should include details of relevant resources which have helped engage with the theme of the day.

## **The Final Year Review Meeting: Before, during and after**

The final year review meeting again includes the curate, their TI and the Reviewer. The discussion will explore the last year, and look ahead to the next stage of ministerial life.

Again, honesty and openness will be vital, not least to enable the curate to discern the way ahead with as clear a sense as possible of their gifts, areas of weakness, and what fires and inspires them in ministry. The expectation is that any documents sent in advance of the review meeting have been shared and agreed between the curate and the TI. Where there are different perspectives expressed by curate and TI in the pre-review paperwork, these should be included. Where there are concerns from either curate or TI about any aspect of the curacy, it is important that these are aired and shared with the CTO.

### [Before the Final Year Review Meeting](#)

Before the review meeting, the curate and TI meet together for a 'pre-review' discussion. This will cover a number of areas, and will produce some material which needs to be sent to the Reviewer before the review meeting and copied to the CTO and CTO's p.a.:

1. [Reflection on the experience, learning and development of the curate](#): This is a shared discussion between curate and TI, and is likely to include a discussion

of the portfolio, and to include a reflection on all elements of the curacy, including supervision, and the strengths and weaknesses of the training.

2. It will also include a [detailed discussion of the curate's learning and development](#) based on the National Formation Criteria which will provide the framework for the discussion. These notes are to be sent to the Reviewer not later than 48 hours before the review meeting as they will form part of the discussion.

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*A detailed version of the National Formation Criteria can be found in Part 2 of the Curate Training Handbook.*

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3. [A review of the WLA](#) noting what, if anything has changed and developed.

4. [The Training Agenda](#): Review the previous year's TA, including;
5. [Discussion with the TI about their strengths as a trainer](#). Time also to review the curate/TI relationship and related areas, such as the strengths of the TI as a trainer and any ways in which TI may further help the curate (including supervision, reflection, feedback, planning time, time for family, etc).

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*See Mission Project above, under 'the Main Elements of Training in Curacy,' and under second-year portfolio.*

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### [During the Final Year Review Meeting](#)

The [review meeting](#) includes the curate, TI and Reviewer, and usually lasts from 90 mins to 2 hours, so that there is plenty of time for discussion. The meeting will affirm the curate's developments in ministry, will note progress since the last review, and will highlight areas which need further attention.

The [framework for discussion](#) of the curate's development will be the National Formation Criteria and will draw on the pre-review notes submitted by curate and TI. The previous [training agenda](#) is reviewed, noting both what has been completed and what remains unfinished. Overall, any areas of ministry which have not been tackled are considered in the light of any future appointment. It might be sufficient simply to note these areas. Alternatively, suitable training might be arranged.

It is common for curates to have areas, at the end of their curacy, which need further attention. These might form part of a 'training needs assessment' which travels with them to their new post, though serious issues or substantial gaps might lead to questions about suitability for a position of responsibility. These will usually have already been addressed in training, but it may be necessary to think about the implications of remaining gaps as the end of Common Tenure approaches.

## After the Review Meeting

On the basis of the review meeting (and also referring to the PA, Lay References, and TI's report), the Reviewer will write a report for the Bishops, commenting on whether the curate will have completed their curacy satisfactorily. Areas for further training will be noted. The report will be sent to the curate and TI by the CTO before the curate's meeting with the Bishop.

The TI will write a report on their curate, also based on the National Formation Criteria, and indicating whether or not they think the curate will have completed their curacy satisfactorily. The report will be shared with the curate and should not include anything that was not raised in the review meeting. The TI's report will be sent to the Reviewer, CTO and CTO's p.a., and the CTO will forward it to the Bishop. If the TI considers that something needs to be communicated confidentially to the CTO, this must be done separately, with an explanation as to why it was thought necessary.

After the review, the curate will be invited to give feedback on their relationship with the TI and the parish. This is not part of the assessment, but an opportunity for reflection. It is hoped that this will not throw up anything which has not already been discussed openly.

## The Final Assessment

### The Decision of the Bishop

Where a curate is considered to have completed their curacy satisfactorily (they are 'signed-off')

The Bishop makes a decision as to whether the curacy has been satisfactorily completed and will write to the curate to communicate their decision (and may also request a meeting). Once this decision has been communicated, the curate will have 12 months to find a suitable new post.

- Where the curate is stipendiary (full-time three year or OPM), the primary onus for finding a new post lies with the curate, though the Bishops, the archdeacons, and the CTO may help with appointments where possible.
- Where the curate is SSM or MSE, the diocese takes prime responsibility for arranging a suitable position, in consultation with the curate.

Where a curate is considered not to have completed their curacy satisfactorily (they are not 'signed-off' as expected)

If this happens, it should not come as a surprise. The curate will have been kept informed along the way and given every opportunity to address the problems with their

TI, the CTO, and the Bishop in an effort to enable them satisfactorily to complete their curacy. However, if the final recommendation is that this has not happened, a meeting will be set up between the CTO, TI, and curate (and where necessary the Bishop) in an effort to agree an appropriate course of action for the next stage. If agreement cannot be reached and the curate remains dissatisfied, they have a right of appeal, should they choose to use it, to an experienced and qualified panel comprising a member of the Bishop's Management Group, two experienced TIs, and an external IME2 Officer from the wider region.

The panel will then be asked to consider the evidence and arrange meetings with the curate, TI, and CTO, after which they will make their recommendation to the Bishop. At this point the Bishop will weigh up all the internal and external evidence and will make a final decision.

If an appeal process is sought, this will inevitably prolong the final assessment process beyond the expected time for its completion.

## Concluding Remarks

By the time a curate completes their curacy in Peterborough Diocese, they will have experienced several years of ministry, developed and honed practical and personal skills, learned habits of reflection and, hopefully, have a deepened understanding of the importance of character, disposition, and relationships in ministry.

It is the hope of the Bishops that curates who have thrived in the diocese will continue to find a home within it, and with colleagues and fellow travellers, as they move onto the next stage of ministry.

In this new venture, as throughout curacy, they will be prayerfully accompanied and supported by those who have nurtured their ministry and will continue to support them in the years ahead.



# The Training Incumbent: Roles and Responsibilities

## Introduction

The relationship between the training incumbent and the curate is a significant part in any curate's training. Everyone who becomes a TI will have memories of how their relationship with their own training incumbent shaped their ministry, through positive learning, and through discovering how they might do things different. Taking on this responsibility is, therefore, an important step.

TIs who have worked with a number of curates will bring a wealth of experience and understanding with them and will also recognise that each new curate will bring unique experiences, different skills, gifts, and needs. New training incumbents will have been asked to take on this responsibility by the Bishop as a result of their own gifts and potential to train others in ministry. All in this role, therefore, have much to offer, and it is hoped that they will not only share their gifts with the curates, but will also share their gifts with each other and support each other as fellow TIs.

This section of the Handbook provides some general information on the role of the TI, time requirements, and support. There is also some further information on the TI/curate relationship.

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*For more information on other aspects of work of the TI, see Supervision, in the section on 'Main elements of Curate Training,' and the section on 'Review and Assessment' (above).*

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## The Role of the Training Incumbent: A brief overview

The role of the TI is a demanding one,<sup>24</sup> but so too can it be inspirational in the opportunities it provides to be part of the continued formation and learning of a new deacon/priest. It can also bring new perspectives to the TI's ministry and provide opportunities to reflect afresh on calling and on ministry in their context. It is also a complex role, in its need to play different roles for the curate, from supporter and encourager to assessor and reviewer, as well as challenging, maintaining boundaries, and sometimes offering pastoral support or the friendship of colleagues.

Maintaining this complex range of roles and holding them in tension is challenging and can call out new skills in the TI. And the difference in character and approach of different TIs will certainly mean that the precise flavour and style of each TI will be different and will need to be worked out in relation to their particular curate, and the

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<sup>24</sup> This is particularly the case in the particularly in the post-Hind Report era which has ushered in more rigorous and focused assessment during both IME1 and IME2 the use of formation criteria for IME2). Archbishops' Council, *Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church: The Hind Report*, CHP, 2003.

unique personal style and approach which they bring. Where a curate and TI are placed together, the hope is that over the 3-5 years of the curacy (depending on the curate's pathway) the TI will find their own ministry enriched and that any challenges which are faced can become sources of growth and formation.

## Selecting Training Incumbents

Selecting TIs is a process of discernment. TIs are carefully chosen by the diocese for their proven ability or for their potential to provide a thoughtful, thorough, and prayerful context for a curate. There are usually more potential TIs than there are potential curates in any given year, and TIs will be invited to consider a curate where the combination of the curate's needs (and pathway), their potential relationship with the TI, and the parish context dovetail together. This may mean that very able potential TIs may wait for a time before a curate comes to their parish or benefice.

The Ministry Division of the Church of England has established guidelines for the selection and training of TIs<sup>25</sup> which are borne in mind in this diocese. Here, the various parameters of experience, readiness to grow into the role, realistic discussion with the PCC to ensure a welcoming and appropriate context, and a transparent process of discussion with potential TIs, including an invitation to accept the role, all form part of the selection of TIs. The spiritual life of the TI, their commitment to lifelong learning and formation, and to fostering the flourishing of others, will also be borne in mind.

## Time Commitments required of the TI

A TI is required to set aside time to attend to the learning and formation of their curate. There will be one-off meetings and discussions (such as establishing the WLA at the beginning of curacy), regular meetings (such as supervision), and day to day requirements, including general conversations, and being available to reflect on an *ad hoc* basis.

Broadly, the time commitments are as follows:

1. **Working and Learning Agreement.** The TI will need to work with curate to produce a WLA within the first 2-3 months of the curate's arrival.

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<sup>25</sup> *The Appointment and Training of Training Incumbents: Guidance on Good Practice, Revised 2017.*  
[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/good\\_practice\\_in\\_the\\_appointment\\_and\\_training\\_of\\_training\\_incumbents.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/good_practice_in_the_appointment_and_training_of_training_incumbents.pdf)

2. **Regular supervision sessions with curate.** Distinct from business meetings and to include time for reflection, including intentional use of the National Formation Criteria. For stipendiary curates this should be once a week at least for the first year, and for SSMS never less than once a month.
3. **The Curate's Portfolio.** The TI will help with the curate's portfolio if this is sought. This may include giving advice, recommending reading material, helping with ideas, reflecting together, etc.
4. Training and support events at the beginning of the curacy:
  - a. **An introductory day about being a TI.**
  - b. **A visit to the curate's TEI:** To discuss with them the beginning of curacy;
  - c. **A Myers Briggs or Gilmore-Fraleigh training day,** undertaken together with curate, during years 1 and 2 of the curacy;
  - d. **Up to 2 days each year for additional training.** This may include additional training on new initiatives, supervision skills, or reflective practice.
  - e. **Twice yearly Peer Supervision:** There is a recommendation that all new TIs attend a peer supervision group twice during the first year of working with a new curate.
  - f. **Annual discussion for TI with a mentor:** To discuss how things are going and if there are any key training or development needs for the TI.
5. **Meetings and Reviews:** Working and learning agreement meeting during September of first year and review meetings between TI, curate and CTO, pre-priesting and usually once yearly after that.
6. **Written reports.** TIs will be asked for a pre-priesting and a final report, based on National Formation Criteria.
7. **Unpredictable commitments:** Time which may need to be put aside to work with difficult issues and to seek support.

All of this means that, whilst most curates will be an asset to the parish and a help to the TI (especially after priesting), they cannot be thought of as an extra pair of hands. Rather, they are in a training post and commitment to them will take up more of the TI's time.

## Training and Support for Training Incumbents

### Initial Training

Potential TIs are invited by the DDO to attend a session which provides an overview of the role and its commitments, and which explains the process through which the potential TI goes in being considered for a curacy. The fundamental principle is also outlined that a curacy is a training post, and not an opportunity for the parish to have 'another pair of hands'.

In the months leading up to the ordination of deacons, new TIs are invited to a day introducing them to the role and the Handbook. They are also invited to a day's training on supervision.

### Ongoing Support

At present, support is available for discussing specific issues, ongoing difficulties, problems in the TI/curate relationship, and issues which are arising personally for the TI as a result of the curacy, through:

- **Discussion with the CTO:** I am always available to discuss particular difficulties. Indeed, it is important to discuss significant issues with the CTO for the purposes of curate training, but it may be helpful to have a more reflective conversation by way of support. If in doubt, do make contact.
- **Experienced TIs who offer occasional supervisory conversations:** A number of experienced TIs in the diocese are available for occasional conversation to reflect on specific issues. They are:

**John Hall:** John Hall is the Rector of the Nene Crossings Benefice, comprising Irthlingborough and three smaller villages. He was ordained in 1998. He has spent all his ministry in the Peterborough Diocese working in multi-parish benefices of various make ups and styles. He has been the training incumbent for both stipendiary and non-stipendiary curates. He is also the Diocesan Warden of Readers, a Vocations Adviser, and a recently appointed as a BAP Vocations Adviser. He has been a single parent widower for a number of years, before remarrying in 2016. Theologically he would be considered a Modern Catholic.  
[canon.johnhall@gmail.com](mailto:canon.johnhall@gmail.com)

**Brian Withington:** Brian has a background in training having been Head of Training and Development in the London Probation Service. Ordained 1997, he has been training incumbent to five curates, including one married couple and one home

grown curate who began as an SSM and became stipendiary during curacy. He says that being a TI is a significant responsibility and can be both challenging but also hugely rewarding. He has been grateful for the confidential support of other TIs at various times and looks forward to being able to support others in a similar way. [rectornv7@uwclub.net](mailto:rectornv7@uwclub.net).

**Ann Slater:** Ann was ordained in 1995 and served as curate at St Benedict's Northampton. She had responsibility for Welton and Ashby St Ledgers in the Daventry team, then moved to Heyford, Flore, Brockhall and Stowe, where she trained a curate. Ann was a member of the Diocesan Board of Education for many years, serving as Chair of the School Support Committee, and was Rural Dean of Daventry for five years. Since retiring in 2014 she has been a Bishop's adviser for aspiring ordinands and is an Assistant Curate Training Officer [annslater34@gmail.com](mailto:annslater34@gmail.com).

**Judy Evans:** Judy is the Vicar of St Alban the Martyr in Northampton and Assistant Rural Dean of the Greater Northampton Deanery. She describes herself as an 'empathetic, mission-minded catholic priest with a good sense of humour!' She was a curate in Crayford, an outer suburb of London, and moved to be Vicar of Kells in Whitehaven, Cumbria, and half time Chaplain of Whitehaven Hospital. Prior to ordination, Judy was a nurse and has also worked in schools with children with special needs. She has experience of life with its ups and downs and is a great listener. [revdjudyevans@btinternet.com](mailto:revdjudyevans@btinternet.com)

**David Ridgeway:** David is currently the Rector of the Castor benefice where he has served as incumbent since November 2015. Prior to this, he was in St Alban's Diocese. Following his ordination in 1987 he served as a curate in two different parishes and was lucky to be trained by two experienced and effective training incumbents, who provided a good role model for curate training. He then served as incumbent of two other parishes before moving to Peterborough including, most recently, as vicar of St Stephen's parish in St Alban's city where he was incumbent for fifteen years, for ten of which he was also Rural Dean. He helped to train four curates in this parish and also played a minor role in curate training in the diocese. [rector.castor@btconnect.com](mailto:rector.castor@btconnect.com)

**Christopher Armstrong:** Chris was ordained in 1975 in the Diocese of Canterbury but has spent most of his ministry in the North of England: university chaplain in Durham, DDO in York, incumbent in Scarborough and Dean of Blackburn. Taking semi-retirement in 2016, Christopher worked in the Welland-Fosse Benefice in the Diocese of Peterborough before retiring finally to Stamford in 2022. After a very happy initial curacy in Kent, colour has been added to his ministry by encouraging and selecting ordinands, training 7 curates and overseeing many parish

placements. His style is 'modern catholic' and he would be happy to support anyone engaged in IME2. [armstrong.chris73@gmail.com](mailto:armstrong.chris73@gmail.com)"

## Additional Training / Support for TIs

Further support can be offered to help in building skills, providing a space for reflection and accountability. TIs can access:

a. **Up to 2 days each year for additional training.**

This may include **additional training on new initiatives**, supervision skills or reflective practice. This may be two individual days, or a 2 day residential;

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*More information will come out about these during the year.*

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b. **Twice yearly peer supervision.** If desired, a peer support group can be set up for TIs.

c. **Discussions for TI with a mentor.** Mentors can be provided to discuss the TI's progress and learning, and to find out if there are any key training or development needs for the TI.

## The Curate / TI Relationship

It seems to me that the relationship between vicar and curate is second in importance after the relationship with one's spouse (if married, that is). At least, it feels like that at the time. It is close, intimate, vibrant, dynamic and fragile.<sup>26</sup>

If this assessment of the curate/TI relationship seems startling, it certainly expresses its richness and significance, not only for the individuals and parishes involved, but also for the whole Church in which curates are being prepared for ministry. Where the relationship is a positive one, in which honest discussion and reflection are possible, and where difficulties can be aired and negotiated, the curacy is likely to be fruitful and to be a context of profound learning and formation.

There are various ways of expressing this. One way, is to think in terms of 'Respect' and 'Role modelling'.<sup>27</sup> Whilst these are obvious, finding ways of reminding ourselves of them may be important.

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<sup>26</sup> Alan Howe in Jonathon Ross-McNairn, *Being a Curate: Stories of what it's really like* (p. 103). SPCK. Kindle Edition.

<sup>27</sup> Alan Howe in Ross-McNairn, pp105-110.

## Respect

Whilst there is inevitably a power dynamic in the TI/curate relationship, mutual respect is likely to be expressed in a combination of acceptance, affirmation, willingness to confront difficulties, appropriate accountability, challenge, forgiveness, and loyalty.

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*For more information on different aspects of work of the TI, please see the Training Incumbent Section in 'Main elements of Curate Training' (above).*

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For the TI, a willingness to facilitate the curate's ministerial identity and approach, a recognition of life experience before curacy, balanced with an understanding of the curate's specific learning and formational needs in the parish, may also reflect a respectful acknowledgement of the role and trajectory of the curate.

For the curate, respect may be apparent in, for example, a preparedness to work with the authority of the TI, accept the role of the parish in shaping their ministry, and a willingness to engage in negotiation with the TI.

## Role modelling

It is very scary to think that the curate watches very closely how I pray, the words I use and the passion involved.<sup>28</sup>

As the curate is learning the practice of ordained ministry 'from the inside' it is inevitable that the TI will be a role-model. The TI's style of preaching, presiding, prayer, the tenor of relationships and ways of resolving conflict, will all be sources of scrutiny, learning, and shared reflection.

Being a role-model is likely to extend to other areas too. Time management, personal refreshment, and respect of family needs may also be sources of learning, as will the attitude of the TI to the wider Church and relationship with its authority structures.

Some of the challenges may come as the curate discerns what they wish to preserve from the style and approach of their role-model (and the style and tradition of the parish) and what will not serve them in the future. This may need careful reflection as the curacy progresses.

## The Curate / TI Relationship: A note on the WLA and Supervision

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<sup>28</sup> Ross-McNairn, 110.

Some of the challenges and expectations around the TI/curate relationship are be discussed and outlined in the working and learning agreement, which provides an opportunity for both curate and TI to articulate their hopes and expectations of the working relationship.

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*For more on the WLA see above under 'Curacy: an Overview.' You will find a copy of the standard WLA in Part 2 of the Handbook and on the website.*

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These will be aired during the initial working and learning agreement meeting which takes place by the end of the first September/October of the curacy, and involves the TI, the curate and the CTO. The

WLA needs to take into account the curate's pathway (and hence time offered within the parish), family circumstances, and personal needs as well as the needs and requirements of training and formation. The WLA may be revised subsequently if necessary, if new circumstances arise or if the parameters of the original WLA need to be tweaked to become workable.

## Concluding Comments

Whilst the curate is the obvious 'student' in the curacy, it is hoped that a curacy is a fruitful time for TI and curate alike, and that both will grow and learn about themselves and ministry. And just as curates are encouraged by their TI to see mistakes in curacy as times of focused learning, so too are TIs encouraged to see their mistakes in their training and supervision of others as times to learn; and curates are encouraged to understand mistakes made by their TI in this spirit.



## Resources

A number of resources are available for exploring supervision and curacy. Below is a brief selection:

Ross-McNair, Jonathon. *Being a Curate: Stories of what it's really like*. SPCK. Kindle Edition (2014).

K. Lamdin and D. Tilley. *Supporting New Ministers in The Local Church*. London: SPCK (2007).

J. Harrison and R. Innes. *Clergy in a Complex Age: Responses to the Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy*. London: SPCK (2016).

R. Simpson. *Supervising a Curate: A Short Guide to a Complex Task*. Cambridge: Grove Booklets (2011).

*The Appointment and Training of Training Incumbents: Guidance on Good Practice*. Revised 2017. [https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/good\\_practice\\_in\\_the\\_appointment\\_and\\_training\\_of\\_training\\_incumbents.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/good_practice_in_the_appointment_and_training_of_training_incumbents.pdf)

There are specific resources available to UK Minority Ethnic (UKME) curates:

The UKME Champions in Peterborough Diocese are:

Precious Luke [precious.luke@emmanuelgroup.org.uk](mailto:precious.luke@emmanuelgroup.org.uk) 0794 1124159

Revd Jun Kim [prayandwork@gmail.com](mailto:prayandwork@gmail.com) 01604 621265

CEMEAC <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/views/race-and-ethnicity>

The Ordained Vocations Mentor Directory <https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/vocations/mentor-directory>

Anglican Minority Ethnic Network (AMEN) <https://www.amenanglican.org.uk>

And for those with disabilities or specific learning difficulties:

Access to Work Funding <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

Church of England website <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/barrier-free-belonging>

Go-Sign! <https://www.gosign.org.uk>

The Torch Trust <https://web.torchtrust.org.uk/>

Through the Roof <https://throughtheroof.org>  
Churches for All <https://churchesforall.org.uk>

## **Information**

For all queries relating to the programme of Curate Training Events (days and Wisdom in Ministry), please contact:

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[morna.simpson@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:morna.simpson@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)  
01604 887000

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[Chrys.Tremththanmor@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:Chrys.Tremththanmor@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)  
01604 902051

<https://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/events-training/training/training-noshow/curates.php>