Curacy Framework and Post Ordination Training (POT / IME2)

Information for curates and training incumbents
Post Ordination Training (POT) or Initial Ministerial Education (IME2)

The terms are used interchangeably, as most dioceses now refer to the period of training following ordination as IME2. However, the term ‘Post Ordination Training (POT)’ continues to be used in London Diocese for philosophical reasons. When the change to ‘Initial Ministerial Education’ was made nationally, it was noted that there was actually a shift of focus from Education to Training when moving into curacy, the whole being seen in the context of life-long formation. It was decided at the time, therefore, to stay with the traditional terminology locally, whilst acknowledging the wider context.

Revised May 2021
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From the Director of Ministry  
To our new Curates

Welcome to Ordained Ministry in the Diocese of London! I very much hope you will enjoy ministering in this great city and gain a huge amount of experience. We take post ordination training (POT / IME2) very seriously and aim to make every effort to offer appropriate support and development opportunities as you begin ordained life.

I hope that this framework will be a useful reference guide over the next three years. Post ordination training takes place primarily in your local parish; your Training incumbent and parish is your most important trainer. However, you will also be part of an Area POT group under the direction of your area director of POT. POT groups meet on a regular basis (approximately monthly) and you and your training incumbent will receive these dates in plenty of time for the year ahead. POT group meetings take precedence over any parish activity and should be treated as an absolute priority.

Additionally, there are a number of diocesan induction events which you will be expected to attend; these are also of high priority. Once every three years (i.e. once during your curacy) there is a diocesan residential conference for all curates in their first three years (around 100 curates); the next one takes place 17th – 19th January 2023. You may also take part in a wide range of other continuing ministerial development (CMD) opportunities offered at both area and diocesan level.

Throughout your curacy those responsible for your training and formation will endeavour to ensure that you receive a good, all round, training in practical ministry in the Church of England. However, it is not possible to offer every experience in every parish! Please do discuss with your POT director or training incumbent further ways in which you may like to develop or opportunities you may like to experience. Ultimately curacy is not a box-ticking exercise but an opportunity through training, education, formation and practical experience to develop as a deacon / priest / minister in the Church of God.

Every blessing on your journey.

To our Training Incumbents

A huge thank you for taking on this extremely important role in the diocese. Whether this is the first time you have acted as a training incumbents or you’re an old hand, you will know how seriously the London College of Bishops take this ministry and the care entrusted to you.

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(Yr 1 report for Distinctive Dns)                                                                        | Incumbent & POT Director                       | Area  |
| April      | Pre-Priesting Interview                                                                       | Bishop                                        | Area  |
| Year 1     |                                                                                             |                                                |       |
| Petertide  | Ordination to the Priesthood                                                                | Area                                          | Area  |
| Jan/Feb    | 18 Month Review Review & Revise Training Plan and Learning Agreement                         | POT Director with Incumbent and Curate. Report & Revised | Area  |
| Ad lib     | Engaging with Difference Interfaith Awareness                                               | These two Diocesan Courses must be completed before the end of Year 2 | Diocesan |
| Ad lib     | Ministerial Development Review                                                               | Area Scheme                                   | Area  |
| Year 3     |                                                                                             |                                                |       |
| Sept       | Begin to consider what next  
(Your Next Move; etc)                                                                               | Area / Diocesan                               |       |
| By Palm Sunday | End of Curacy Report  
(with list of Evaluations completed / incomplete)                                                                             | Incumbent and POT Director                     | Area  |
| March / April | Final interview with Bishop                                                                    |                                               | Area  |
| Post-Easter| Earliest time to move                                                                         | Incumbent, POT Director and Bishop must agree  |       |
| 30 June    | End of Curacy                                                                               |                                               |       |
| Throughout Curacy | Mandatory Attendance at POT  
POT Triennal Residential Conference (once during curacy)                                         | Area                                          |       |
|            | Annual Diocesan POT Event                                                                     | Diocesan                                      |       |
|            | Stay up to date with Theological Reflection                                                  | Area                                          |       |
The Role of the Training Incumbent

The placing of deacons in their first post is based upon their need for ministerial formation, and value to the parish in terms of an additional member of staff is very much a secondary consideration. In choosing clergy (usually incumbents) to be training incumbents, bishops and their staff will be looking for someone who:

- has a vision for the mission of the church in the parish which involves the development of lay ministry;
- is a person of prayer who can inspire others to pray;
- is a good listener and enabler;
- is able to act as guide, adviser and consultant rather than benevolent dictator or efficient delegator;
- is possessed of a mature degree of self-awareness and understanding of his/her own strengths and weaknesses in ministry;
- has a secure but not rigid faith and spirituality that can be shared with a colleague who will not necessarily have the same views or traditions;
- is theologically acute enough to be able to help the assistant in the process of integrating theological study with ministerial experience;
- is prepared to take into consideration a curate’s experience in terms of previous employment and responsibilities;
- is able to share ministry with a colleague, including sharing difficulties as well as successes;
- is capable of allowing an assistant to develop in ways different from him/herself;
- is still prepared to learn, and particularly to undertake in-service training;
- will give priority to attending training and meetings provided for training incumbents;
- has, or is willing to acquire an understanding of learning styles and cycles in adult learning, and of psychological make-up and personality;
- is able effectively to mobilise resources for training the assistant over a three-year period and prepared to allow others to be involved in that training;
- is willing and has the time to devote to regular training, supervision and reflection sessions with the assistant, distinct from staff meetings and informal contact;
- will develop a pattern of staff meetings, supervision meetings, prayer and worship which is mutually convenient for the incumbent and the curate;
- is aware of the importance of the diocesan POT programme and will ensure that the curate gives it priority;
- will be committed to staying in the parish for at least the diaconal year of the assistant, and expects to be there for the greater part of the training period;
- has good working relations with fellow clergy, lay leaders and officers in the parish, and those outside the church.

The role of the training incumbent is complex and demanding. It calls for gifts of sensitivity and generosity and the skill to identify and foster all the gifts and interests that their colleague brings. At the same time there is a need to encourage the curate not to specialise too early. Both incumbent and curate should be able to look beyond the needs of the immediate situation to the development of the curate’s ministry throughout life. It is within the parish context that the curate really learns the skills of ordained ministry and will develop a style of ministry. The taking of services and the celebration of the occasional offices are obvious examples of this. Similarly, learning professional courtesies involved in visiting and working with others is developed. However, the curacy time is not simply about the acquisition of skills; rather, it is essential that the process of theological reflection, begun in pre-ordination course or college, is continued and developed in the interactions between practice, prayer, conversation in supervision, and continued theological study. This is integral to formation in the ordained life. Agreement to become a training incumbent is, in fact, agreement to take on a significant training responsibility on behalf of the diocese and of the whole church.
Guidelines for a Role Description and Learning Agreement

Introduction
The Role Description and Learning Agreement should be drafted by training incumbent and Curate before ordination, with a final version, based on the realities that emerge once the deacon is in post, submitted to area director of POT by 30th September following ordination as a deacon.

Note: These guidelines are particularly aimed at stipendiary curates and their incumbents but should be read by SSMs and their incumbents and adapted as appropriate. Further particular guidance in the case of SSMs is given from page 10.

Mutual Expectations
The relationship between incumbent and curate is both personal and professional, and each will have expectations of the other in these areas. It is important that these mutual expectations are declared openly as early as possible in the relationship so as not to cause frustration later.

Although pastoral authority at the parish level rests with the incumbent and PCC, there is a degree to which authority is delegated to the curate. In reaction to any given task, the extent of this delegation needs to be made clear.

As has already been stated, it is vital that the boundaries of confidentiality should be discussed and respected. Experience has shown this to be a major area of potential misunderstanding. The question of loyalty also needs discussion, particularly the mechanisms whereby incumbent and curate can be “played off” against each other.

Use of Time
A common understanding of the extent of the working day and the working week needs to be reached. Agreement on this will enable assumptions to be tested before they become a problem.

It should be clearly understood that ‘one day off per week’ does not mean that the curate is expected to work continuously the other six days. Indeed, he/she should not! The pattern of the working day/week and time off should be negotiable, taking into consideration the responsibilities of a married curate to his/her family, and the fact that many single curates have family and friends who may live some distance away. In the case of the latter, one day off per week may not be particularly useful, and an alternative arrangement might have to be made. Furthermore, all curates, including those who are single, need time for shopping, cooking, and cleaning etc., which does not totally compromise their time off work. It should be remembered that for some this will be the first time they are living on their own. See Clergy Wellbeing pages on the Diocesan Website.
https://www.london.anglican.org/clergy-wellbeing/practical-steps-and-resources-for-clergy-wellbeing/

Worship
A curate needs to share in corporate prayer and worship, both with the congregation, and with the incumbent and other colleagues. The times and occasions for daily/weekly prayer together need to be clearly stated. There should be a regular opportunity to share in the design and leading of worship, and in preaching. Agreement needs to be reached regarding the frequency of preaching (not more than once every two weeks in a curate’s first year). It is also desirable that the curate’s sermons should be reviewed with the incumbent, and with other colleagues and lay people where appropriate.

Personal Growth and Development
In addition to participating in corporate prayer and worship, the curate should be encouraged to develop a
personal prayer life that can be sustained when alone. To this end the acquisition of a spiritual director/soul friend/personal consultant is deemed to be essential, as is a quiet time/retreat at least once a year. Encouragement should also be given to reading across a wide spectrum.

**Professional Development**

At the risk of stating the obvious, the bulk of Post-Ordination Training is done in the parish. As a complement to this, there are regular sessions of POT throughout the year organised on an area basis. **This programme of central training takes precedence over parochial commitments.** Incumbents should ensure that curates are able to attend. An agreement should be made whereby the curate has planned opportunities for theological study and reflection. It is suggested that at least a morning or afternoon per week should be set aside for this purpose. This study period is to be distinguished from sermon preparation.

The first three years of ministry are very ‘full-on’ with a great amount of learning, skills-development, formation and new experience taking place. A wide variety of opportunities are offered to encourage and support this both within the parish and more widely in POT and diocesan CMD. In consultation with the training incumbent and director of POT curates may consider attending other conferences, but attending external events should never be assumed.

High value is placed on life-long learning and once a three-year curacy has been completed clergy may well wish to consider formal courses of study leading to an additional qualification (e.g. diploma, degree or further degree). However, further formal study should not be undertaken during initial three-year curacy. Experience has consistently shown that there is enough going on during this period of training and that further studies will inevitably be a distraction from ministry development.

However, it will be important for curates to develop their teaching, training, equipping skills and so should be given good opportunity to take part in the parish’s ministry of teaching, education for discipleship and evangelism.

**Staff Support and Supervision**

There should be a weekly staff meeting. It is also expected that curates will attend chapter meetings, Deanery Synods and other clergy groups.

Supervision sessions between incumbent and curate should be held regularly. The diocesan officers responsible for POT are available for consultation at any time. The progress of curates, like all clergy, will be reviewed under the diocesan procedures for annual ministerial review.

Training incumbents should be aware of the dynamics which occur in close working relationships. They should understand that interactions may be on more than one level, i.e., not only intellectual, but emotional, including the dynamics of power and sexual attraction/repulsion whether with curates of the same or the opposite sex.

In addition to regular supervision sessions there should be an annual review of the curate’s work and his/her developing relationship with the incumbent, other colleagues, the congregation and the parish. The annual review also provides the opportunity for the re-setting of specific goals as they differ from year to year. The headings of the Gifts and Competencies (available in the Downloadable Resources section) is a useful measure against which to determine which areas of training and experience should figure as goals for the year ahead.
In the case of a married curate, it is essential that the incumbent devote time to the curate’s spouse and family.

**Pastoral Responsibilities**
The curate is an assistant to the incumbent, but this says little about the way in which he/she is expected to relate to the PCC and other groups within the parish, and where any specific pastoral responsibilities might lie. It is essential that these lines of responsibility be clearly drawn.

**Administration and Finance**
This is not simply a matter of knowing basic church law and the proper way to keep records, important though those matters undoubtedly are. More importantly, especially in the early days of the curacy, it concerns the ability to plan the week, to manage time and to decide on priorities, including correspondence, the use of the telephone, filing and basic office administration.

A curate’s pay is according to the national scale. Expenses items should be agreed in advance and should be reviewed annually in the Role description and Learning Agreement. It is much appreciated by curates if the PCC is willing to allow them an annual book grant.
Guidelines for SSMs (MSEs)

The nature of Self-supporting Ministry
There is a spectrum of ministry within the SSM ambit, ranging from a total commitment to working out a ministry in the workplace, to one based entirely on the home parish. Most SSMs probably find that their ministry lies somewhere between the two ends of the spectrum, and that they combine a commitment to ministry at work and in their local communities and responsibilities with certain responsibilities in the parish.

Diocesan Support
Whatever the emphasis of an SSM’s ministry, the diocese wishes to recognise, affirm and support it. The usual structure for this will be the licensing of SSMs to a particular parish. For that relationship to be fruitful, however, it is essential that the Role description and Learning Agreement between the SSM and the incumbent - with the knowledge and support of the churchwardens and the Parochial Church Council - ensures that all parties are clear about mutual expectations and about what is required of them as colleagues.

It is important that Self-Supporting Ministers of all kinds should not find themselves overburdened with expectations from too many quarters. The setting of boundaries is important, and the Agreement must set out a framework within which SSMs and their colleagues may agree upon appropriate areas of ministerial responsibility. This applies both to duties in the parish and the training expectations of the diocese. Naturally, it is hoped that the SSM curate will take the maximum advantage of the training opportunities offered at diocesan and area level, and every effort will be made to offer them at the most convenient times. Even so, it is recognised that it may simply not be possible for curates in other employment to combine full participation in Post-Ordination Training with their obligations to work, family, parish, and personal study and recreation.

Drawing up the Role Description and Learning Agreement
Ordained ministry is more than a ‘job’, and must be based on mutual understanding, interdependence and collegiality, rather than upon concepts of employment and duty. It is not possible to set out in detail what individual people should or should not do, for circumstances change and the details of any agreement will need to change with them. What matters most is that due recognition should be given, where appropriate, to the ministry of ministers in secular employment: they should not be overburdened with parochial responsibilities.

With this in mind, SSM curates and incumbents are asked, in consultation with the Bishop, to complete the elements of Role description & Learning Agreement and Training Plan on as realistic a basis as possible, and to recognise that in the nature of the case re-negotiation, possibly within the year, may prove necessary.

Appointment and Deployment of SSMs
The initial Role Description and Learning Agreement for a Title Post drawn up between training incumbent and curate, and as ratified by the Bishop should state clearly the duration of the appointment. At the end of this period the appointment will be reviewed by all three parties with a view to its renewal or the redeployment of the SSM to another parish.

In the event of a vacancy in the parish or the incumbent’s absence, departure or death, the Churchwardens have legal responsibility for the running of the parish. In such a situation an SSM would continue to exercise his/her professional duties in consultation with them and any other ministerial colleagues. (For more information, see The Curate during a Vacancy, page 22)
The Role of the Parish in Training

The following Guidelines for Parishes Receiving a Curate should be considered by the PCC in advance of the arrival of a curate

Introduction
The three years following ordination are a crucial time in a person’s life and ministry. The parishes to which curates are licensed share with the incumbent in the great privilege of helping someone in their formation and development. These guidelines seek to ensure that a parish’s expectations are in line with those of the bishops of the diocese, and the Church of England’s ministry division, and indeed with the incumbent and curate themselves.

Expectations
A person’s initial training is not completed at the time of ordination. Rather, the full period of initial training is now viewed as running from the time of entry into college or course until the completion of the curacy. At the end of the curacy all should be competent to continue in responsible priestly ministry. Many will progress to incumbency or equivalent responsibility posts, while others will continue to develop a priestly ministry in the workplace, with part-time parochial involvement. To that end, there is a clear expectation that personal growth, development and learning continue through the curacy time.

A parish and its PCC must therefore recognise that they are not being given a curate merely as an extra pair of hands to assist a busy incumbent. Rather they have been identified as a parish with a suitable training incumbent who will enable training and ministerial formation to continue. In fact, having a curate will, certainly initially, entail the incumbent making a significant extra time commitment to working with his/her curate in supervision meetings and other aspects of training.

Criteria
The parish will have been identified as a suitable parish for a curate because:

- It can offer a suitably wide range of ministerial opportunities;
- It will seek to help the curate in (a) the role transition from lay to ordained status; and (b) developing ministerial competence;
- It is willing to grant the curate, ungrudgingly, the time to take a full part in POT;
- It is willing to pay the curate’s working expenses.

POT
Training is essentially organised in each episcopal area with some diocesan study days and a triennial diocesan residential conference. Programmes are likely to include eight to ten days each year, and an annual residential weekend. A monthly evening programme is provided for those who hold full-time secular jobs. This is all in addition to other such training and study that a curate may undertake.

POT is a priority for curates. Parishes must aim to avoid facing a curate with a clash between POT and parish activities; and where such a clash occurs POT takes priority.

Statement of Particulars and Role Description
All curates working under Common Tenure shall have a Statement of Particulars (SOP) and a Role Description. The SOP will address those issues which are required under the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009 and the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009.
The Role Description will reflect the nature of the curate’s ministry in terms of whether it is wholly parochial, part-time parochial, or mainly in secular employment with some limited parochial involvement; and whether or not it carries a stipend. The PCC (or its standing committee/churchwardens) will wish to see it.

The Training Plan
The purpose of the Training Plan is to enable the incumbent and curate to map out a phased programme of experiences over the title post years. For example, experience of and training in the conduct of funerals may come in the first period, while familiarity with church management and budgeting may come later on. The Training Plan allows objectives to be set for the coming year, and for these to be reviewed from time to time, and especially in an annual review which the curate and training incumbent can undertake. In preparing the Training Plan the incumbent and curate will take note of the expectations of the Church of England as set out in the Formation Criteria agreed by the House of Bishops.

As well as the incumbent, skilled members of the congregation may be able to assist the curate’s training through:

- Offering a ‘lay-eye view’ of public ministry such as evaluating preaching, leadership of worship, etc.
- Enabling the curate to understand areas of work in which lay members have special skills and involvement, for example the work of parish treasurer or children’s and young peoples’ leaders and, outside of the direct church environment, the aspects of ministry lived out in the world of secular work.
- Offering particular skills in, for example, adult learning and training and other practical fields

The PCC is encouraged to note these Guidelines and discuss their implications before a curate takes up post.
The Curate in Training

In agreeing to ordain and license a curate in the parish, the bishop expects that all curates – stipendiary or SSM – will be committed to:

- sharing in the mission of the gospel through the local parish church and deanery;
- prayerful discernment of their own and other people’s gifts, strengths and weaknesses;
- growing in self-awareness as individuals and as Christian ministers;
- an openness to appreciate the contribution of and ability to work with Christians of other traditions and people of different views from their own;
- sharing responsibility for their own learning and development;
- receiving, offering and responding to feedback from colleagues and church members;
- Diocesan and area requirements for POT;
- the policies and practice of leadership in the parish;
- working towards the desired aims and outcomes set out in this handbook.

Agreement to receive ordination and serve as a curate involves agreement to set out on a training-based ministry. During the time of the curacy it is expected that curates seek personal growth in a wide variety of areas, including:

(a) experience and confidence in the variety of specific roles of the ordained minister, including liturgical, pastoral, teaching and evangelistic roles in relation to both adults and children;
(b) competence in preaching through increasingly frequent and regular practice, with the assistance of others, including laity, in reflecting on the experience;
(c) practical experience and reflection on mission and evangelism in the local area;
(d) growing competence in the role of leader as well as community member, including the clear ability to work with others to seek the common good
(e) development of a spiritual discipline of private and shared prayer;
(f) continued systematic reading of and reflection on the Scriptures; and continued study of spirituality and theology;
(g) the ability to handle the frequently isolated role of the ordained minister and to seek out and develop appropriate support networks including cells and chapters.

Assistant clergy ordained in the diocese should remain in their first post for three years from ordination to the diaconate, or two years from ordination to the priesthood, whichever is longer. The title post licence is usually for three years, and stipendiary curates are usually expected to have moved by the end of the third year. A change from one curacy to another in the diocese during the first three years after ordination is sanctioned by the bishops only in very special circumstances.
Before the Curacy Begins
Some parts of this section will not be applicable to self-supporting curates.

Parish visit
Before the curacy begins, the candidate should be invited to visit the parish at least for a whole Sunday and ideally stay overnight. The visit should include the opportunity to see the church at worship, informal meetings with lay people, and a personal interview between the incumbent and candidate alone. It is also desirable that an opportunity should be provided for a private discussion between the candidate and his or her predecessor if there is one in post.

If the candidate is married, it is good if their spouse can accompany them for the parish visit and arrangements should be made for them to see as much as possible of the life of the church. However, neither the spouse of the curate nor that of the incumbent should take part in the formal interview. Any expectations there may be of the role of spouses of clergy should be made clear during the parish visit.

Arrangements for a visit to the curacy house should be made, and people should be available who can answer questions about schools, medical and community facilities, etc.

Moving in
Practical preparations for the curate to move into the parish will need to be made, among the most important of which concern the provision and preparation of the curate’s house. This is a sensitive area and the way it is handled by both sides can do a great deal to get the curacy off on the right foot, or to build an atmosphere of reserve or disappointment.

When the agreement has been made for the curacy to go ahead, arrangements need to be put in hand for welcoming the curate and his or her family in the parish. Particular attention is to be given to the ordinand’s spouse and family during the ordination retreat (when they may feel especially vulnerable) and to social and welcoming arrangements on the ordination day itself.

The curate’s schedule and diary
Because of the need in parishes for forward planning it is inevitable that some decisions will have to be made about the curate’s schedule some time before the ordination itself. These need to be communicated clearly and sensitively so that everyone knows where they stand. Special arrangements must be made for the support of the curate when the incumbent is away from the parish during the first year for holidays and conferences.

Curates are likely to arrive feeling tired after a pressured time at the end of their pre-ordination training and the demands of moving house, possibly family, as well as excited about the opportunities and challenges ahead. Arrangements should be made to discuss their holiday dates so that this subject can be broached without embarrassment at the start of their new job. It is expected that a newly ordained curate ordained at Peter tide will take a summer holiday.

Term of Office
A first curacy is expected to last for three years. It is subject to qualified Common Tenure under S29 (1) (c) of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009. Any such termination is subject to the provisions of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure and Regulations.

Housing provision
It is the responsibility of the PCC and archdeacon to ensure that the curate’s house is kept in good repair by the parish and is ready for the curate to move into in good time for the beginning of the curacy.
It is the responsibility of the occupant to ensure that the internal decoration is kept in good order and the PCC should make available a decorating allowance equivalent to what the diocese provides in respect of its houses.

**First Month in the Parish**
The incumbent is responsible for setting the framework within which a curate will work. Here are some suggestions for the induction process in the first month in the parish:

**Initial meeting**
There should be an introductory meeting with the incumbent setting out parish policy and the range of work expected. A Role Description should be drawn up and sent by the end of September after ordination to the bishop and the POT tutor.

**Documents File**
It is useful if documents relating to the parish’s Mission Action Plan and other policies and information (baptism, wedding, safeguarding, budget plan etc.) are given to the curate. There should be time given to study them and for questions to be asked about them.

**Timetable**
The weekly timetable should be agreed. Issues such as days off, staff meetings, times of offices and services, and other fixed points should have particular attention paid to them.

**Liturgical training**
As a newly ordained deacon, the new curate will need to be introduced to the liturgical functions s/he will be expected to perform. This will include roles at the Holy Communion and other Sunday services.

**Daily Prayer**
A rhythm of daily prayer is fundamental to the life of a parish and every Christian minister. Incumbent and curate should be committed to this, for example, in the case of those with a wholly parish focus, saying morning and evening prayer together most days of the week.

**Supervision**
Time should be made for incumbent and curate to meet formally (other than at a staff meeting) to engage in theological and personal reflection. This meeting should be used to review the development of the curate’s ministry, and to discuss particular issues as they arise. This is often used as a time of practical teaching too - how to do a baptism, celebrate the Eucharist etc.

**Church and community**
Meetings should be arranged with the churchwardens and any other staff members. Visits to key members of the congregation and leaders in the wider community should also be agreed.

**Church building**
A set of church keys should be provided for the new curate on arrival. (Many incumbents know the difficulty of finding their way around a new bunch of keys to church buildings, so it may be necessary to give some time to this!) A tour round the church buildings is also very important. This will include cupboards, the safe and other well-kept secrets!
Parish
An initial tour of the parish – with the incumbent – is strongly recommended. The aim is to familiarise the new curate with its geography, visiting residential, commercial, industrial and retail areas. Such a tour will offer the opportunity to raise and discuss important issues relating to the parish. Visits to any institutions in the parish should also be arranged. (This may be particularly useful in the case of schools before the summer break)

Administration and Professional Conduct
There needs to be understanding of how the parish registers are kept and how other parish information is recorded. Time needs to be set aside to discuss how personal records are best kept – of people, catechetical material, liturgical material, personal reading, and prayer requests.

Correspondence on behalf of the parish should be dealt with as soon as possible – letters answered promptly, bills paid immediately.

There should be agreement between the incumbent and the curate about standards of punctuality, availability, visibility (dress), loyalty and confidentiality. The booklet Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy is available online (link below) and is a booklet in which incumbents and curates may, at various times, find issues to discuss together.
https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/guidelines-professional-conduct-clergy/guidelines

Expenses - The SOP will state the policy on expenses.

Administrative support - Where there is a parish office, staffed by PA or administrator, it is important for the curate to know what his/her relationship to this person should be. For example, if the PA does administration or typing for the incumbent is it legitimate for the curate to expect this service as well? And when work peaks, who has priority of access? It is often in these detailed and mundane areas of life that pressures can surface if clear communication is not established and properly maintained.

Training Plan - A meeting between the incumbent and curate needs to be arranged to complete fully the Training Plan at the start of the curacy and again in conjunction with the 18-month review. The incumbent should send a copy of this to the area bishop and POT tutor by 30th September of year one, and in advance of the 18-month review.

Support structures - The bishop expects all clergy to establish their own support structure to nurture their spiritual and professional lives. At a minimum this will include having a spiritual director with whom they can talk in confidence about their ministry and their prayer. It is expected that a newly ordained curate will meet with someone to discuss his or her spiritual life from the outset. More information about finding a Spiritual Director can be found on the London Centre for Spiritual Direction website - www.lcsd.org.uk

Many clergy, particularly as their ministry develops, also value the opportunity to engage in professional supervision with an external supervisor, mentor, or work consultant. Participation in a clergy cell or peer group is another valuable means of support. Time given to any of the above should be seen as part of the working week, and not be seen as time off.

Concerns - It is inevitable that concerns will arise over a host of issues, large or small. Incumbent and curate should agree that there must be an openness to share and raise such concerns as soon as they arise, rather than leaving them to grow into major problems.
Chaplaincy Placement

During the second year of the curacy the curate will arrange and undertake a chaplaincy placement. The curate should discuss with their training incumbent and their POT director what chaplaincy options might be available. The purpose of this placement is to explore, in depth, an aspect of ministry which is unfamiliar, regardless of whether or not the curate intends to pursue chaplaincy. (In certain circumstances, in negotiation with the POT director, a placement other than chaplaincy may be appropriate.) The placement should be challenging and the curate should choose a type of chaplaincy that is outside their comfort zone. So, if the curate did a chaplaincy placement at college, they will need to choose a very different type for the purposes of this placement.

The placement should not just be about visiting someone in hospital or prison, but spending some serious time with the chaplain to learn more of their role. The duration of the placement should be discussed between the curate and training incumbent (and the host chaplain) but two days is probably the barest minimum to get some sense of what goes on, and will ideally be significantly longer than this; it may be a block-placement or a weekly commitment over a number of weeks. Options may include; hospital, hospice, school, university, prison, mental health, air cadets, business, armed forces chaplaincy, or other as appropriate.

Timing for the placement will vary and should be negotiated between curate, training incumbent and POT director, but should be up and running (and normally completed) by the end of the second year. Responsibility for arranging the placement rests with the curate. A short placement reflection will be completed at the end of the placement, in the same way as other theological reflections.
The Supervision Process

The relationship between incumbent and curate is the most central element in a curate’s training. It is from this relationship that the new deacon or priest will learn most and will be most influenced in the conduct of her or his ministerial life. It is also a mutual relationship: one with in which both curate and incumbent can help and support each other in their pilgrimage and ministry. When the relationship works well it is a great blessing to both. Within this, meeting together for Supervision and Reflection is an absolutely vital building block. It is important that time is made for regular, rather than haphazard reflection. Such sessions should not be confused with staff meetings and diary planning, from which they need to be quite separate.

Sessions should be fixed in the diary on a regular basis. For stipendiary curates, or those who give the major part of the week to the parish, a weekly session will be good. For those who are part-time it may be fortnightly, or in some cases even monthly.

A session may centre on a piece of work (for example a sermon) but should also involve opportunity for wider exchange and reflection, when the curate and incumbent can share perceptions about progress being made, both in general terms and in terms of the Annual Training Plan.

The process of this meeting needs to be right. The training incumbent may find the following checklist helpful:

- listen more than you speak
- recognise your personal feelings and their possible influence on your judgements and actions
- be sensitive to the experience and needs of your colleague
- stay with the issues, and avoid being too anecdotal
- ask open questions and be genuinely interested
- build on your colleague’s strengths by offering constructive feedback
- encourage your colleague to learn from failures as well as successes
- set realistic goals
- be patient
- don’t let disagreements fester

Sadly, we are not all as good at this as we like to think, and even clergy who may be excellent listeners in the pastoral parochial context can forget their skills in the complexity of a conversation with a colleague which takes place in the midst of many duties and pressures. A check list is provided on the next page as a reference and reminder. How do you rate yourself? Highlight any ‘ouch’ points as you read through these aspects of good practice.

It is not difficult to see how sensitive use of these skills will facilitate all aspects of the relationship, not only in the work of supervision, but in the simple day-to-day making of arrangements and giving feedback.

If the incumbent and curate are unhappy about anything then they should speak to one another first and attempt to resolve the difficulty. Honesty in a working relationship is vital and has to be developed over time. If difficulties cannot be resolved by them, the difficulty should first be discussed with the POT director, area director of ministry, or one of the team; and then, if necessary, with the bishop.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of poor skills</th>
<th>Examples of better skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not listening to various cues, signals</td>
<td>Listening carefully, taking up cues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butting in, interrupting</td>
<td>Allowing space, and some pauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making assumptions, ‘knowing’ or assuming answers</td>
<td>Seeking the individual’s answers; extending the scope of the interview by offering possible links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to influence, or providing own solution, manipulative</td>
<td>Shaping the interview, but encouraging the person to come to their own solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking leading or closed questions, and asking two questions at one time</td>
<td>Asking open questions that draw out more information, avoiding questions with Y/N answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being threatening, heavy-handed, devaluing and defensive; officious, pressurising, sarcastic and sexist</td>
<td>Being friendly, gentle, sincere, encouraging, genuinely interested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing lack of empathy, unable to acknowledge true feelings</td>
<td>Showing strong empathy and compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering unrealistic promises/choices</td>
<td>Offering realistic and rational assessment of genuine choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking too much, too hurriedly, not allowing time for answers</td>
<td>Slowing the pace down, especially when there are signs of panic; making space for each person to think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wandering away from painful material; changing the subject</td>
<td>Helping painful material to be expressed and picking up difficult issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being critical and shocked</td>
<td>Being positive even if surprised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being patronising, talking down</td>
<td>Not pretending to know when in fact you don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being eager to get the information or outcome which the interviewer wants</td>
<td>Clarifying issues, and alternative action but ensuring choice is with the other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting words into the others mouth</td>
<td>Using person’s own words to reflect back, repeat, recap, and sum up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making the person out to be peculiar</td>
<td>Showing how others might feel the same way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incongruous sharing of experience (‘I get fed up too…”’)</td>
<td>Using own experience without revealing it, to reach other’s experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inviting disloyalty to other people; running down (or defending too quickly, a third party)</td>
<td>Allowing different feelings to be expressed even if not agreeing; assuring confidentiality and discretion (where appropriate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not offering time to consider issues</td>
<td>Offering further time to follow up, as well as time for reflection in the interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting angry when don’t get own way</td>
<td>Offering ongoing support, defusing a crisis and leaving door open</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Good practice in supervision is essential in the incumbent/curate relationship. Difficulties in this area can lead to expectations not being met, frustration and resentment setting in and a gradual deterioration of both the working and the learning relationship.

Common areas of difficulty are:
- the erosion of time allocated because of other pressures
- a sense that after a year or so supervision is less important
- changing of time and place so often that good practice is undermined
- finding time for supervision when curate has a part time role in the parish
- not really knowing how to use the time effectively
- a tendency to mix supervision with other agendas

If the incumbent or curate feel that these or other difficulties are affecting the quality of supervision it can be difficult to raise the issues openly because of feelings that time is precious, or concern about possibly creating conflict by pointing out that expectations are not being met.
To avoid such tensions, it is important to have and to maintain a clear agreed understanding about what is involved in supervision and when it will take place. The way in which the meeting is to be prepared for and the process it will follow also needs to be clear.

‘Supervision’ can have somewhat different meanings in different working contexts. In the relationship between incumbent and curate, the incumbent has a supervisory role with regard to learning, and provides a context for self-awareness and reflection for the curate. However, the incumbent is not an objective participant in the conversation but is also responsible for managing the day to day work of the curate and there is a structure of accountability and responsibility. This can be a complex relationship, in which there needs to be space for the curate to explore their own perceptions, but in which they will also need to hear feedback from a colleague at times.

A model for supervision is provided here. It need not be followed slavishly but demonstrates the essential components of a supervision session. Please note that this outline can be used for:

- the curate to prepare for a supervision time in advance (which is in itself good practice)
- an outline for the incumbent to follow as a reminder to raise particular issues and cover the essential questions
- a guide for both to ensure that there is appropriate open conversation, agreed action and satisfactory closure
- a place in which to note particular things which are agreed at the end of the conversation and can be referred back to.

**A Model for Supervision in the Training Relationship**

**Focus**
What is the specific incident or issue or training occasion in view?

**Facts**
What happened? When was this? Who was there? What was said? What was the context? What details may be important or significant?

**Facts include Feelings**
What feelings were you aware of at the time? In others? In yourself?
What evidence was there for feelings present? Were they stated? Physical reactions or bodily sensations?
What feelings are you aware of now as you tell the story?

**Thinking**
What were you thinking? Were you aware of taking particular decisions to speak in a particular way or follow a course of action? (Do not pursue or evaluate possible reasons or outcomes at this stage, simply note what thought processes were involved)

**Assessing**
What was positive in the experience? What was not?

**Understanding**
What sense do you make of the situation? How do you understand or interpret what was happening?

**Reviewing**
What might you have done or said differently? What were your reasons? What implications or outcomes might or might not have resulted?

**Connections**
What images, similar experiences, memories, encounters or ideas are evoked for you? What reminders emerge? In what ways might these have influenced you? (they will have done- consciously or otherwise!)
**Learning review**
What would you do differently in a similar situation? Have you learnt things which could be applied to other situations? What have you learnt about yourself?

**Responsibilities**
Is any follow up action in the situation appropriate? What will this be, who will do it and when?

**Future Learning**
What learning needs have been highlighted? How could they be addressed? Is there someone it would be worth talking with?

**And finally (take care not to gloss over this stage by assuming all is well!)**
How do you feel now? Is there anything else you want to say? Do we need to talk about this again?

**Giving Feedback**
The effective giving of feedback and offering constructive criticism is important in any working relationship one, but essential in a training relationship. If feedback is given badly, or not given at all then the relationship will not be an effective context for learning. Not only that, but in addition, the resentment and misunderstanding which may develop will prevent good communication and erode trust.

It is very common for curates to feel that their incumbent gives them insufficient feedback, or that the feedback is mostly negative and unhelpfully critical. It is difficult for a curate to point this out, because they may not wish to seem defensive; they may fear that further criticism will result; or they may think that their incumbent just can’t be bothered. But often the incumbent may have no idea that the curate feels like this. Perhaps this is because it is a long time since the incumbent was a curate anxious for some feedback, perhaps it is because they are focused on numerous other things, perhaps it may be true that the curate is oversensitive. But whatever the reasons, it is important that both curate and incumbent engage in good practice in this area.

An incumbent should be able to give clear and positive affirmation when things have been done well, and although this may seem blindingly obvious, there is an element of discipline in remembering to offer specific comment here. A general sense of ‘well done’ is not enough, examples of what was good and why should be offered.


Constructive critical comment is a more difficult area but not one to shrink from. Because it can be a sensitive area, comments which were meant to be constructive can sound more abrupt than was intended. But again comment should be specific and whilst pointing out areas of weakness, it is helpful to concentrate on how it might have been done differently, how it could be approached in future and what has been learned. This approach will feel less bruising than a simple demolition of a piece of work, because it offers a way forward and expresses the faith of the incumbent in the curate to develop their skills with more experience. The curate is pointed forward and left with a focus on a positive ‘next time’ rather with feelings of failure and disappointment in the present.

When the curate and training incumbent evaluate a piece of work, it is helpful to allow the curate to give their own perspective first. This enables the learner to feel in control of the situation and not immediately exposed to the opinions of the other. If the self-assessment is negative, the incumbent can respond with something like ‘yes, I think you are right about some of the things that went wrong, let’s talk about them’. If
the curate’s assessment is unrealistically positive, some tact will be needed, but at least the incumbent will be aware that the critical comment may be unexpected and therefore needs to be handled with care. Learning styles also differ. See the Learning Styles resource for some insights into this.

In the training relationship, there is an emphasis on the roles of incumbent and curate as trainer and learner respectively. Nonetheless, in all healthy learning contexts there is flexibility about these roles and it is appropriate for the teacher to learn and the learner to teach. Incumbents who feel that they have nothing to learn from their colleagues are missing an opportunity, especially today when the newly ordained may bring with them rich experience of professional working life, lay ministry and personal relationships.

Feedback can be positive and encouraging, even when it points out serious flaws and weaknesses. Without self-awareness, comment on a colleague’s performance can sound negative and destructive, leaving a colleague feeling personally diminished. You may find the check list on the next page helpful, showing the difference between positive feedback and negative criticism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructive feedback is...</th>
<th>Negative criticism is....</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designed to enable improved performance</td>
<td>Sometimes a way of unloading anger, disappointment, frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calm, reasoned, self-aware</td>
<td>Angry, dismissive, emotional, unreasonable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific, relates to particular facts</td>
<td>General, vague, uses expressions such as ‘you always, you never’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deals with the work as distinct from the person, ‘it had a weak ending’</td>
<td>Harsh on the person, addresses them more than the work ‘you ended weakly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focuses on what might have made a difference, what can be learnt, what can be done in future</td>
<td>Concentrates solely on the past and leaves the person in dread of ‘next time’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two way – asks the learner for their assessment and perceptions</td>
<td>One way, gives no opportunity for self-evaluation or the person’s own perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builds the training relationship, deepens trust</td>
<td>Undermines, even destroys the relationship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the time, Supervision and Reflection sessions will be immensely useful and creative. Finally, however, do be alert to the dangers of **Dumpers, Blockers and Destroyer/Criticisers**:

- **Dumpers** are those who are not available or accessible, and are likely to:
  - throw people into new roles
  - use strategies which leave people to ‘sink or swim’

- **Blockers** avoid meeting others needs by:
  - refusing requests (‘the Refuser’)
  - controlling through withholding information (‘the Withholder’)
  - arresting development by over supervising (‘the Hoverer’)

- **Destroyer/Criticisers** set out to destroy others by:
  - subtle attacks to undermine confidence (‘the Underminer’)
  - open approaches of verbal attack and argument
  - deliberate destroying confidence (‘the Belittler’)
  - constant put-downs and questions of abilities (‘the Nagger’
The Curate during a Vacancy

It is the normal practice to require training incumbents to commit themselves to staying in the benefice for at least the first year of a curacy, and, it is to be hoped, for most of it. Training incumbents are not normally permitted study leave/sabbatical during the first two years of receiving a curate in training.

Particular difficulties arise when a training incumbent leaves the parish during the curate’s training or is absent for any reason for a long period of time. On such occasions it is the responsibility of the curate to inform the area director of POT and of the incumbent to inform the area bishop (this can sometimes be done through the archdeacon).

Normally the area dean has general oversight of the parish during a vacancy. An experienced curate, associate minister or non-stipendiary minister in a parish does not become priest-in-charge, even though such assistant clergy will undoubtedly find themselves shouldering extra responsibilities. In some situations, and if there is sufficient funding available, the bishop may suggest that the curacy is extended in order to provide stability and continuity for the congregation through the vacancy.

During a vacancy, the curate should not expect to fill the hole left by the departing incumbent. Curates do not take on the leadership role, nor all the wide-ranging duties incumbents carry out. Together with the PCC, it is the responsibility of the churchwardens to maintain the life of the church, ensuring that regular worship services happen, pastoral care is seen to and financial matters are looked after. The curate is expected to support and respect the churchwardens and the PCC, and to work collaboratively with them.

During a vacancy, it is important to ensure that continuing support and parish training are made available to the curate. POT continues to be a priority, and the curate should not be given or take on duties that get in the way of attending POT or related training events or completing assignments. Following consultation with the director of POT the bishop may delegate supervision to a locum training incumbent or Interim Supervisor. Churchwardens will not take on a supervisory role, but they do have a responsibility to recognise that the curate is not the incumbent, to keep an eye on the curate’s work load, making sure time off is taken, and to ensure a stipendiary curate in the third year of POT has sufficient time to explore and apply for the next post.
Overview of the Training Plan

Training should be planned in advance. The Training Plan should be completed at the start of the curacy and in the lead up to the 18-month review.

This plan requires especially careful preparation, since it contains the substance of the work to be delivered by both parties in the training relationship. It must be drawn up after close consideration of:

1. The Formation Criteria, which are printed in the following pages; and for those whose ministry is full-time parish focused, the checklist of parish ministry which follows them.
2. The curate’s previous experience within the last five years which is relevant to ministry formation.

Additionally, it will be important to note what diocesan or area POT days are being provided.

From this exercise it will be possible to form a three-year training plan of which particular areas need working on in each year. Naturally, this may be adapted in the light of experience, but it will be important to have a ‘map’ there in the first place.

The headings of the Formation Criteria are:
   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

Using these or other suitable headings, it will be possible to identify in each case:
   • Areas in which experience and competency has already been gained
   • Areas of on-going development
   • Areas in which this particular curate will not need to gain experience and competency.

You may wish to do an outline for three years at the start of the curacy; this can then be reviewed and updated for the 18-month review.

The Training Plan, then, is effectively a personalised version of the Formation Criteria, reflecting the local context and the curate’s previous experience. It is therefore an extremely important adjunct to the Role description; these require very serious joint consideration.

The final step is to complete the Training Plan which needs to be sent to the area bishop and POT director (keeping copies for your own records of course).
Formation Criteria for Ordained Ministry
The Formation Criteria are organised under seven headings:

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

Within each of these headings, the Formation Criteria are organised in clusters that are disposition-led [in bold] and emphasise the primacy and inseparability of character from understanding and skills:

**Dispositions**
These are related to formational learning and character development. They represent the most important criteria: knowledge, understanding and skills are secondary to Christ-like character. However, disposition is not easy to assess: sometimes evidence may be more anecdotal and narrative than systematic. Dispositions are often discerned relationally and developed through a combination of learning, experience, reflection and prayer.

**Understanding**
These are 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.

Using the formation criteria
The Formation Criteria are fundamentally aspirational: they are goals to work and develop towards rather than criteria that can be ‘fully met’. This means that they should be used as a vocational tool ...

1. **by curates** – to provide a framework for reflection on their development in ministry against the Church’s expectations at different points through the training process.

2. **by training incumbents and diocesan colleagues** – to discern areas of and for growth and development during curacy and to provide the grounds on which to affirm the readiness of ministers to take up assistant minister, ordained pioneer minister or incumbent status posts in the Church of England.

3. **by bishops** – as a framework to enable them to confirm candidates’ readiness to take up ministerial posts as priests of the Church of England at the end of IME Phase 2.
The Formation Criteria

A. Christian tradition, faith and life

Ordained ministers sustain their public ministry and personal faith in Christ through study and reflection that is open to new insights. They...

- understand the Bible as text and as holy Scripture for the church and the world through regular critical engagement with Old and New Testament texts and issues relating to their interpretation.
- are able to interpret Scripture in a wide range of settings, using their exegetical and hermeneutical skills to communicate clearly and accurately in ways that enable others to learn and explore.
- are able to engage in independent study of Christian beliefs and practices and communicate their findings in diverse settings.

Ordained ministers work with and value the breadth and diversity of belief and practice within the Church of England. They...

- are able to engage in independent study of how Christian beliefs and practices shape the moral life of individuals and communities.
- are able to reflect critically on how Christian doctrine and ethics relate to discipleship, church and society, communicating this appropriately inside and outside the church.

Incumbents replenish their leadership through a life of disciplined study and reflection that is open to new insights. They...

- are able to exercise theological leadership for the church in mission.

B. Mission, evangelism and discipleship

Ordained ministers have a deep and prayerful enthusiasm for mission and evangelism that is nourished by Christ’s love for the world and lived out in acts of mercy, service, justice and reconciliation. They...

- understand holistic and contextual engagement with the world in Christian mission and evangelism from biblical, theological, historical and ecclesial perspectives.
- are able to discern God’s mission in a specific context by reflective and empathetic engagement with it in light of its cultural, historical, economic, social, political and religious characteristics.
- are able to engage courageously in mission, evangelism and apologetics in a range of contexts and particularly in local communities and churches.
- are able to communicate the gospel confidently and effectively using a variety of media in diverse situations, both inside and outside the church.
- are able to lead and inspire others in mission and evangelism in the local church.
Ordained ministers are committed to Christian education, promoting good practice, both inside and outside the church. They:

- are able to nurture others in their faith development, including those with little previous knowledge of the faith, through catechesis, teaching and preaching, including preparation for baptism and confirmation.
- understand the importance of the Church of England’s engagement with schools for the common good and for the mission and ministry of the church.

Incumbents...

- lead, enable and release missional vision and faithful witness in and among those for whom they have responsibility.
- enable others to articulate the gospel and participate in its proclamation.
- are able to foster and lead mission-shaped churches.

C. Spirituality and worship

Ordained ministers are sustained by disciplined personal and corporate prayer shaped by the responsibilities of public ministry and corporate worship in the tradition of the Church of England. They...

- are able to relate different approaches to, and traditions of, personal and corporate prayer to sustain and develop their own prayer life and those of others of all ages, backgrounds and in a range of life circumstances.

Ordained ministers...

- are able to demonstrate good reflective practice in preaching and in leading – and where appropriate, presiding at – public worship, including pastoral services, using appropriate forms of liturgy in a variety of settings.

Ordained ministers are growing in the love of God and in Christ-likeness as members of the body of Christ and can testify to the grace of the Holy Spirit in their lives and ministries. They...

- are able to relate spiritual traditions to corporate and individual practices that sustain and develop their own spirituality, and those of others of all ages, backgrounds and in a range of life circumstances.

Ordained ministers’ spirituality permeates their perceptions of and interactions with others inside and outside the church. They...

are able to help others discern God’s presence and activity in their relationships and in the wider world.

Incumbents are sustained in the strains and joys of leadership by a life of prayer.
D. Personality and character

Ordained ministers show insight, resilience, maturity and integrity in the pressure and change entailed in public ministry. They ...

- are able to balance appropriate care of self with the care of others by developing sustainable patterns of life and work, and effective support networks in the context of public ministry.

Ordained ministers are growing in self-knowledge and commitment to Christ within the roles and expectations of ordained ministry. They ...

- are able to approach the sacrificial impact of ordained ministry on the whole of life with wisdom and discernment.
- are able to reflect with insight and humility on personal strengths, weaknesses, failures, gifts and vulnerability in response to a new context of public ministry.

Incumbents ...

- encourage and enable colleagues to balance appropriate care of self with care of others.

Incumbents personify an integration and integrity of authority and obedience, leadership and service. They ...

- engage with others to reflect with insight on their style of leadership, its strengths and weaknesses in context, and demonstrate appropriate development.

E. Relationships

Ordained ministers ...

- are able to form and sustain healthy relationships with peers in the mixed economy of fresh and more traditional expressions of church.
- are able to handle and help resolve conflicts and disagreements, enabling growth through them.
- understand human flourishing in relationships and Christian pastoral care in a range of life circumstances and contexts.
- demonstrate good reflective practice in a wide range of pastoral and professional relationships.

Ordained ministers are people who respect others, demonstrate empathy and honesty in their relationships, learning from them. They ...

- are able to live within the House of Bishops’ Guidelines: *Issues in Human Sexuality* and engage positively with those with whom they differ.
- are able to establish and evaluate appropriate professional boundaries in their ministerial practice and personal lives.
- understand policies and best practice in safeguarding and their application in a variety of contexts.
Incumbents ...

- show skill and sensitivity in resolving issues of conflict within the church community.
- are able to supervise others in the conduct of pastoral relationships.

F. Leadership, collaboration and community

Ordained ministers seek to model their servant leadership on the person of Christ. They ...

- are able to participate in and lead communities, reflecting on, and being alert to, the use and abuse of power.
- are able to lead collaboratively and competently, working as a member of a team within a community, as an ordained person.
- Ordained ministers share leadership by actively looking for, recognising and nurturing the gifts of others. They ...
- are able to use authority appropriately in ways that release, equip, enable and empower others, including colleagues, to fulfil their calling to mission and ministry from within a Christian community.
- are able to supervise and mentor others in a limited range of roles and responsibilities in mission and ministry.

Incumbents ...

- show skill and sensitivity in enabling the formation and flourishing of corporate life in the presence of diversity.
- are able to lead teams collaboratively in a variety of settings, including multi-parish benefices.
- are able to facilitate change creatively and sensitively, exercising leadership with an entrepreneurial and forward looking approach.
- are able to supervise lay and ordained people in positions of responsibility in formal and informal settings of training and practice.

G. Vocation and ministry within the Church of England

Ordained ministers are firmly convinced of their calling to ordained ministry, realistic about its challenges, and continue to ask important questions about their role as deacon or priest in the church of God. They ...

- are able to articulate their calling to discipleship and to ordained ministry as a deacon or priest within the Church of England.
- understand the sacrificial and corporate nature of their role in ministry and mission as a deacon or priest within the breadth and diversity of a mixed economy of traditional and fresh expressions of church.
Ordained ministers are rooted in the traditions and practices of the Church of England and share in the spiritual life of the communities they serve. They ...

- are able to represent the church in public life and engage in partnerships across wider groups of parishes, including, where possible, working with churches of different denominations and traditions and other faith communities and their leaders.

Ordained ministers are accountable and obedient in exercising ordained ministry as a deacon or priest within the Church of England. They ...

- understand the legal, canonical and administrative responsibilities of those in public ministry within a mixed economy of church.
- show developed skills as theologically reflective and reflexive practitioners in relatively unsupervised settings, exercising wise and discerning judgment.

Incumbents are ready for, and open to, exercising a ministry of oversight and vision as priests in the church of God. They ...

- take a lead role in working with partners, representing the church in public life, including, where possible, working with other faith leaders.

Incumbents exercise appropriate accountability and responsibility in faithfully and loyally receiving the authority of others, consistent with a position of responsibility. They ...

- know and understand the legal, canonical and administrative responsibilities of those having oversight and responsibility.
- show sophisticated skills as reflective and reflexive practitioners and the capacity to develop these further to energise creative, theologically informed practice.
Guidelines for Periodic Review

At regular intervals through the curacy, it will be important to review progress. As the following questions are addressed, bear in mind the various headings of the Gifts and Competencies (available from the Downloadable Resources section online) and the Formation Criteria, namely:

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

It is suggested that curate and incumbent initially answer the following questions individually, and then meet to discuss what they have written.

1. What experiences of mission and ministry have there been for the curate?
2. Which of these have gone well and been positive for the curate?
3. Which have gone less well and been less positive?
4. What has been challenging and stretching for the curate?
5. How has the curate developed as a person and as a deacon/priest?
6. What particular gifts, strengths, and enthusiasms has the curate displayed?
7. What areas of weakness or further development can be identified?
8. How well has the curate worked in collaborative or team settings?
9. In what ways is the working relationship between curate and incumbent a good one? In what ways less so? How could it be improved?
10. Has the curate developed an appropriate pattern of prayer and a spiritual discipline?
11. How have boundaries been established and maintained, and time balanced, between parish and home (and, where appropriate, the workplace)?
12. Has the Role Description proved realistic? Does it need updating?
13. Which POT Years 1-3 and/or other training has been particularly valuable? And which less so?
14. What are the agreed priorities going forward?
15. Other comments?
Aims of POT

Post-Ordination Training (IME2) in the Diocese of London is delivered on an area basis, though some sessions are organised on a diocesan-wide basis. It is designed for both stipendiary and self-supporting clergy. It aims to:

- support and enhance the work of training incumbents in shaping the ministerial life and practice of curates
- nurture professional development and ministerial formation
- enable curates, both individually and as a group, to reflect theologically on their ministry as it evolves and develops
- provide opportunities for mutual support and encouragement
- provide pastoral care for the curates in training

Most curates will attend the sessions provided in the area, but some SSMs whose work prevents this, will attend a more convenient group in another area. Curates will normally attend the same group for all three years, unless their circumstances change.

POT days are not optional extras, and they take precedence over all commitments. Ideally, they should be flanked with sufficient space for curates to digest and reflect on the session. If, under exceptional circumstances, a particular session is not possible, then the absence will need to be agreed in advance by the POT tutor. Curates should also tell their training incumbents if and why they cannot attend a POT session.

Formation, Ministerial Development and Education

Post-Ordination Training is centred in a process of personal formation, ministerial development, and continuing theological education, the purpose of which is to help a newly ordained person to be effective in their ministry in the Church of England. This process is one in which curates can help one another through the bonds of friendship they form, and as they share and reflect on their own ministry. No curate should underestimate what he or she personally can contribute to the POT group and the quality of its sessions.

St Irenaeus, writing at the end of the second century, said that ‘The glory of God is a human being fully alive, and the life of humanity consists in the vision of God.’ POT is about helping curates keep in touch with their humanity as well as developing their professional skills and competence as clergy. Half-dead clergy do not advance the kingdom of God! It is about learning to place all that we are, including our mistakes and failures, in God’s hands that they may be used and redeemed. It is about encouraging the personal integration of pastors and priests. It is about reflecting together on our faith and our vision of God in relation to the challenges and opportunities of our mission and ministry in London today.

Education today is seen as a life-long process. POT is merely the first phase in the task of continuous ministerial development, formation, training and education, but it has a distinctive agenda because it responds to the experience of new deacons and priests. Curates and incumbents are encouraged to help in that educative process by feeding-back to the Director gaps that they may be aware of, or issues that they feel need to be addressed, to help curates become effective leaders in today’s church.
**Ordination to the Diaconate**

Although in the Western Church, ordination to the diaconate over the centuries has become merely a prelude to ordination to the priesthood/presbyterate, in recent years there has been a movement to recover the distinctive shape of the diaconate. A significant number of women and men feel called to the diaconate as a life-long ministry, and not as a probationary experience to priesthood.

In affirming their vocation and ministry, the diocese is concerned to support them through post-ordination training. As required, it will organise meetings for perpetual deacons to enable them to reflect theologically on their ministry, and to support one another.

**Ordination to the Priesthood**

Ordination to the priesthood should not be thought of as having somehow ‘arrived’. Like marriage and parenthood it is the beginning of another stage in the Christian journey that needs constant attention and nurture. It cannot be emphasised too strongly that to be ordained is to embark on a training-based ministry. Skills learnt in another profession have to be adapted to different contexts and an ever-changing culture requires new skills and the revisiting of old ones.

Just as ordination to the diaconate was subject to the satisfaction of supervisors at theological college or ordination course so ordination to the priesthood and sometimes matching up with subsequent preferment is subject to the satisfaction of the bishop. A team of people help the bishop in this task and they include the training incumbent and the POT team. Assessments will be made at regular intervals during the diaconate. In some cases two years (or more) in the diaconate may be advisable.

There are certain basic requirements, which must be satisfied as part of any recommendation for ordination to the priesthood after one year in the diaconate. These are:

- Regular attendance on the POT course
- Fulfilment of the Training Plan
- Some experience of funerals and care of the bereaved
- Preaching
- Sharing in baptism/confirmation preparation
- Teaching or leading of a Christian nurture group
- Putting together and leading acts of worship
- Some practice at mission/evangelism within the context of the local community or workplace
- Some preparation for presiding at the celebration of the Eucharist and occasional offices
Outline programme of Area POT course
The POT course complements the training in the parish by providing opportunities for reflection upon broader themes and the POT groups are intended to be places of encouragement and support. There are normally 10 sessions each year, a triennial residential, and other diocesan and area events. Placements in secular institutions and parishes of contrasting traditions are encouraged in the first two years.

Some sessions involve organised visits or study days. POT tutors remain with the group for the three-year period and are available for help and support as appropriate. Additionally, every curate is expected to attend the following training days organised by the diocese:

- **Safeguarding for clergy** (within first year)
- **Engaging with Difference** (within first two years)
- **Interfaith Awareness** (within first two years)

The easiest way to find out about forthcoming dates and to book is to visit:
www.london.anglican.org/events/?category=cmd

Financing Training
The CMD financial allocation for each person in Years 1-3 is made to POT during this time. Participation in any additional training and education is to be discussed with the director of POT. Aside from area CMD provision, other training and education is not to be embarked on without the Director’s permission. Curates in training are not eligible to start further degree courses.

**CMD Grants:** incumbents and curates (from the second year of their training) may apply for CMD grants to help cover the cost of training courses and conferences, which they may wish to attend. For further information please contact the area director of ministry and see the CMD information on the diocesan website. www.london.anglican.org/support/ministry-and-vocations/training-support-development/

Oversight and support
The directors of POT have a specific brief to help the bishop in exercising pastoral and professional oversight of curates. This means that they are available to help and support curates at any time. If at any time a curate has any concerns of a professional or personal kind that he/she would like to share with either the director of POT or one of the POT staff, then they should not hesitate to be in contact.

Downloadable resources

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