

Oversight and Care of Candidates for Ministry (Ministry of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Work)

1. Continuing Discernment

- 1.1 The journey from the very beginning of any exploration of a call to ministry, through selection, training and introduction, and then to ordination or commissioning is one of the most significant journeys that any Christian can make. It involves a willingness to open your life and your vocation to the testing of the Church through its discernment process. It demands a great deal in terms of commitment, vulnerability and openness. It is a journey that, at every point, has no assured outcome and no pre-determined end. In itself, it is a test of a person's readiness to be shaped by the disciplines of the Church community and to engage in significant processes of discernment and searching. Anyone who is willing to set out on this journey needs and deserves the assurance that they will be treated with integrity and honesty, that their pastoral needs will be addressed with courtesy and care and that whatever the outcome, the Church will continue to hold them at every stage in faithful care. The issuing of a call to a pastorate or post, subsequent ordination/commissioning and induction can never be guaranteed.

- 1.2 At every step of the journey, both Church and candidate are engaged in testing a Call and at every stage it may become apparent that a different path is the next step. At every point, both Church and candidate are seeking to work out what is right. There will be judgments to be made; about suitability or progress, about learning, character and personality, about availability and readiness. The Church is committed to making any judgments about vocation with care and rigour, and in a spirit of prayer and discernment. Such decisions will need to be made by National Assessment Board through its Assessment Conference as they consider entry to training, by Resource Centres for Learning as candidates take and progress through courses, and by local congregations or communities as they ask whether someone is called to a particular post or pastorate. As decisions are made, and oversight is exercised, the greatest care will be taken to act with justice and wisdom. In every circumstance the Church will surround decision making, training and progression to new paths with appropriate and significant pastoral care. Those who engage in this journey are asked to be continually open to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, acting through the councils, teachers and processes of the Church, as God's people seek to listen for God's will and to act in God's

name.

- 1.3 Those who oversee candidates for ministry (Assembly Committees, Synod Officers¹, College Tutors, etc) also expect to care for these candidates. Discussions about oversight are inseparable from those about care. Nonetheless the two issues are distinct. Oversight reflects the church's responsibility to ensure, so far as it can, that those who enter its ministry are ready and suited to serve. Care aims to help those who have offered for ministerial training to sustain and draw strength from their relationships - with God, family, friends, neighbours, church and self. Occasionally the two responsibilities must be dealt with quite separately. This paper, then, deals with both topics; they are linked, but they should not be confused.
- 1.4 The oversight and care of candidates for ministry should be exercised with due discretion and respect for the individuals involved. It is also important to recognize that all stages of candidating and Education for Ministry Phase 1 are subject to the Data Protection Act of 2018, which is a law designed to protect the privacy of individuals, in particular with regards to the processing of their personal information. It is therefore important that Assembly Committees, Synods, and Resource Centres for Learning have clear protocols for keeping information on individuals, and understand the conditions under which candidates may have access to information on request.

2. Decisions to be taken about entry to Education for Ministry Phase 1

2.1 It is important to distinguish four separate issues:

- a) **WHETHER** someone should train for ministry. Since General Assembly 2007 this decision is taken by the Assembly Assessment Board of the Ministries Committee acting on behalf of the United Reformed Church. Candidates only attend an Assessment Conference as a result of a Synod decision following a Synod interview.²
- b) **THROUGH** which Resource Centre for Learning someone should train for ministry. This is a recommendation of the Education and Learning Board at the Assessment Conference, following Resolution 40 on Assessment Procedure passed by the 2007 General Assembly. A decision is reached after the Assessment Board has interviewed the candidate and heard the recommendation of the Education and Learning Board. A candidate may ask for consideration to be given for preference to study at one Resource Centre for Learning.

¹ All references to synod in this paper are taken to mean the synod through which a person has candidated or in occasional cases another synod to which responsibility for them has been formally transferred. In the latter case the Ministries' Assessment Board and Education and Learning committees need to be informed, through the Secretary for Ministries.

² Synods may not change the recommendation of the Assembly's Assessment Board. However, members of the Assessment Board will meet with representatives of the Synod should there be a difference between the decisions of the two groups in an attempt to reach a common mind.

- c) **WHEN** someone should train for the ministry. For a few candidates, whose educational qualifications are marginal, there is a question about readiness to start training. This decision lies with the Assembly's Assessment Board following the General Assembly's decision in 1997 (Record for 1997, p 40: "such professional qualifications or experience of life and work as, in the opinion of the Assessment Panel ... provides a suitable foundation for training"). Where a candidate's educational background does not clearly match the United Reformed Church's declared standards, the Assessment Board will seek advice from the Education and Learning Board at Assessment Conference, in order to decide whether the candidate is ready to enter formal training straightaway or whether further preparatory work is needed. Synods are therefore asked to initiate early contact with the Secretary for Education & Learning about any unusual cases, in order that there may be due and timely consideration of individual circumstances.
- d) **WHO** tells the candidate whether they will be sent to train for ministry. Members of the Assessment Board will meet with the candidate and Synod representatives in the second week after the Assessment Conference at the Post Assessment Conference interview to meet the candidate and convey the decision. This is also an opportunity to talk to the Synod about the final decision and, where the decision is to send the candidate for training, to discuss through which Resource Centre for Learning they will train, and the ongoing care and oversight of the candidate/student with Synod representatives. If the decision is not to send the candidate for training or to defer training, then the discussion needs to focus on the debriefing process and care of the candidate.
- 2.2 For the sake of simplicity and clarity the rest of this paper will refer to the "student", to distinguish between the individual's progress through the initial assessment process and their entry into Education for Ministry Phase 1. Assessment of an individual's suitability for ministry does not end when a candidate is accepted as a student, since discernment continues throughout the Education for Ministry Phase 1.

3. Starting training - contact between relevant bodies

- 3.1 Copies of the Assessment Board and Education and Learning Board's decisions are given to the Synod by an assessor at the Post Assessment Conference meeting with the Synod and candidate. As soon as possible after the candidate has formally accepted the offer of training, a copy of their application papers is sent from Ministries, to the appropriate Resource Centre for Learning. These papers will also include the Assembly Assessment Board report, the Education and Learning Board report, any comments from the synod, the report of the Psychometric test, along with the reports of the pre-training health screening conducted after the Assessment Conference. It is vital that any qualifications and comments made during the initial assessment process are kept in mind throughout training and are reviewed when the final decision on eligibility for a call is taken.
- 3.2 The Resource Centre for Learning will invite the student for a meeting to discuss their recommended course of study, financial support during training, and other practical

matters such as housing and residential arrangements.

- 3.3 All students in Education for Ministry Phase 1 are expected to complete the You're Welcome: An Introduction to the Ethos and History of the URC Course prior to starting their course of study. This will normally be by Zoom coordinated by the Secretary for Education & Learning.
- 3.4 Responsibility for keeping the Assessment Board updated on a student's progress rests with the relevant Assembly Officers (Secretary for Education & Learning and Secretary for Ministries) working in conjunction with the Resource Centre for Learning and the Synod.

4. Who cares?

- 4.1 Ministerial formation demands a great deal in terms of commitment both in time and in energy. Except where assigned to their home church, pastorate, Synod (or other church involvement) by their Resource Centre for Learning as part of their EM1 formation for a determined period and purpose, a student will be expected to relinquish all roles of church responsibility. This so that they can be fully available for the formational journey. For avoidance of doubt, it shall be the student's responsibility to ensure they adhere to this understanding and to discuss any possible dispensation. Exceptions to this principle should be agreed in writing.
- 4.2 The stresses of passing through a complex and extended process of training can be great, and the Church has a responsibility to offer its ministerial students pastoral care that both respects their needs and supports their training. The local church or pastorate will continue to offer pastoral care as it has done so through the process of candidating. However, the Church expects to honour that responsibility as follows:
 - a) The Synod has an anchor role in the care of the individual, beginning from the time they make their initial application to be considered as a candidate for ministry, sustained during the initial assessment process, and continuing throughout the training period and beyond, whether or not the completion of Education for Ministry Phase 1 results in the issuing of a Call. If Synod Officers are not well placed to provide constant or close care themselves, they must satisfy themselves that this is being provided.
 - b) The Resource Centre for Learning has a prime role through its regular contact with the student, and should seek to provide support through an assigned Tutor.
 - c) Resource Centres for Learning should ensure that each student has a viable set of arrangements for pastoral care which is appropriate to their situation. This may, in some cases, include the appointment of a suitable person to the office of Chaplain to the Resource Centre for Learning. Arrangements for pastoral care should ensure that the student has someone to whom they can take concerns who is independent of the assessment and discernment processes and fully committed to confidentiality.

- d) A number of student families experience strain during the training years, and have not always found it easy to share their burdens. It is important that:
- i) the synod should initiate a pastoral contact with the family, as soon as the candidacy is confirmed. Thus, if a candidate is accepted many months before training formally begins, the need for contact and care may begin then and should include advice on related matters such as the financial implications of training and ministry;
 - ii) when a family has relocated to live near a Resource Centre for Learning, the Centre should initiate a pastoral contact with the family soon after the move.
- e) How (and indeed whether) such an initial contact leads into a longer-term pastoral relationship will vary from family to family. Some responsibility lies with the person who has made the contact for sustaining it in ways that may be helpful.

4.3 Thus, there are important expectations that pastoral care will start at a very early stage in candidacy, and that it will be available throughout Education for Ministry Phase 1. Nonetheless, no single system or practice will ever suit all candidates equally well. All who carry responsibility should expect to care for individuals in, to some extent, individual ways.

4.4 Should it become clear to either the Synod or the Resource Centre for Learning that a student or student's family is experiencing extreme difficulty or stress they should, with the permission of the individuals involved, inform the Secretaries for Education and Learning and Ministries in the first instance so that an appropriate response can be considered. There may be cases where pastoral necessity requires a decision to be taken about the continuation of Education for Ministry Phase 1. The decision would be taken by the Assessment Board, having consulted all parties including the student.

5. Education for Ministry Phase 1 - contact between relevant bodies

5.1 The Assessment Board has an oversight duty towards those who have been recommended for training. This needs to be exercised in close cooperation and consultation with the Assembly Officers (Secretaries for Education & Learning and Ministries), the Synod and the Resource Centre for Learning because for much of a candidate's training period the Assessment Board's oversight will be exercised remotely through the receiving of summary reports.

5.2 Throughout training, the Assessment Board will delegate routine oversight responsibility, through the Secretary for Education and Learning, to the Resource Centre for Learning, which should have regular contact with the Synod in relation to each student, on at least an annual basis and preferably at more frequent intervals. The Secretary for Education and Learning is eligible to attend key meetings of the Resource

Centres for Learning and thereby hear and participate in deliberations about students' progress. The Secretary for Ministries may visit the students along with the Secretary for Education & Learning in the course of their work. It is primarily through the Resource Centre for Learning that the Assessment Board is represented in the training process as well as in the pastoral care of candidates.

- 5.3 The Synod should be involved in the discussions leading to the preparation of the annual report, so that this becomes a shared production. Such contact and involvement from the synod will normally involve a personal visit to the training institution and to the candidate. The purpose is both to monitor and to affirm, and problems that arise will initially be addressed within these consultations involving the Resource Centre for Learning, the Synod and the student. However, there may be some cases in which issues of discipline or performance begin to develop to a point at which formal procedures are initiated. It will then become necessary to separate the roles of pastoral care (Synod) and oversight (Resource Centre for Learning /Assessment Board). This is discussed further in Paragraph ?

6. Annual Reports

- 6.1 In 2019 Mission Council agreed the Marks of Ministry for Ministers of the Word and Sacraments. In 2023 General Assembly agreed updated Core Competencies for Church Related Community Workers. These documents form the gifts and graces, skills and competencies expected of those in training for these ministries. Although expected standards of progression will be based on the Marks of Ministry and Core Competencies, it is also recognised that not all are relevant or as relevant for Education for Ministry Phase 1. Therefore from 2024 the annual reports will include marks which show:

- Completion of all requirements of the academic programme;
- Completion of all placements and reflections on learning from them;
- Shown characteristics of the faithful disciple of Jesus Christ;
- Willingness to take full part in the life of the college;
- Openness to learn through classroom, placements and community;
- Communicate well in spoken and written word;
- Exhibit pastoral gifts and sensibilities;
- Show self awareness;
- Display humility and selflessness;
- Persevere and demonstrate resilience;

- 6.2 Consistent use of these headings in annual reports from Resource Centres for Learning should enable all parties to see more clearly how the student is developing through Education for Ministry Phase 1, and how any difficulties have been addressed and dealt with.

- 6.3 It is essential that nothing in the annual reports, or indeed anything in placement reports or other reports which play a part in assessment, should be concealed from the student. Data protection is one issue - we cannot expect to deal in closed reports. Factors that eventually ought to influence placement in service need to be addressed openly as they arise by the Resource Centre for Learning with the student, in consultation with the sending Synod, and if necessary, with the Secretary for Education and Learning and the Secretary for Ministries on behalf of the Assessment Board. There should be no secrets and no surprises in any of the annual reports.
- 6.4 The Resource Centre for Learning will send a copy of the student's annual report to the Synod. The Resource Centre for Learning will also send a copy of the report to the Secretaries for Education & Learning and Ministries. The Secretary for Ministries will confirm the progress of students with the Convener of the Assessment Board, through a simple listing of reports received.
- 6.5 At any time during Education for Ministry Phase 1, a student may raise a personal matter that they wish to be handled with special discretion during the eventual introduction process. In such a case it is important that all concerned make clear to one another the expectations and boundaries that apply in dealing with such an issue. Making an introduction requires sharing of personal information; sharing of personal information requires consent.

7. The penultimate year and introductions to the Synod Moderators.

- 7.1 At the end of the student's penultimate year, the Resource Centre for Learning will send the end of year report to the Secretaries of Education and Learning and Ministries ensuring that, where appropriate, the student has achieved Exam board-approved academic marks to at least diploma level or equivalent (June-August).
- 7.2 It is important to be aware that two reports are written in succession at the end of the penultimate year of EM1 – a normal end of year report and a report specifically for the synod moderators.
- 7.3 The Assessment Board receives report and agrees student should move into the settlement process (beginning September of the final year). The process will depend on the type of ministry the student has trained for.
- 7.4 The Secretary for Ministries informs Moderators Meeting that the student has moved into their final year;
- 7.5 For those entering stipendiary service, the student completes their summary and profile and meets with the Synod Moderators for an introduction to a pastorate (mid September for October Mods);

- 7.6 The Synod Moderators begin to introduce candidates to vacant pastorates in their final year. This implies that, so far as can be judged at this point, the candidate is expected to be ready and suitable for ministry at the completion of the course.
- 7.7 Pastorates to which students in their last year of EM1 are introduced, and students themselves, need to be told explicitly that entry to ministry is dependent on (i) the satisfactory completion of any academic courses which were included in the agreed training programme, subject to any amendments which may have been agreed with the Assessment Board during the EM1 period; (ii) the receipt of a certificate of completed training from the Resource Centre for Learning (sometimes known as a "Leavers Certificate"); and (iii) the Assessment Board's letter that the student can move to ordination or commissioning.
- 7.8 For those entering non-stipendiary service Models 1-3,
- 7.8.1 the student completes their summary and profile and meets with the Synod Moderator of their own Synod to ascertain to what sphere of ministry the Synod will appoint them to. The Synod Moderator, through the Synod Ministries Committee, or equivalent, will have identified a suitable role/post at the point of candidating, although it is recognised that they will need to allow for flexibility throughout training.
- 7.8.2 A suitable role should be identified and confirmed by the Synod Ministries Committee, or equivalent, in consultation with the Moderator, the NSM and the local congregation(s) and, in the case of Model 3 ministries (Ministers in Secular Employment), representatives of those organisations to which it is intended that the minister should relate.
- 7.9 For those entering non-stipendiary service Model 4:
- 7.9.1 Towards the end of the student's EM1, when the Resource Centre for Learning is confident that the NSM4 portfolio is nearing completion, the Resource Centre for Learning sends a report to the Secretaries of Education and Learning and Ministries advising the student's impending readiness for service;
- 7.9.2 Assessment Board receives report and agrees student should move into the settlement process (this will be on completion of the portfolio).
- 7.9.3 The Secretary for Ministries informs the relevant Synod Moderator that the student is nearing completion of their EM1 period;
- 7.9.4 The student meets with the Synod Moderator of their own Synod and representatives of the local congregation(s) (or other ministry sponsor) to review the ministry vision/role description written at the start of the candidating process revising where necessary (the Resource Centre for Learning will be advised of any substantial revisions to ensure that

the training which has been undertaken has prepared the student for the service that will follow);

- 7.10** The decision as to whether or not the penultimate training report is satisfactory rests with the Assessment Board.
- 7.11** The Assessment Board or its officers should not be asked to make a decision about a student's readiness for ministry on the basis of incomplete information. Neither should synod moderators be asked to weigh factors of which the candidate has not been told, because otherwise their job becomes impossible. However, it is also important that all reports on a student should be dealt with discreetly and carefully.
- 7.12** The Assessment Board's decision on readiness for ministry should be notified to the next convenient meeting of Ministries Committee acting on behalf of General Assembly.
- 7.13** The annual meeting of the Assessment Board takes place in the first half of September so, for reasons of timing, it may be that the Convener of the Assessment Board and the Secretary for Ministries will act on behalf of the Board in declaring a student eligible to go forward to the next stage of the process, unless doubts have been raised about an individual's progress by the Resource Centre for Learning.

8. Leaving Certificates and fitness to practice

- 8.1** The Assessment Board has the responsibility to ensure that ministerial formation of all students has been completed to the expected standard. Resource Centres for Learning are tasked with overseeing that formation, under the guidance of the Assessment Board. Where it is judged that the student has completed all that the Assessment Board required, the Resource Centre for Learning will issue a Leaving Certificate. This will be communicated to the Assessment Board who will confirm that the ministerial formation of students has been completed. It is recognised that, in the course of a student's EM1 ministerial formation, training may need to be extended or shortened on the advice of the Resource Centre for Learning and with the agreement of the Education & Learning and Assessment Board. This may mean that the introduction process takes place at a different time of year. The following process confirms the steps which should be taken from the beginning of the final year until ordination/commissioning.
- 8.2** For Stipendiary Students:
 - 8.2.1** Once a call has been accepted by both the pastorate* and concurrence has been given by the Synod, the Synod Moderator(or their deputy) must inform Ministries Department of provisional ordination/commissioning date;
 - 8.2.2** Call and concurrence remains dependent on the awarding of the Resource Centre for

- Learning Leaving Certificate and a letter from the Assessment Board in readiness to be ordained/commissioned. Ordination and induction dates remain provisional;
- 8.2.3** The final Resource Centre for Learning annual review panel decides whether or not the Resource Centre for Learning should grant the Leaving Certificate. A Leaving Certificate states that the student has completed the necessary Resource Centre for Learning requirements for ministerial formation and commends them back to the Assessment Board as ready for ordination/commissioning;
- 8.2.4** The Resource Centre for Learning sends the College report to the Secretaries for Ministries & E&L for the Assessment Board along with a copy of the Leaving Certificate (June);
- 8.2.5** A new DBS/PVG is applied for through the Ministries Department;
- 8.2.6** Upon receipt of the final report, if satisfactory, the Assessment Board Officers shall write to the student and receiving Synod Moderator commending the student for ordination/commissioning.
- 8.2.7** The Secretary for Ministries reports to Assessment Board AGM in September concerning ordinations/commissionings which have taken place.
- 8.3** For a Non-Stipendiary Student Model 1-3
- 8.3.1** A Covenant should be drawn up by the Synod Ministries Committee, or equivalent, in consultation with the Moderator, the NSM student and the local congregation and, in the case of Model 3 ministries (Ministers in Secular Employment), representatives of those organisations to which it is intended that the minister should relate. See the process for NSM appointment on the URC website.
- 8.3.2** Depending on the sphere of ministry, the Synod may use a call process with a local pastorate or appoint the student as candidate directly.
- 8.3.3** Once a call has been accepted by both the pastorate* and concurrence has been given by the Synod, the Synod Moderator (or their deputy) must inform Ministries Department of provisional ordination date;
- 8.3.4** Call and concurrence remains dependent on the awarding of the Resource Centre for Learning Leaving Certificate and a letter from the Assessment Board in readiness to be ordained/commissioned. Ordination and induction dates remain provisional;
- 8.3.5** The final Resource Centre for Learning annual review panel decides whether or not the Resource Centre for Learning should grant the Leaving Certificate. A Leaving Certificate

states that the student has completed the necessary Assessment Board requirements for ministerial formation and commends them back to the Assessment Board as ready for ordination;

- 8.3.6 The Resource Centre for Learning sends the College report to the Secretaries for Ministries & E&L for the Assessment Board along with a copy of the Leaving Certificate (June);
- 8.3.7 A new DBS/PVG is applied for through the Ministries Department;
- 8.3.8 Upon receipt of the final report, if satisfactory, the Assessment Board Officers shall write to the student and Synod Moderator commending the student for ordination;
- 8.3.9 The Secretary for Ministries reports to Assessment Board AGM in September concerning ordinations which have taken place.
- 8.4 The process outlined in 8.2 and 8.3 above is based on a usual four year EM₁ programme.
- 8.5 For NSM Model 4
 - 8.5.1 Towards the end of the student's EM₁, when the Resource Centre for Learning is confident that the NSM₄ portfolio is nearing completion, the Resource Centre for Learning sends a report to the Secretaries of Education and Learning and Ministries advising the student's impending readiness for service;
 - 8.5.2 Assessment Board receives report and agrees student should move into the settlement process (this will be on completion of the portfolio).
 - 8.5.3 The Secretary for Ministries informs the relevant Synod Moderator that the student is nearing completion of their EM₁ period;
 - 8.5.4 The student meets with the Synod Moderator of their own Synod and representatives of the local congregation(s) (or other ministry sponsor) to review the ministry vision/role description written at the start of the candidating process revising where necessary (the Resource Centre for Learning will be advised of any substantial revisions to ensure that the training which has been undertaken has prepared the student for the service that will follow);
 - 8.5.5 Concurrence to the call remains dependent on the awarding of the Resource Centre for Learning Leaving Certificate and a letter from the Assessment Board in readiness to be ordained. Ordination and induction dates remain provisional;
 - 8.5.6 A Resource Centre for Learning review panel decides whether or not the Resource

Centre for Learning should grant the Leaving Certificate. A Leaving Certificate states that the student has completed the necessary Assessment Board requirements for ministerial formation and commends them to the Assessment Board as ready for ordination;

- 8.5.7 The Resource Centre for Learning sends the College report to the Secretaries for Ministries & E&L for the Assessment Board along with a copy of the Leaving Certificate;
- 8.5.8 A new DBS and, in the case of PVG where applicable, is applied for through the Ministries Department;
- 8.5.9 Upon receipt of the final report, if satisfactory, the Assessment Board Officers shall write to the student and Synod Moderator commending the student for ordination;
- 8.5.10 The Secretary for Ministries reports to Assessment Board AGM in the following September concerning ordinations which have taken place.

*For pastorate read grouping, missional partnership or whatever terminology the Synod may wish to use

9. When problems emerge

- 9.1 All students, when accepting the United Reformed Church's offer of training, undertake to abide by the procedures and protocols of the Resource Centre for Learning to which they are assigned. Similarly, when registering for a particular course of study with a university as part of their agreed EM1 programme, they undertake to abide by the terms and conditions set by that institution. In the same way that universities have their own disciplinary and grievance procedures, it is expected that the Resource Centres for Learning will make clear their policies and procedures through their student handbooks and other guidance documents. Students should expect to be supplied with such documents, or given online access to them, when they join the Resource Centre for Learning.
- 9.2 Issues may arise for the student, or between the student and the Resource Centre for Learning which, whilst pressing, do not cast serious doubts about a student's progress towards ministry. In such cases the Assessment Board looks to the Resource Centre for Learning and the Synod to liaise to resolve the issues. The Resource Centre for Learning and the Synod should use their judgement as to whether the Secretaries for Education and Learning and Ministries needs to be informed, and the student should be aware that such action is being taken.
- 9.3 In exceptional cases, and where there are not serious doubts about a student's progress towards ministry as described in paragraph 9.4, the Resource Centre for Learning and the Assessment Board may come to the view that the student and the United Reformed

Church might be better served by the student transferring to another Resource Centre for Learning to complete their training. Requests for transfers should be made in the first instance to the Secretary for Education and Learning who will consult with the Secretary for Ministries. Transfers can only be made with the agreement of the Assessment Board. Transfers can be costly and disruptive for all concerned, and therefore will not be countenanced lightly.

- 9.4 If there are serious doubts about a student's progress towards ministry at any point, including at the time of the penultimate report, or during the final year of training, the Resource Centre for Learning will instigate what is known as Stage 1 of the Amber Light procedure. The procedure is included in the student handbooks of each Resource Centre for Learning. It includes the requirement that the Resource Centre for Learning, after due consideration with the Synod and the student, and with their knowledge, contacts the Secretary for Ministries to inform them that the procedure is to be operated. The Secretary for Ministries will inform the Secretary for Education and Learning that such a contact has been made.
- 9.5 The purpose of the Amber Light procedure is to determine what action is to be taken in response to the concerns regarding a student's readiness for ministry. The outcomes of Stage 1 of the procedure will be either:
- a) that action has been undertaken which has sufficiently addressed the concerns that were raised; or
 - b) that the concerns have not been allayed. In this case a recommendation for the Assessment Board to instigate Stage 2 of the Amber Light procedure will be submitted through by the Resource Centre for Learning to the Secretary for Ministries.

There can be a number of outcomes from Stage 2 of the Amber Light procedure, including a decision by the Assessment Board to withdraw the offer of a place on EM1 and thus end a student's progress towards ministry.

- 9.6 If a student's EM1 is deferred or terminated for any reason, the Assessment Board and especially the Synod should ensure that appropriate care, support and consideration are given. Any financial implications should be discussed with the Secretary for Education and Learning and the Secretary for Ministries. The receiving Synod must be kept informed if the deferral or termination has taken place during the process of Call to a pastorate. The receiving synod is responsible for informing the pastorate of developments, whilst taking into consideration the pastoral implications for the candidate and the pastorate of how this is to be done.

10. Entry to ministry

- 10.1** The final Resource Centre for Learning annual review panel decides whether or not the

Resource Centre for Learning should grant the Leaving Certificate. A Leaving Certificate states that the student has completed the necessary Assessment Board requirements for ministerial formation and commends them back to the Assessment Board as ready for ordination.

10.2 The Synod Moderator of the receiving Synod should check before any ordination or commissioning that

- a) a Certificate of Completed Training has been issued.
- b) a letter from the Assessment Board commending a move to ordination or commissioning has been received;
- c) Concurrence has been given and received;
- d) A DBS/PVG has been issued

No ordination or commissioning should proceed without the above in place.

June 2024

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GIFTS AND GRACES, SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES, EM1

Expectation	Rationale	Application to Ministry	Marks of Ministry	Evidenced by	Measured during
It is taken for granted that, in EM1, a student's conduct and engagement will demonstrate they are 'a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ'. This will particularly be displayed in how students engage with each other, nurture their prayer life and bible study, lead and participate in worship, and make their discipleship known in everyday life.			1		
Willingness to take a full part in the life of the College	College life is an exercise in building community; relationships forged here might be supportive in future ministry. Relating to other people is crucial in ministry.	Ministry concerns both 'leading' and being 'part of a team'; it requires personal commitment and ability to engage fully with other people in a healthy way.	5, 6, 9	How students relate to each other and to tutors; The spirit in which students engage in college activities and their programme; The extent to which students give of themselves and display a willingness to be appropriately vulnerable in their relationships.	Student self-reflection; tutor observation; tutorial discussion.
Openness to learn through classroom, placements and community	We are all on a journey and none of us knows what the future holds. No one 'knows it all'. 'Be transformed by the renewal of your minds' (Roms 12:2).	Ministers need to be open to new insights in order to react to changing events and to see God at work in the present.	2, 11	How students show they have heard and responded to challenges to existing thinking; How students receive and respond to feedback; Students can point to examples of how they have developed, what they have learnt and how that might inform future ministry.	Formal and informal written work, presentations; formal feedback from modules and placement supervisors; student self-reflection; tutorial discussion.
Communicate well in spoken and written word	Communication is essential in the formation of good relationships. It is also	Ministers need to communicate well and fully in order that the people of God are built	4, 9	How students contribute to the College's worship and prayer life;	Formal and informal written work, presentations; formal feedback from

	significant in formal assessment of work.	up. Preaching, praying and written communication – as well as the ability to converse with people of all ages and backgrounds – form the essential tools in effective ministry.		Formal assignments and other written work, with a willingness to receive feedback.	modules and other learning events; tutorial discussion.
Exhibit pastoral gifts and sensibilities	Relating to people of all ages and backgrounds, engaging them in conversation and being aware of their needs is important in ministry. Meeting need is not always the role of the minister, and it is important to know when to refer people to other avenues of support.	Pastoral care and relationships remain crucial for the exercise of effective ministry.	3, 5	How students show care for themselves and each other; How students relate to others in Church and/or social context placements.	Tutor observation; feedback from placement supervisors; student self-reflection; tutorial discussion.
Show self-awareness	The ability to know both strengths and weaknesses enables someone to seek help when needed, while knowing how one is perceived by others helps build relationships. All this is useful in conflict resolution.	On occasions, ministers need to acknowledge that others are better suited for certain roles or activities. They need to understand themselves and how they interact with and are perceived by others. Sadly, they have to deal with situations of conflict.	2, 5, 6	How students show awareness, in how worship is conducted, about how others may receive them and to demonstrate a sensitivity to those who form the congregation; Similar considerations in social context placements.	Tutor observation; feedback from placement supervisors; student self-reflection; tutorial discussion.

<p>Display humility and selflessness</p>	<p>Christian discipleship in part means, as far as is possible, living the grace-filled and Christ-like life. This involves, at times, selflessness and a willingness to serve.</p>	<p>While ministers are leaders, their example for leadership is Christ who ‘came to serve, not to be served’ (Mark 10:45). Ministry of the Word and Sacraments is a ministry of service to God, to the Church, to each other and for the world.</p>	<p>6, 7, 8, 10</p>	<p>Demonstrate a willingness to serve in College and in placement; Balancing personal circumstances with the requirements of the course or the community.</p>	<p>Tutor observation; student self-reflection; tutorial discussion.</p>
<p>Persevere and demonstrate resilience</p>	<p>Ministry is ‘long term’ and ministers need to be able to ‘stick at it’ and not be floored by the unexpected or the trials and tribulations which emerge. This does not mean ‘keeping going at all costs’, or taking on more and more, or filling the diary. One mark of resilience is knowing when to ask for help.</p>	<p>Ministry is not always (if ever) easy. There will be pressures emerging from workload, relationships and expectations. Managing these while continuing to exercise ministry – or else, when necessary, seeking appropriate help – will help to keep the balance between service and self-care.</p>	<p>2, 5</p>	<p>Responding positively to feedback and constructive criticism; Demonstrate ability to manage their time in a way which enables a balance where College commitments are not neglected. Having an awareness of the need to build resilience in others and in communities.</p>	<p>Tutor observation; formal feedback on assignments and other learning events; feedback from placement supervisors; student self-reflection; tutorial discussion.</p>

Cambridge Theological Federation: Statement on Freedom of Speech and Expression

Context

1. The Cambridge Theological Federation is required by law to outline principles for its members in relation to their right to freedom of speech in the context of other legal responsibilities of the Federation. This Statement takes into account the specific legal responsibilities, as set out in Section 43 of the Education (No 2) Act 1986, the Equality Act 2010 and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
2. This Statement outlines the principles of free speech which apply to all members of the Federation, staff or students connected to the Federation, and visiting speakers (i.e. speakers who are not members of the Federation or one of its constituent University bodies, namely the University of Cambridge, University of Durham, Anglia Ruskin University or any other University through which a member of the Federation is matriculated for their course of study).

Principles

3. The Cambridge Theological Federation is strongly committed to the principle of freedom of speech and expression. It fosters an environment where all of its members can participate fully in the life of the Federation, and where each member feels confident and able to research, question and test received wisdom, and to express new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without fear of isolation, marginalisation or discrimination. Equally, the Federation expects its members to receive and respond to intellectual and ideological challenges in a constructive and peaceable way. The Federation acknowledges its statutory duties in protecting its members and other people from “radicalisation”, in terms of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. See Appendix 1 for the ethos of freedom of speech and expression which the Federation embraces.
4. Subject to paragraph 3 above, no premises of the Federation and/or respective Houses will be denied to any member or body of members by reason of the beliefs or views of that individual or of that body or the policy or objectives of that body. Whoever is acting on behalf of the Federation and/or respective Houses will have regard to the mission and ethos of the Federation and/or respective Houses, validating institutions, or national religious bodies.
5. In holding to these key principles, the Federation will take into account its obligations regarding freedom of speech, the management of the health and safety of its members and the general public, the promotion of equal opportunities and prevention of discrimination on the grounds of belief, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation or other legally-protected characteristics, and its duties associated with preventing people from being drawn into terrorism or the promotion of terrorist activities.

As an example of this, the Federation reserves the right to refuse access to its premises if it is of the opinion that a visiting speaker or the purpose of a meeting is likely to give rise to the incitement of crime and/or is likely to cause a breach of the peace.

Policies and procedures

6. In determining the likelihood of risk of harm to members of the Federation and/or the general public, or members of the Federation being drawn into terrorism, or otherwise promoting any violent or illegal action, the constituent bodies of the Federation or the Federation as a whole publishes policies and/or procedures to set out and manage:
 - a) the behavioural expectations of students (see respective House policies);
 - b) the management of events within the Federation at which controversial views may be expressed (whether or not they are held within the Federation); and

c) the management and conduct of visiting speakers at meetings held within the Federation (see Federation policy).

Freedom of Speech and Expression

Based on University of Chicago Statement on Freedom

Because the Cambridge Theological Federation is committed to free and open inquiry in all matters, it guarantees all members of the Cambridge Theological Federation community the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn. Except insofar as limitations on that freedom are necessary to the functioning of the Cambridge Theological Federation, the Cambridge Theological Federation fully respects and supports the freedom of all members of the Cambridge Theological Federation community “to discuss any problem that presents itself.”

Of course, the ideas of different members of the Cambridge Theological Federation community will often and quite naturally conflict. But it is not the proper role of the Cambridge Theological Federation to attempt to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive. Although the Cambridge Theological Federation greatly values civility, and although all members of the Cambridge Theological Federation community share in the responsibility for maintaining a climate of mutual respect, concerns about civility and mutual respect can never be used as a justification for closing off discussion of ideas, however offensive or disagreeable those ideas may be to some members of our community.

The freedom to debate and discuss the merits of competing ideas does not, of course, mean that individuals may say whatever they wish, wherever they wish. The Cambridge Theological Federation may restrict expression that violates the law that falsely defames a specific individual that constitutes a genuine threat or harassment, that unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests, or that is otherwise directly incompatible with the functioning of the Cambridge Theological Federation. In addition, the Cambridge Theological Federation may reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure that it does not disrupt the ordinary activities of the Cambridge Theological Federation. But these are narrow exceptions to the general principle of freedom of expression, and it is vitally important that these exceptions never be used in a manner that is inconsistent with the Cambridge Theological Federation’s commitment to a completely free and open discussion of ideas.

In a word, the Cambridge Theological Federation’s fundamental commitment is to the principle that debate or deliberation may not be suppressed because the ideas put forth are thought by some or even by most members of the Cambridge Theological Federation community to be offensive, unwise, immoral, or wrong-headed. It is for the individual members of the Cambridge Theological Federation community, not for the Cambridge Theological Federation as an institution, to make those judgements for themselves, and to act on those judgements not by seeking to suppress speech, but by openly and vigorously contesting the ideas that they oppose. Indeed, fostering the ability of members of the Cambridge Theological Federation community to engage in such debate and deliberation in an effective and responsible manner is an essential part of the Cambridge Theological Federation’s educational mission.

As a corollary to the Cambridge Theological Federation’s commitment to protect and promote free expression, members of the Cambridge Theological Federation community must also act in conformity with the principle of free expression. Although members of the Cambridge Theological Federation community are free to criticize and contest the views expressed on campus, and to criticize and contest speakers who are invited to express their views on campus, they may not obstruct or otherwise interfere with the freedom of others to express views they reject or even loathe. To this end the Cambridge Theological Federation has a solemn responsibility not only to promote a lively and fearless freedom of debate and deliberation, but also to protect that freedom when others attempt to restrict it.

Prevent Duty: Guidance

1. Prevent and the law

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities – including most higher education institutions – to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This is commonly referred to as the ‘Prevent Duty’.

The Act also requires those authorities to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State in meeting the Prevent Duty. That guidance identifies various areas that require policies and procedures, properly followed and applied, from relevant higher education bodies (RHEBs).

The Act makes clear that RHEBs must balance their duties under Prevent with their legal requirements in relation to freedom of speech and academic freedom, as enshrined in other legislation. Freedom of expression is itself an important means to challenge and prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

The Federation¹ and its constituent member houses (as full and associate members of the Federation) are required by law to comply with the Prevent Duty.

2. How has the Federation responded?

The Federation has established a Prevent Duty Task Group to devise its response to the Prevent duty. The Task Group has included representation from across the Federation and from the student body, and is chaired by the Principal of Westcott House.

Work was undertaken by the Task Group to review and refresh existing policies, and, in some cases, to create new policies to respond specifically to questions raised by the Prevent Duty. For instance, the provision and monitoring of training provision to raise awareness of the Prevent Duty has been an area where the Federation has had to devise new policies and procedures. These policies will be reviewed and updated as necessary on an annual basis.

The Federation has recently agreed governance and operational structures and policies that have been put in place to mitigate many of the risks described in the Prevent Duty. The Federation has submitted its risk assessment, action plan and related policies and procedures to HEFCE in order to comply with its statutory duty.

3. Prevent and safeguarding in the Federation

Specified authorities have considerable freedom in terms of how they implement their responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, and the Federation is taking a proportionate and risk-based approach to these matters.

The Federation and the Houses have well established arrangements in place to mitigate a number of the drivers of criminal extremism and promote positive, respectful relations among its students and staff. As a Federation our work is to prepare students² almost universally for public ministry in its constituent Christian churches; even those students not preparing for Christian ministry are church-based in their affiliation.

¹ When the term “Federation” is used in this document it is used to include the Full and Associate Member houses of the Federation

² The term “student” in this document includes students registered on all award-bearing courses offered by the Federation, as well as students enrolled on bespoke or other non-accredited courses and modules offered by the Federation or any of its constituent member houses, or students studying on other courses who are living in residence or are affiliated to one of the Federation’s constituent houses.

The Federation values freedom of speech and expression. Our classrooms and houses are places where each member feels confident and able to research, question and test received wisdom, and to express new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without fear of isolation, marginalisation or discrimination. Equally, the Federation expects its members to receive and respond to intellectual and ideological challenges in a constructive and peaceable way. The Federation acknowledges its statutory duties in protecting its members and other people from “radicalisation and has carefully considered its [policy on freedom of speech](#), to which all members of the Federation and its houses (including visitors, speakers, and exchange students) are subject.

We are mindful that we must be diligent in terms of access to our students, staff and facilities especially through external events, and thus we have reviewed and revised our [policies for external events](#) in terms of all the constituent houses. Our well established diversity networks, the role of house chaplains and our faith-related facilities play an important role in this regard. So too does the close level of pastoral care provided by Federation and house tutors and other support staff. We are committed to staff and student wellbeing and have many support services available. Each constituent house has a structure for pastoral-care which ensures that students are able to raise any concerns, and these can be escalated through principals.

We are mindful of the pervasive and all important role that IT plays in the life of the Federation, and have reviewed and revised our [IT policy](#) accordingly.

The Federation has excellent relationships with people of other faiths – chiefly through the Woolf Institute, one of our associate members – and this is one of our many strengths in relation to these issues. We also have excellent relationships with the Cambridge Muslim College, for instance, which we see as one of the best ways in which to build the sort of community relations – and prevent recourse to radicalisation – which the Prevent Duty is designed to advance. Many of our teaching programmes contain courses in which the relationship of different faiths is a focus, and in which negative aspects of these relations are addressed.

We recognise that some students only interact with us through distance-learning or by occasional supervisions. The duty of care in relation to these is one of which we are especially mindful since they represent variations to the norm for us in student terms. They are part of the same pastoral-care structures nonetheless within the constituent houses.

If you have any queries or concerns about any Prevent-related matter please email the Federation Registrar at registrar@theofed.cam.ac.uk