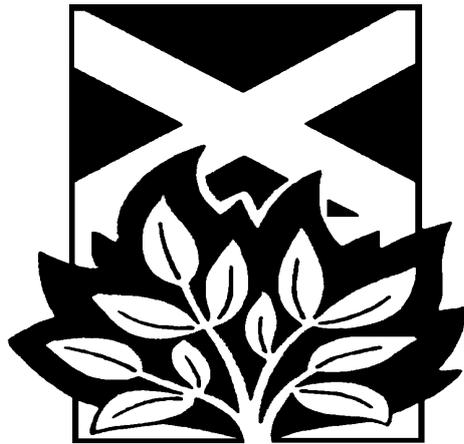


PROBATIONERS' HANDBOOK

Diaconal



Church of Scotland

Ministries Council

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [The Ministries Council](#)
3. [Deacons of the Gospel](#)
4. [Regulations for Selection and Training for the Diaconal Ministry](#)
5. [Candidature Review Process](#)
6. [Training Task Group](#)
7. [Role of Training Development Officer](#)
8. [Placement](#)
9. [Supervisors' Training and Supervision](#)
10. [Terms and Conditions](#)
11. [Important Dates](#)
12. [Conference Programme](#)
13. [Ministries Training Network](#)
14. [Church Law](#)
15. [Role of Presbytery](#) (including Pastoral Care)
16. [Finance](#)
17. [Miscellaneous](#)

[APPENDIX I](#) – Indicators for Assessment

[APPENDIX II](#) – Ordination Vows

[APPENDIX III](#) – Code of Conduct

[APPENDIX IV](#) – Articles Declaratory

Any general enquiries please contact the Training Team on MinistriesTraining@churchofscotland.org.uk

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Ministries Council is pleased to offer you continuing training and support as you enter the final phase of your ministerial formation and welcomes you to this stage of your training commonly referred to as “probation”.

The Ministries Council offers education and training based on the “Deacons of the Gospel” policy statement. A section of this booklet provides an abridged version of that statement, full details of which can be found in that Board of Ministry report. The process of formation provided at this stage is a full-time placement in a congregation alongside a comprehensive conference programme. A biblical Portfolio exercise and essay in Church Law will complement this learning process.

We live in challenging times for the Church in Scotland, especially for ministers and deacons as they seek to enable and share in the ministry of all God’s people. The educational and training requirements, which the Church now lays upon you, are not designed to be obstacles placed in your path, but necessary stepping stones to equip you for the demands of the full-time ministry. We would be doing you and the Church as a whole a disservice if we did not seek to provide you with the best possible opportunities for formation for your future ministry.

The Ministries Council will seek to offer you support in this process and indeed throughout your ministry thereafter. We hope and pray that you will find great joy and blessing in the years of service that lie ahead.

2. THE MINISTRIES COUNCIL

The new Ministries Council came into being on 1 June 2005. It is comprised of the former Board of Ministry, with elements of the former Board of National Mission and the former Board of Parish Education.

The Training Task Group will be the one directly involved in your training. Overall policy decisions are discussed by this Task Group and submitted to the Council Executive for approval, which in turn operates under the broad strategic directions endorsed by the Ministries Council. The implementation of all policy will be undertaken by the Training Task Group in conjunction with staff members.

The principles, which form the structure of the present process of formation, are as follows:

- The importance of the integration of theology and practice
- The essential nature of good supervisory practice for the ongoing development of candidates
- The development of recognised teaching placements
- The development of a substantial conference programme, beginning in student life, continuing throughout all practical placements prior to ordination
- Encouraging a sense of belonging to the church from the point of selection
- Developing and extending peer group formation
- The desire to have a consistent and coherent system of practical experience leading to ministerial formation
- Financial assistance for ministerial candidates

Future training is not “set in stone” but open to change as we seek best practice. In that regard the Ministries Council certainly takes cognisance of views and suggestions from candidates. The Ministries Council, through its Task Groups, will continue to consult with Candidates’ Associations’ representatives at each of the five University Divinity Faculties (New College; Edinburgh, Trinity College; Glasgow, St Mary’s; St Andrews, Christ’s College; Aberdeen and Highland Theological College) in order that these views and suggestions can be heard and addressed.

3. DEACONS OF THE GOSPEL

A Vision for Today: A Ministry for Tomorrow

2.2 Introduction

2.2.1 The Working Group on Ministry wishes to express at the outset its recognition of the distinctive ministry of the Diaconate and its vital role in the changing patterns of ministry in the life of the Church of Scotland today.

2.2.2 In its remit for this Report, the Working Group was charged with developing the following:

- a theological reflection on the distinctive ministry of the Diaconate;
- a vocational profile of the deacon;
- a set of theological and vocational criteria for the selection, education and training of the Diaconate; and
- a scheme for selection, education and training.

2.2.3 It was not part of the Working Group's remit to address the question of the ordination of deacons. This question is being addressed by the Panel on Doctrine who will report to the General Assembly in May 2001.

2.2.4 In undertaking this work, the Working Group recognises that it is not covering this ground for the first time. It acknowledges the work of previous Task Groups and the insight gained from them in preparing this Report. Furthermore, those in the Working Group, who comprised representatives of the Board of Ministry and the Board of National Mission, express their appreciation of the consultations with the Board of National Mission, the Panel on Doctrine, the Board of Practice and Procedure and the Diaconate Council, and their collaboration in the drafting of this Report.

2.2.5 It is hoped that the adoption of this Report will address contemporary concerns about this particular, distinctive ministry within the Church of Scotland while, at the same time, establishing a process of fair practice which, from initial enquiry to final deployment, will be free of anomalies and incongruities.

2.3 Theological Reflection on the Distinctive Ministry of the Diaconate – The Nature of Diaconal Ministry

"I am in the midst of you as one who serves." (Luke 22:27)

2.3.1 The model for diaconal ministry is Jesus Christ, "one who serves". Servanthood is the key to understanding the "call" to diaconal ministry. Servanthood ministry is a call and empowerment by God to enable people to experience God's gracious power and love. This is based on an understanding of God whose love and care extends to all people. It is a call to be in relationship with God, God's Word and God's world, to accept, support, comfort, equip and encourage others to use their own gifts to fulfil their potential in service and in life.

2.3.2 In the Church the people of God gather as a community to worship and are sent out to serve. God calls us to worship and be nurtured. God sends us out to nurture others. It is a constant movement of gathering and dispersing. The sending out or diaconal nature of the Church expresses its life and purpose. The ministry of the Diaconate involves the two aspects of the Church – the people of God gathered as a community and the Church acting in the world as Christ's servants.

2.3.3 Within the life and worship of our Church, the distinctive role of diaconal ministry is to see needs in the world and to call the Church to respond. In practice this has meant that deacons have been involved in pastoral care, social service, evangelism and mission, wherever their particular gifts and service can be used to encourage and enable the whole people of God.

2.3.4 Servanthood, as expressed by diaconal ministry, is positive and a privilege. It is not to be confused with servitude or slavery! "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." (John 13:14) It is a ministry that enables others also to do ministry. Ministry is fruit-bearing when it draws others into ministry.

2.3.5 As Christ identified with the suffering of the world, with injustice, with poverty, with the disenfranchised, with the abused, so the Diaconate calls the people of God to see the suffering of the world and to be involved. We are to bear one another's burdens, not to make others dependent, but to

express solidarity and support and to be agents of healing and hope. There is a call to persevere in ministry and to be faithful. The Diaconate, like the ministry of Word and Sacrament, is committed to collaboration, so that it works with all the people of God and others in ordained and commissioned service to proclaim the Gospel, not just by what we do but by who we are. Ministers of Word and Sacrament are expected and called to work in a collegial manner with members of the Diaconate to ensure that a variety of gifts and forms of service are harnessed for the proclamation of the Gospel and the care of God's people.

2.3.6 Through reflection, the Diaconate is engaged in asking some of the deep and important questions about Church and society to enable the Church to be a living witness to the Gospel in the years ahead; and, through training and ongoing commitment to growth and development, it is dedicated to the formation of the people of God in the community. *“To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fulness of Christ.”* (Ephesians 4 vv 12-13)

2.4 Vocational Profile of Deacons

2.4.1 Introduction

2.4.1.1 Deacons are called to serve Christ through the worship and witness of the Church. In the Church of Scotland deacons typically practise ministry in a team situation and most are currently employed in a parish setting. There are exceptions to this, however, and some deacons are to be found working in industrial or hospital chaplaincy, the armed forces or in other forms of ministry approved by the Church.

2.4.1.2 In our efforts to understand as fully as possible the range of skills and qualities expressed in the ministry of the Diaconate, we consulted with the deacons presently employed by the Church of Scotland and with the Board of National Mission's Parish Assistance Task Group. This consultation exercise was carried out in a number of ways including formal meetings and discussions with representatives of the Diaconate Council, a questionnaire to all serving deacons, a study of the role of the Diaconate internationally, as well as informal conversations with deacons. These consultations helped to clarify the distinctive contribution that the Diaconate makes to the ministry of the Church of Scotland and have informed the following vocational profile.

2.4.2 Collaborative Approach

2.4.2.1 Deacons work in team situations alongside other ministers and with members of a local congregation, church groups and community. Team working is not an optional exercise for the Diaconate, it is a core skill, critical to the distinctive ministry of the Diaconate. These collaborative skills embrace such diverse qualities as planning, organising, supporting, encouraging, enabling, resourcing and motivating and they are typically practised across the whole age range.

2.4.3 Pastoral Skills

2.4.3.1 The Diaconate is an office of the Church which involves a wide range of pastoral skills and responsibilities, not just for the community of the faithful, but for others outside the Church from all walks of life. In their care of the elderly and pastoral support of the bereaved, deacons often work alongside those ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Deacons are also employed in encouraging others to fulfil these pastoral tasks and here the role of the deacon becomes one of instructor and enabler, sharing skills and equipping other people for the task of pastoral ministry.

2.4.4 Ecumenical Dimension

2.4.4.1 Although an integral part of the Church of Scotland's tradition and practice of ministry, there is an ecumenical and international dimension to the ministry of the Diaconate. In common with their colleagues in the ministry of Word and Sacrament, deacons require a breadth of outlook that will seek to engage with those in other churches and traditions. Ecumenical awareness and engagement is one of the important features of the Diaconate.

2.4.5 Worship Skills

2.4.5.1 It is generally expected that deacons will be able to lead worship and offer prayer in a variety of contexts such as a nursing home, hospital ward, private home, school assemblies and services. Preaching is also an activity in which a number of deacons are actively engaged, although few deacons would see preaching as one of their core activities.

2.4.6 Christian Education

2.4.6.1 It is often the case that deacons are involved in the provision of Christian education to various groups within the Church and in school settings. An understanding of education principles in relation to the Christian faith is necessary.

2.4.7 Social and Cultural Awareness

2.4.7.1 Many deacons are engaged in working with the local community and this demands an awareness of the social context in which the particular congregation is operating and the prevailing culture in which the Church exists. The meeting place of Church and world is often the daily task of deacons and their work can involve them in collaboration with social and community workers, district nurses and health visitors, community education officers, credit unions and youth and pensioner groups outwith the life of the local congregation.

2.4.8 General Education

2.4.8.1 Like their colleagues in the ministry of Word and Sacrament, deacons are committed to life-long learning. Given the significant changes in the opportunities for further education, and acknowledging the range of skills and abilities needed for the ministry of the Diaconate, the Board is of the opinion that, from now on, graduate training will be the accepted requirement for the Diaconate, although consideration will always be given to applicants with other formal qualifications and relevant life experience. All candidates are expected to maintain a commitment to ongoing training and development.

2.4.9 Conclusion

2.4.9.1 As part of the ministry of the Church, the deacon has an historic role to fulfil. Deacons bring to the practice of ministry a variety of skills and interests that complement the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The focal point of diaconal ministry is service and through this service to encourage the Church to fulfil its calling to serve. As such, diaconal ministry contributes to the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ in the world.

2.5 Characteristics of a Potential Deacon

2.5.1 Intrinsic

- evidence of a maturing faith;
- a sense of vocation;
- a sense of commitment to the Gospel;
- a commitment to being part of a collaborative ministry;
- an ability to reflect and integrate personal faith journey with that of the wider Church.

2.5.2 Knowledge and Understanding

- of the Christian faith;
- of the organisation and structures of the Church of Scotland;
- of the principles and practice of team ministry in the Church of Scotland;
- of the role and special contribution of ministers of Word and Sacrament, deacons and other paid or authorised staff;
- of the organisation of our society; and salient contemporary social problems and needs.

2.5.3 Formative

- an openness to personal growth and professional development;

- ability to envision possibilities to see “what might be” and to innovate in order to achieve what needs to be done;
- capacity for study and subsequent application of knowledge and ideas.

2.5.4 Collaborative

- ability to work with others, including persons in authority;
- capacity to work as an effective team member, observing mutual accountability and ability to respond constructively with colleagues;
- capacity to communicate with groups/audiences, large or small;
- capacity to enlist and motivate others.

2.5.5 Reflective

- a capacity to be self-reflective in practice;
- possession of some awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses;
- ability to demonstrate an insight into the dynamic relationship between who we are and what we are.

2.6 Diaconal Selection Process

2.6.1 In the recent past, since the Board of Ministry took over the selection, recruitment and training of the Diaconate, a process of involvement in the selection conference programme of the Church of Scotland has been instituted. It is the view of the Task Group that this process, which has been developed by the Task Group on Vocational Guidance, should continue. It is also recommended that those who have expressed an interest in diaconal ministry should be invited to be part of the Enquiry Process, to allow them to explore the parameters of diaconal and other ministries and forms of service within the Church of Scotland. As a result of engaging in the Enquiry Process, along with others who are interested in the ministry of Word and Sacrament and other forms of service, those who express interest are invited to take part in a journey of vocational exploration that may lead them to apply for consideration as a candidate. In order to underpin the team work and collaboration that lies at the heart of the Board’s understanding of ministry, it is proposed that the age requirements for selection and training to the ministry of Word and Sacrament will also apply to the Diaconate.

2.6.2 After completion of the Enquiry Process, which will include field assessment and a parallel process of experience, review and assessment, as required for potential ministers of Word and Sacrament, an enquirer may submit an application; the applicant, normally a member of the Church of Scotland, would be invited to a selection conference, in which there would be a group or groups of applicants with assessors who had particular training and background materials, including deployment, on the Diaconate. The application at this point would be accompanied by a report from the applicant’s minister and Presbytery. The vocational profile and details of this report would form the criteria for assessment. The exercises of the selection conference process would helpfully explore the issues of a collaborative, reflective and formative ministry and highlight the characteristics and issues of diaconal service that the Church has agreed are critical.

2.6.3 The actual details of the process of the selection conference would be designed by the Vocational Guidance Task Group, drawing on its past experience of running selection conferences over the last thirty or more years, in particular the recent experience of diaconal selection processes. Full cognisance would be taken of the reports from the applicants, Presbyteries, congregations and relevant referees. Involvement in the Enquiry Process would ensure that those who had expressed a wish to be selected for diaconal service had an adequate and appropriate knowledge of the boundaries and practice of diaconal ministry within the Church of Scotland. The recommendation from the selection conference would be made to the appropriate Task Group of the Board of Ministry for consideration and would be reported through the Board to the individual and Presbytery concerned.

2.7 Course Proposals

2.7.1 Introduction

2.7.1.1 If we are agreed that the Diaconate needs to be a group of widely skilled, competent and confident people who have gifts to offer to the whole people of God in their ministry, we must be certain

that the training they have equips them to serve in a particular and helpful manner for the good of the Church. Such a training will include divinity topics to allow deacons to work from a strong theological base. Training will also include social science topics to enable insight into social and cultural issues.

2.7.2 Core Course

2.7.2.1 Any core course should include the following:

- Old and New Testament Study;
- Introductory Course in Practical Theology including Mission, Evangelism, Pastoral Care Counselling, Worship of the Church, in particular the Church of Scotland, and Sociological and Ecclesiological Issues;
- Church History with special reference to the Church of Scotland;
- Systematic Theology in the areas of the Principal Doctrines of the Christian Faith, including, for example, Trinity, Salvation, Redemption, Doctrine of God and Christology;
- Practical Placements;
- History and Contemporary Understanding of the Diaconate (Church of Scotland and Ecumenical);
- Law and Practice of the Church of Scotland;
- Christian Education;
- Voice and Communication Skills;
- Attendance and Participation at Diaconate Council.

2.7.2.2 While a faculty of divinity or an institute of higher learning with a religious studies department would normally offer such courses, flexibility would be allowed to acknowledge a candidate's previous study in these areas prior to commencing any course or preparation for the Diaconate.

2.7.3 Additional Courses

2.7.3.1 A list of options would be possible to encourage the development of particular skills in the candidates for the Diaconate. Included in this list would be:

- Youth Work;
- Christian Spirituality;
- Hospice and Hospital Care;
- Industrial Chaplaincy;
- Management Analysis and Systems;
- Work with Elderly;
- Developmental and Co-operative Enterprises with Secular Agencies for Community Projects.

2.8 Acknowledgement of Work Experience

2.8.1 While many of our candidates may well have completed a degree at one of the four faculties of divinity, the Scottish Churches' Open College or another institution of higher learning, it would be important to agree that some time in training (in a practical sense and through conference work) was undertaken with other candidates for ministry, so that they are acquainted with the issues, and have challenged others by their presence, participation and witness regarding the ethos and understanding of diaconal service.

2.8.2 This would be fulfilled through the candidates for diaconal ministry attending the conferences for candidates for the ministry of Word and Sacrament which are held each year in September, as well as undertaking practical placements where they work alongside others in ministry. If a candidate has completed his or her academic training in all areas prior to acceptance as a candidate, we would expect at least one year of full-time training in an institution recognised for training by the General Assembly, involving other candidates for the ministry. This would allow candidates to undertake either a Diploma, a Certificate in Ministry or perhaps even a Master's Degree, and would provide opportunities for interaction with candidates training for other ministries.

2.9 Act Anent Selection, Training and Admission of Deacons (Appendix I)

2.9.1 The Board of Ministry places before the General Assembly at this time an Act to change various previous pieces of legislation affecting the Diaconate. The Board presents this proposed legislation for the approval of the Assembly in the hope that it will enable the Board of Ministry to undertake the effective recruitment, training and support of potential deacons for the future benefit of the Church as a whole.

2.10 Other Issues

2.10.1 It would be important that the training devised acknowledged the changes in Scotland and the challenges that will develop in the future in any form of ministry in this country. Perhaps being rigidly prescriptive would be a mistake; instead, candidates should be encouraged on an individual basis to develop particular skills in sociological and psychological development, to prepare them for understanding the multitude of needs in society and in individuals whom they seek to serve as deacons.

2.10.2 Any regulation of the core course might be left flexible and open to determination by the Working Group on Academic Questions which will advise the Education and Training Task Group and the Board in 2001 regarding the educational requirements of all candidates for ordination or commissioning.

REGULATIONS FOR SELECTION AND TRAINING

VIII. CONSOLIDATING AND AMENDING ACT ANENT DEACONS (incorporating the provisions of Acts VIII 1998, IX 2001, VII 2002 and II 2004, all as amended)

Edinburgh, 22 May 2010, Session IV

The General Assembly declare and enact as follows:-

The Office of Deacon

1. A Deacon is a man or woman who, under a Call from God, has pledged himself or herself to the service of Jesus Christ and His Church and has been selected, trained and ordained to exercise ministry in terms of this Act (or any succeeding legislation) and according to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of Scotland. The Office of Deacon is recognised by the Church to be a distinctive, lifelong status within the ministry of the Church and to be agreeable to the Word of God. For the avoidance of doubt, this Act does not apply to members of Deacons' Courts.

A. SELECTION, TRAINING AND ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Definitions

2. Section I of Act X 2004 shall apply to the Diaconate subject to the deletion of sub-sections (h), (j) and (k), all for the purposes of that application only.

Selection and Training of Deacons

3. Sections 2-11, 18-21 and 23-25 of Act X 2004 shall apply to the Diaconate. For the purposes of this Act:
 - (i) references to 'the Ministry of the Church of Scotland' or 'the full-time ministry' shall be understood as referring to the diaconal ministry of the Church of Scotland (ii) references to Universities shall be deemed to include any institution of higher education approved by the Ministries Council for the training of Deacons.

For the avoidance of doubt appeals against decisions taken in terms of this section shall be subject to the provisions of Act VI 2007 anent the Ministries Appeals Panel.

Academic and Practical Training of Deacons

4. (a) Each Candidate shall have a Course prescribed by the Ministries Council immediately following acceptance as a Prospective Candidate.
 - (b) The Candidate shall satisfy the Ministries Council of competence:
 - (i) in all areas of study prescribed from time to time by the Ministries Council, which shall always include the interpretation and use of Holy Scripture (both Old and New Testaments), the development and growth of the Church (with special reference to the Church of Scotland), the principal doctrines of the Christian faith (their interpretation, their defence and their application), the constitution and laws of the Church of Scotland, the history and contemporary understanding of the Diaconate in the Church of Scotland and ecumenically, practical theology (including mission, evangelism, pastoral care and counselling, the worship of the Church (especially the Church of Scotland), and the contemporary understanding of Church and society, and voice and communication skills;
 - (ii) in further optional courses approved from time to time by the Ministries Council and selected by the Candidate;
 - (iii) in all areas of practical knowledge required by the Ministries Council, by satisfactory participation throughout their candidature in such residential courses and conferences as are prescribed by the Ministries Council;
 - (iv) in attendance and participation at the Diaconate Council;
 - (v) in the practice of the diaconal ministry, by completing to the satisfaction of the Ministries Council the three placements prescribed below.

Placements during Training

5. (a) As part of the Church requirements, three periods of placement work shall be undertaken by the Candidate, and must be completed to the satisfaction of the Ministries Council which shall determine the length and content of each placement. The placements shall normally include two during the academic course (of which one shall be part-time and shall last not less than twenty-five weeks and one shall be a full-time summer placement lasting not less than ten weeks) and one full-time placement of twelve months commencing on the first day of July, August,

September or October in the year of completion of the prescribed academic course; the Ministries Council shall have power in exceptional circumstances to vary this arrangement.

The candidate will not normally be permitted to engage in academic study through a university or college or in remunerative employment or office during the course of the twelve months full-time placement at the conclusion of the academic course. *

- (b) The supervisor of each placement will be chosen by the Ministries Council and shall undertake training as specified by the Ministries Council. The supervisor shall be responsible for supervising the placement according to the guidelines and standards established by the Ministries Council and University, and shall produce assessment materials as required.
- (c) The assessment materials shall be assessed by the Ministries Council. It shall be competent for the Ministries Council to refuse to sustain a placement where it considers that the Candidate has not met the required standard or for other relevant reasons.

Sustaining the Course

- 6. (a) The Ministries Council shall obtain from the universities lists of those Candidates who have satisfactorily completed their prescribed Course, whereupon the Secretary of the Ministries Council shall inform candidates that they have permission to commence their final placement.
 - (b) The Ministries Council shall, in consultation with the Presbytery, decide whether to sustain the final placement after nine months.
7. The Council shall maintain a list of those who have satisfactorily completed their training in terms of this Act and Act X 2004. An individual who has completed training, who has not been ordained as a Deacon and who has not applied to be removed from the above list, shall for the purposes of superintendence and discipline be treated in the same manner as a Graduate Candidate as defined in section 22 of Act X 2004 and all Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly relating to the superintendence or discipline of a Graduate Candidate shall apply to such individuals.

Ordination

- 8. (a) *Entitlement.* It belongs to Presbytery to ordain an individual to the Office of Deacon on his or her taking up an appointment. However, in order to ensure a general standard of qualification and training for the Office throughout the Church, a Presbytery may ordain a candidate to this Office only if it is furnished with a recommendation to that effect from the Ministries Council.
- (b) *Procedure.* The procedure leading to the act of ordination shall be the same as the procedure described in section 29 of Act VIII 2003 for ministers of Word and Sacrament, *mutatis mutandis*.
- (c) *Ordained status.* A Deacon, on being ordained, shall have the authority of the Church to exercise his or her appointed ministry. He or she shall be entitled to append the letters "DCS" (Deacon of the Church of Scotland) after his or her name and to wear the Diaconate badge. On being ordained, a Deacon shall be admitted into membership of the Diaconate Council.
- (d) *Membership of Presbytery.* A Deacon shall be a member of Presbytery if he or she occupies a parish appointment, or any other post that would entitle a Minister of Word and Sacrament to membership of Presbytery in terms of sections 11-13 of Act III 2000, and the provisions of those sections shall determine which is the relevant Presbytery.

*In 2014 the General Assembly agreed that Diaconal training would comprise two term time placements of 25 weeks minimum, one full-time summer placement and a full-time probation of 15 months.

B. FUNCTION OF DEACONS

The Function of a Deacon

11. The function of a Deacon is to exercise a ministry of an evangelistic, pastoral, educational or social nature, including the conduct of public worship as need arises, in one or more of the following spheres:

- (a) service in the employment of a Council, Committee or Court of the Church;
- (b) service in a Chaplaincy, including University, College, School, HM Forces, Prison and Hospital, or as a Lecturer or Teacher in Religious Education, and in similar spheres;
- (c) other service which is approved by the Ministries Council and the Presbytery concerned.

Deacons and Marriage Services

12. (1) The functions of a Deacon shall include the solemnisation of marriage, subject to the provisions of sub-section (3) hereof and to the permission and supervision of the minister or Interim Moderator of the parish in which the marriage takes place.

(2) For the purposes of the conduct of marriages, section 18 of Consolidating Act II 2000 anent Ministry (as amended) shall apply to Deacons.

(3) The Principal Clerk shall authorise Deacons to conduct marriage services where that is consistent with the provisions of the relevant civil law, or with the special permission of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

Retirement Age

13. The normal retirement age for Deacons shall be 65 years.

C. SUPERINTENDENCE OF DEACONS

Responsibility for Life and Doctrine

14. (a) A Deacon shall be responsible for his or her life and doctrine to the Presbytery of which he or she is a member, or from which he or she holds a current Practising Certificate.

(b) A Deacon who is not a member of Presbytery and who does not hold a Practising Certificate is nevertheless subject to the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of the bounds in which is situated the congregation of which he or she is a member, or in which he or she lives, as he or she shall choose, and are under obligation to notify the Presbytery Clerk of any change of address.

Responsibility for Service

15. A Deacon shall be responsible for the due performance of his or her service as follows; namely:

(a) a Deacon, serving under a Council, Committee or Court of the Church shall be responsible to that body;

(b) a Deacon, serving outwith the jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland, shall be responsible to the employer.

Practising Certificates

16 The provisions of sections 5-15 of Consolidating Act II 2000 anent the Ministry shall apply to Deacons *mutatis mutandis*.

The Roll of the Diaconate

17. (1) The Ministries Council and Diaconate Council shall keep a Roll of the Diaconate containing the following lists:

(a) Deacons who are voting members of Presbyteries.

(b) Deacons holding Practising Certificates.

(c) Deacons who are neither members of Presbyteries nor holders of Practising Certificates.

(2) In cases of doubt as to the list on which a Deacon's name should be placed, the decision of the Ministries Council shall be final. In December of each year, the Ministries Council shall check the Roll with Presbyteries, including the names of those to whom Practising Certificates have been issued.

The Diaconate Council

18. (1) The functions of the Diaconate Council, of which all Deacons shall be members, shall include the representation of the interests of all Deacons to the Ministries Council, and the support of the Ministries Council in the professional development of Deacons.

(2) The Constitution and Standing Orders of the Diaconate Council, and the Constitution of Local Associations thereof, are as set out in the Appendix, and are subject to the powers of alteration contained therein.

D. REPEALS AND AMENDMENTS

19. Sections 26 and 27 of Consolidating Act III 2000 anent Church Courts (as amended) are hereby repealed, and shall be replaced by a note reading “See Act VIII 2010”

20. Act II 1988 anent the Judicial Commission (as amended) is hereby further amended as follows:

- by the addition in paragraph 2(a), after the word ‘Ministers’ of ‘, Deacons’.
- by the addition in paragraph 2(j), after the word ‘Ministers’ of ‘, Deacons’.

21. Paragraph 1(c) of Act XV 2003 anent Scottish Criminal Records office Checks of Ministers, Deacons and readers in Terms of the Police Act 1997 (as amended) is hereby amended to read “Deacon, for the purposes of this Act only, refers to all Deacons who are members of Presbyteries or holders of Practising Certificates.

For the avoidance of doubt, this Act does not apply to members of Deacons’ Courts.”

APPENDIX A

CONSTITUTION OF DIACONATE COUNCIL

Functions

The Functions of the Diaconate Council hereinafter constituted shall be:

- a) To formulate and express the collective views of its members
- b) To make contacts with those engaged in like work at home and overseas
- c) To provide opportunity for in-service training and personal development

Constitution

The Council shall consist of:

- (i) All Deacons on the Active List
- (ii) All retired Deacons
- (iii) Deacons with a Practising Certificate may attend Council at their own expense and be non-voting members.
- (iv) Two members appointed by the Ministries Council
- (v) Deacons ordained or commissioned by the Church of Scotland who are serving overseas as members of another Church shall be entitled when on furlough to attend all meetings of the Council as corresponding members without the right to vote.

Office –bearers

The Office bearers shall be:

A President, who shall hold office for three years, and not be eligible for re-election.

A Vice President, who shall hold office for three years, and not be eligible for re-election.

A Secretary, who shall be appointed for three years and be eligible for reappointment.

A Treasurer, who shall be appointed for three years and be eligible for reappointment.

The President and the Vice President shall be elected by the Council in manner specified in the Standing Orders.

Committees

Business Committee – a Business Committee to attend to business during the meetings of the Council and at other times, as agreed, between Councils, may be constituted in manner provided in Standing Orders.

Other Committees

The Council shall have power to appoint, if it so desires, other Committees to facilitate its business and to consider various aspects of the service undertaken by Deacons.

Meetings

The Council shall meet for one day in January/February of each year.

The Council shall normally meet for two days in June of each year or as otherwise decided.

The Council shall meet in public or in private as the Business Committee may decide.

The Council may in exceptional circumstances meet at such other times as the Ministries Council appoint.

Procedure

Meetings shall each day be opened, and the Council closed with prayer.

Other procedures shall be as set out in Standing Orders. The cost of Council, including the travelling expenses of full members of Council, shall be met by the Ministries Council.

The Diaconate Council shall be represented on the Ministries Council through its President.

The administration of the Council shall be serviced by a Secretary appointed by the Diaconate Council and an admin assistant appointed and financed by Ministries Council.

Local Associations of Deacons

The Council shall set up Local Associations of Deacons, which shall have the following aims:

- a) To provide a fellowship of Deacons
- b) To be a channel through which Deacons may communicate to the Business Committee and/or Diaconate Council matters concerning Deacons or the wider interests of the Church
- c) To give an opportunity to Deacons to express their views on matters of public interest
- d) To be the body to liaise with such local groups as are related to the interest of the Diaconate
- e) To do all things necessary for or incidental to the Constitution

Local Associations shall be governed by the Constitution.

Alteration of Constitution

Any alteration to this Constitution may be made only by a two-thirds majority of the whole membership of the Diaconate Council, upon a motion of which seven days' notice has been given to all members thereof.

APPENDIX B

THE DIACONATE COUNCIL – STANDING ORDERS

Standing Orders

Procedure at Meetings

The President, or in his or her absence the Vice-President, shall preside, whom failing the Council shall appoint its own Chairperson.

Proceedings each day shall be opened with prayer.

Business

The business of the Council shall include:-

- (1) Election of Office-bearers, Committees and Representatives on the Ministries Council, such election to take place at the meeting of the Council in June.
- (2) Reports from Local Associations, Committees of the Council, and the Ministries Council.
- (3) Initiation of discussion on any matters which concern the Diaconate and the wider interests of the Church.

Election of Office-bearers

Nominations for the election of the President and Vice- President shall be sent in by Local Associations. Each Local Association shall send in a maximum of four nominations, selected from the whole membership of the Council, and those nominated must have been ordained/commissioned for at least five years. The Secretary shall draw up a list which shall be sent to all Deacons, both active and retired, for their postal vote.

Business Committee

The President, Vice-President, Secretary and Presidents of the Local Associations shall constitute the Business Committee.

Other Committees

Any Committee appointed by the Council by virtue of the power conferred on it in the Constitution shall be given a special remit, and shall report to the Council.

Finance

Members may be required to pay an annual subscription fee.

Any proposal involving finance amounting to more than the total of Council Funds shall, before action is taken, be referred to the Ministries Council.

Minutes

The Minutes of Diaconate Council shall be approved at the opening session of the next Council.

Full Minutes of the proceedings of the Council shall be circulated to all members.

Reports

Reports from Local Associations and Committees of the Council shall reach the Secretary at least seven days before the meeting of the Council.

Any Other Business

Local Associations or individuals may request an item of competent business to be placed on the Agenda, giving seven days' notice to the Council. Where shorter notice has been given, the mover shall briefly

introduce the item and the Council shall, without discussion, decide by simple majority to take up the item of business.

Close of the Council

When the business set down for the final day of the session of the Diaconate Council has been completed, the Council shall appoint the date and place of its next meeting.

Alterations of Standing Orders

Seven days' notice having been given, these Standing Orders, with the exception of the paragraph on Finance, may be altered by a two-thirds majority of the Diaconate present at a meeting of the Council.

APPENDIX C

LOCAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DIACONATE -CONSTITUTION

1. The name shall be "Church of Scotland Diaconate.....Local Association"

2. Aim

- (a) To provide a fellowship for Deacons
- (b) To be a channel through which Deacons may communicate to the Diaconate Council matters concerning the Diaconate or the wider interests of the Church
- (c) To give an opportunity to Deacons to express their views on matters of public interest
- (d) To be the body to liaise with such local groups as are related to the interests of the Diaconate
- (e) To do all things necessary for or incidental to the Constitution.

3. The aim shall be reached by:-

- (a) holding at least four statutory meetings each year;
- (b) providing an opportunity for corporate worship, retreat and help for the devotional life of Deacons throughout the year;
- (c) submitting to the Council a report which will include matters referred to the Local Association by the Council;
- (d) initiating business for the Council.

4. Membership

All Active Deacons and retired Deacons, shall be full members of the Association.

All Deacons holding a Practising Certificate shall be associated but without voting power.

Deacons serving a probationary period shall be associated but without voting power.

Deacons ordained/commissioned by the Church of Scotland who are serving overseas as members of another Church may be corresponding members, and when on furlough may attend meetings but may not vote.

Deacons of other denominations may be associated.

5. Office Bearers

The Association shall appoint its own office-bearers and committee in accordance with a procedure agreed by the Association in advance.

6. Subscriptions and meetings

The Association shall fix the amount of subscription and arrange the time and character of its meetings.

7. Report for Council

The adoption of the Association's Report for the Council shall be moved by one of the office-bearers.

After adoption by the Association, the Report shall be dispatched so as to be in the hands of the Secretary of the Council seven days before the meeting of Council.

8. Individual Business

Any business brought forward by an individual Deacon, if rejected by the Association, shall if desired by the Deacon, be forwarded by the Association with full comments to the Secretary of the Council.

9. Election of President and Vice-President of Council

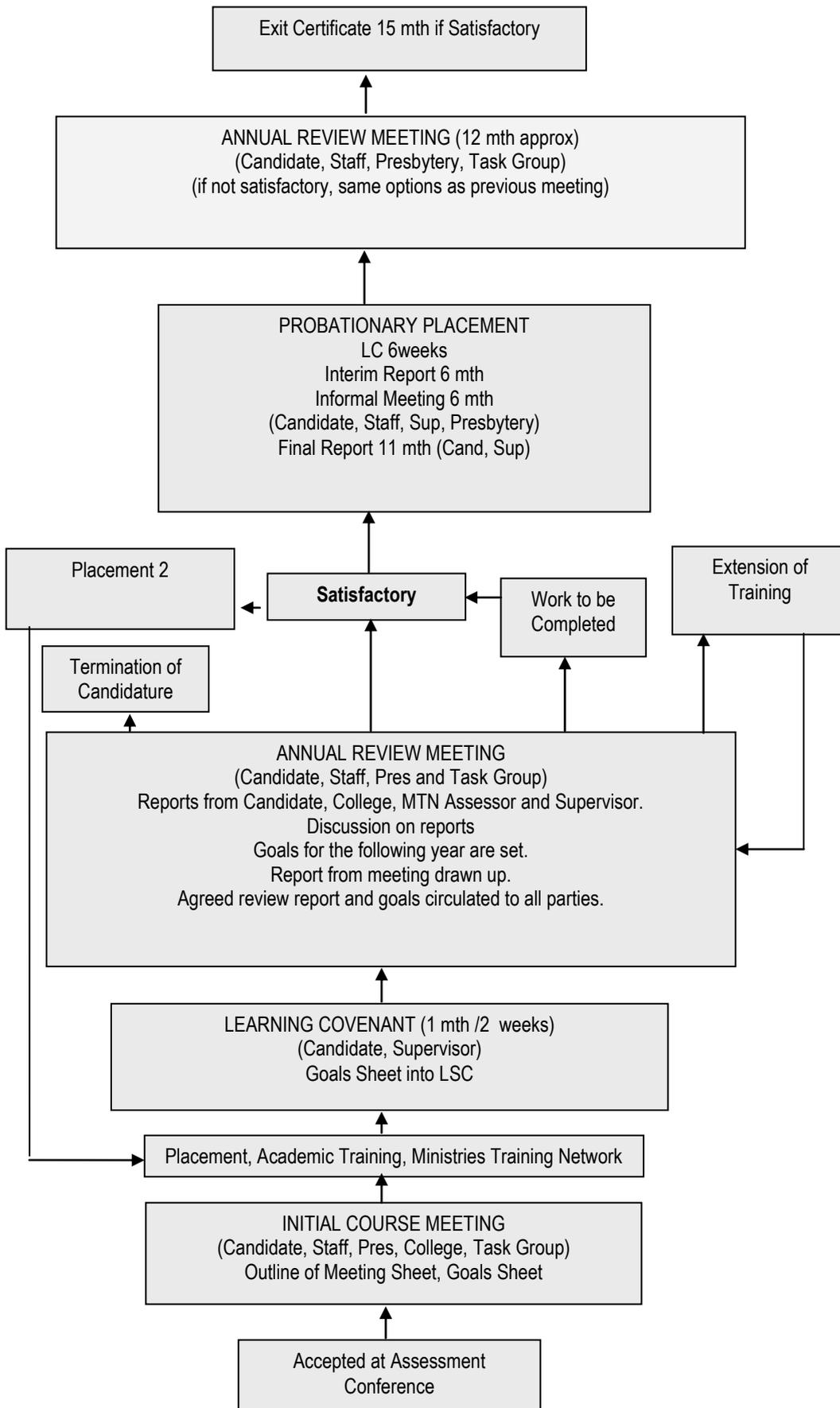
On the occasion of the election of a President or Vice-President of the Council, the Association shall send to the Secretary of the Council by the end of February not more than four nominations for each office.

Nominations shall be selected from the whole membership of the Council and must have been ordained / commissioned for not less than five years.

10. Change of Constitution

Any change in this constitution proposed by the Association shall be notified to all other Local Associations, as each Association is governed by the same Constitution, and shall become effective only when approved by the Council.

5. CANDIDATURE REVIEW PROCESS



CANDIDATURE REVIEW PROCESS

Goal Setting

It is important that any goals set for a particular year of education and training are ones that are able to be achieved by the candidate without undue stress or anxiety. That is not to say that the goals should not be challenging, but the following guidelines are indicative of considerations that need to be taken into account in setting goals. Goals should be:

- as specific as possible rather than broad and vague;
- measurable in some way, where possible;
- achievable within the context of the placement;
- reasonable in the light of the candidate's current skills;
- manageable within reasonable time constraints.

All goals should be directed towards enabling the candidate to develop skills, whether in academic, practical or spiritual matters. Where a candidate is being asked to undertake something which has resource implications, the Ministries Council will be responsible for ensuring that resources are made available. In the event that resources are not available, the candidate will be informed of this by the Ministries Council and the goals appropriately adjusted.

The goals drawn up in the Annual Review meeting will be used by the candidate and supervisor in drawing up a *Learning Covenant* for the subsequent year of study and placement.

Annual Review – Probationary Period

During the fifteen-month Probationary Period, the review sequence will be as follows:

- after a period of approximately six months, a brief informal review will take place. At this review consideration will be given to the progress of the placement and any necessary action will be taken to ensure that the candidate is able to gain maximum benefit from the probationary period. This initial review will be conducted by a representative of the Presbytery and the staff member responsible for care of the candidate. In the event that some serious concern is raised, this will be reported to the Training Task Group whereupon appropriate action will be outlined by the Task Group;
- after a period of approximately eleven - twelve months, a Final Review meeting will be held in which a final decision on the candidate's fitness to enter ministry will be determined.
 - this will normally take place either in the candidate's home Presbytery, or in the Presbytery in which the candidate's university studies are being undertaken. In the interests of good stewardship, however, another venue, mutually agreeable to all parties, may be chosen on a regional basis;
 - it will normally be convened by a representative of the Presbytery, as the nominating body, and always set in the context of prayer and support for the candidate;
 - the membership of the Review Group shall comprise up to two representatives of Presbytery and up to two of the Ministries Council, with a Ministries Council staff member present in an advisory and administrative capacity;
 - the Review meeting will last up to one hour with the candidate present;
 - the Review Group will set aside fifteen minutes before and after meeting the candidate to consider the content and outcome of the Review meeting;
 - in advance of the Review meeting, all parties will have received reports from:
 - the supervisor;
 - the Ministries Council (through an appropriate staff member);
 - the Review meeting will take the form of an extended conversation between the parties, focussing on
 - what has gone well;
 - what has been difficult;
 - the extent to which the goals set have been achieved;

- what the candidate has learned about him/herself over the year;
- the candidate is entitled to bring a companion to the Review meeting, and this person shall have the status of an observer only;
- at the successful conclusion of the probationary period, the Exit Certificate will be issued on behalf of the Ministries Council. From this point onward, the candidate is referred to as a Graduate Candidate. Certificated Candidates normally remain under the care and supervision of the Presbytery within whose bounds the probationary period was successfully completed, until such time as an appointment is agreed by that Presbytery;

At the end of such a review meeting, which indicates a successful outcome to a candidate's probationary period, the report will indicate that an Exit Certificate may be issued by the Ministries Council at the end of the twelve month period. The representative of the Presbytery so empowered by Presbytery, will indicate the satisfaction of the Presbytery and note this in the final report;

Annual Reviews — Non-Sustaining of Candidature

In the event that the parties fail to agree at any Annual Review to sustain the probationary period, the following options are available:

- the candidate may be given a specified period of time in which to complete the areas of work or outstanding pieces of work that have not been completed or have given cause for concern;
- an extension of training, subject to the approval of the Ministries Council, to allow matters of concern to be addressed;
- an agreement is reached that candidature should be terminated (subject to normal appeal procedures set out in the Act).

An agreement to terminate candidature should be made by the representatives of the Ministries Council and Presbytery present at the Review meeting and subsequently reported to and minuted by the Presbytery and the Candidates' Task Group .

The assessment of the candidate throughout the years of candidature shall at all times take place against the criteria outlined in the Ministries Council's *Indicators for Assessment*. In addition, all parties will comply with the *Expectations & Responsibilities* outlined in the standard document.

Reports

The following parties shall submit reports in good time for all other parties to receive and read them in advance of the Final Review meeting:

- **Candidate:** the candidate will complete a report on the year's work under headings corresponding to goals set at the beginning of the year;
- **Supervisor:** the supervisor will complete a report on the development of the candidate during the placement under headings relating to the *Learning Covenant*;
- **Ministries Council:** on receipt of the above reports, the TDO will prepare a draft review report. This draft will be circulated with other reports to all parties for discussion, amendment and adoption at the Annual Review meeting.

The aims of all reports should be to:

- give affirmation to the candidate for achievement;
- identify any areas for potential future development;
- note any concerns either already resolved during the year, or still outstanding.

It is important to emphasise that, within the boundaries of normal confidentiality, *all* reports are open to all parties involved in the Annual Review process.

6. TRAINING TASK GROUP

This Task Group will meet regularly throughout the year and be the “face of the Ministries Council” to candidates. The Ministries Council itself is made up of 34 members appointed by the General Assembly with the ability to co-opt to its Task Groups such people with the relevant expertise which may be required. Some ten to 15 Ministries Council members and co-opted members will be allocated to the Task Group.

A representative of the Task Group will attend each of the Probationers’ Conferences, enabling good communication and consultation to take place, although all candidates can raise issues also through the appropriate Training Development Officer (TDO).

The Task Group will carry out the policy of the Ministries Council; the Task Group will take decisions on the suitability or otherwise of a particular placement; placement reports will be read by members of the Task Group ; an annual report on each candidate’s progress is made by the Annual Review Group, on behalf of the Task Group , as part of the Candidature Review Process. A decision is taken regarding progress, and goals for the following year are discussed. Progress in training is not automatic – whilst Assessment Conference and Presbytery initially take account of a person’s character, beliefs, vocation, motivation and general suitability, it is important to note that this is not a “once and for all” snapshot in time, but the start of an ongoing assessment process throughout training.

It may be necessary for the Task Group to discuss specific issues that have arisen concerning individual candidates. It should be noted that such discussions are kept confidential in a record apart from the usual minutes of Task Group meetings. Access to this information is strictly limited to the following: Candidate, Supervisors, Presbytery Representative, Training Development Officer or the Education and Support Secretary or, in other special cases, those others deemed appropriate by specific decision of the Task Group .

The Task Group will also provide initial and ongoing training for ministers who act in a supervisory role in placements (see Section 9).

7. ROLE OF TRAINING DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

The TDO helps to facilitate the implementation of the Ministries Council's policy, however it should be noted that the TDO is not a voting members of the Ministries Council or any of its Task Groups and Working Groups.

The broad outline of responsibilities of the TDO in relation to probationers is as follows:

- To facilitate and organise the Candidate Review Process
- To be the primary contact for each probationer with the Ministries Council
- To work with department colleagues to organise and plan Probationers' Conferences in consultation with probationers
- To keep in contact with supervisors to have a picture of each probationer's progress in placement
- To keep in contact with Presbyteries who nominated the probationer to keep them apprised of progress.

8. PLACEMENT

The probationary placement will be 15 months full-time

Reg 17 of Act V 1998 (as amended) states that:

"The supervisor of each placement will be chosen by the Training Task Group."

Significant criteria for selection of placements and supervisors include:

- candidate's learning needs and experience of the Church of Scotland
- candidate's place of residence
- compulsory attendance at training for supervisors
- supervisors must normally have at least five years experience of ministry and have been in their current charge for at least one year
- supervisors must have had at least one candidate on part-time or 10 week placement prior to being offered as a probationary placement
- if there is an associate or a deacon or other professional staff in the charge, then all parties in the team must have been in post for at least one year, and relationships in the team should be settled.
- only in very exceptional circumstances will a candidate serve a placement in their home congregation
- supervisor will not be absent for significant time during placement

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND MINISTRIES COUNCIL TRAINING TASK GROUP

GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF THE PLACEMENT SCHEME

1. As part of the Church requirements a 15 month placement will be required to complete training.
 - (b) The final full-time placement of 15 months will commence on the first day of July, August, September or October in the year of graduation; in exceptional circumstances the Task Group shall have power to vary this arrangement. An informal Interim Review will take place after 6 months. A Final Review Meeting will take place after 11 months, at which it shall be decided whether the final placement can be sustained and whether the candidate is fit to be ordained in due course. Only after this approval is given, will he/she be able to seek a post. Where such approval has been given, the Training Task Group shall satisfy itself that the requirements of sections 13-17 of THE ACT have been fulfilled. The Ministries Council will then issue an Exit Certificate upon completion of the fifteen month placement. No-one will be introduced to an appointment prior to the end of 15 months. (see note three)
 - (f) The placement will feature one Ministries Training Network exercise details of which can be found in section 13. Satisfactory completion of this exercise forms part of the Candidate Review Process.

2. Emolument:

The Candidate shall throughout the Placement be paid a training allowance monthly in arrears equivalent to 85% of year one of the Parish Staffing scale in force at that date. Unless the Placement is extended in terms of clause 13 hereof, no payment shall be made beyond the completion of the fifteen month Placement.

- (a) The cost of travelling expenses incurred during a placement will be reimbursed by the Ministries Council by credit transfer, as above. Travel, where possible, should be by public transport. Where suitable public transport exists, it is only the cost of this that may be claimed. Where a car has to be used, the rate of reimbursement shall be as decided by the Ministries Council (see note five). The mileage claimed must be **wholly, exclusively and necessarily** in the pursuit of your duties in your placement and should not include travel to and from your place of work. Claims should be made on the yellow forms in your Log Book and reach the Ministries Council by the 10th of the following month. Payment will be made at the end of that month, e.g., October mileage in by 10 November will be paid in November's payroll.
3. Ministers and deacons who supervise candidates will be selected, trained and assessed and receive on-going 'in-service' training by the Ministries Council. Presbyteries may be involved in the approval of potential supervisors and parish and other placement opportunities as 'appropriate'. (see section nine)
 4. Liaison and arrangements for the placements with candidates and supervisors shall take place through the appropriate Training Development Officer.
 5. The conference programme is **compulsory** for all probationers throughout their final placement. Candidates will have opportunities for peer group development and involvement with candidates for other ministries (word and sacrament) at the same conferences when appropriate. (see section 12)
 6. The Training Task Group shall consider all reports and approve all arrangements.

Notes

- (One) The guidelines state that candidates should have at least one full day off per week, however the Ministries Council would bring to the attention of candidates and supervisors that the equivalent of two days off per week, endorsed by the General Assembly, should be observed – this may take the form of another full day or appropriate parts of other days. The total hours worked in any week should be an average of 40, recognising the need for flexibility in ministry.
- (Two) Candidates will have the opportunity to start applying for posts after completing twelve months of the final placement; however the full 15 month period must be completed before an exit certificate can be issued. Payment will cease at the end of 15 months. The Ministries Council is aware that some candidates may have a number of months, after completing the probationary placement, where they have no income whilst waiting on a call to an appointment. If this scenario seems likely, then a candidate should actively pursue options to provide themselves with an income – the Ministries Council would be happy to encourage Presbyteries to engage such candidates in locum work until a suitable appointment is found. The Ministries Council will seek to support candidates as it is able, however it should be noted that at no time, even at the point of being accepted by Assessment Conference, does the Ministries Council guarantee employment for candidates.
- (Three) Candidates are free to apply for positions after the satisfactory completion of the Final Review at the beginning of the thirteenth month.

Reporting System

A comprehensive reporting system greatly assists the Ministries Council in gauging a candidate's satisfactory progress through training. Therefore, in the probationary placement, both candidate and supervisor will be asked to complete proforma reports.

At all placements the first document to be completed is the learning covenant – to be completed and returned within the first six weeks of the placement. Probationer and supervisor will receive a blank copy – only one should be submitted, whilst the other is retained for future reference by probationer and supervisor – this can be altered at any stage of the placement with the agreement of supervisor, candidate and the Task Group. This is an important document in the learning process as it enables goals to be set at the start, bearing in mind the previous experience of a candidate, which he/she hopes to achieve at this stage of training.

In the probationary placement an interim report should be submitted at the beginning of the sixth month by both candidate and supervisor and a final appraisal at the beginning of the twelfth month from both probationer and supervisor. The appraisal format by each may have similar features but please note that separate appraisals must be received from probationer and supervisor. The final report will be required a little in advance of the end of the ninth month in order to accommodate the timing of the final review.

At the end of the supervisor's final appraisal, he/she will indicate whether or not the probationer's overall progress is satisfactory or unsatisfactory at that particular stage of training.

To maintain and encourage an open approach between supervisor and probationer, the appraisals should be read by each other, with an opportunity to make comments on a joint response sheet which should also be submitted along with the appraisals.

See Section 11 for a chart outlining the various deadlines throughout the placement. It is imperative to adhere to these deadlines. Reports are read and essays marked by a variety of people and in courtesy to them, in order to assist in the smooth running of the administrative process and ensure the timeous return of essays and arrangement of meetings it is important that written work is submitted in good time. If, for any reason, this is likely to be difficult please inform the TDO as soon as possible.

If any difficulties or questions arise regarding the placement at any time, please contact the TDO as soon as possible. (see section 9 for further information re supervision)

CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT GROUPS FOR PROBATIONARY PLACEMENT

GUIDELINES

You have kindly agreed to become a member of the Support Group for the probationer who is to be attached to your congregation. Such groups have a significant role in enhancing the value of this important final phase of training for the diaconal ministry of the Church.

Obviously, responsibility for the supervision of the probationer falls upon the minister/deacon of the congregation. Nevertheless, it is felt that there is a different but complementary kind of feedback which can be provided by members of the congregation. In the normal course of events, your trainee deacon will soon be in a post, ministering to people like yourself. The reflections, discussions and contributions which you and your group may provide can both affirm the probationer in his/her calling to the diaconal ministry and at the same time enable him/her to take account of constructive comment which reflects the views of members. This is NOT intended as an exercise in negative criticism but as a positive learning experience for the probationer in these first important months of full-time ministry.

The Practicalities

1. It is expected that the Congregational Support Group (consisting of about 4 - 6 people) will initially meet with the probationer about once a month. As relationships develop, frequency of meetings may (or may not) reduce.
2. The Group will help facilitate the entry of the trainee deacon (and where appropriate any family) into the life of the congregation. Members of the Group will be in a position to help the trainee deacon understand the nature of the congregation and parish, its history and its story and its understanding of how it sees its present purpose. The Group will be a resource for the trainee deacon as he/she begins to come to grips with the work of the ministry.
3. Within the overall aim of being supportive and encouraging, the Group will enable the trainee deacon to 'hear' the reactions of the congregation to his or her ministry in its broadest sense and to aid reflection upon and interpretation of this experience.

The Group will have a particular role in providing feedback, from the perspective of members of the congregation on preaching and the conduct of worship. Ministers/deacons and congregations do not necessarily hear (nor do they look for) the same things in these two areas of ministry!

4. Feedback also implies enabling the trainee deacon to 'hear' responses to his or her pastoral ministry and to reflect upon the importance of establishing good human relationships within the congregation.
5. The Group will meet with the trainee deacon on his/her own, usually but not necessarily without the presence of the supervisor, the discussions being conducted in a spirit of openness and honesty. It is NOT the role of the Group to provide an alternative mode of supervision for the trainee deacon, least of all to exclude the supervisor from an awareness of the issues being explored by the Group and the trainee deacon. The Convener of the Group will have a crucial role by way of liaison with the supervisor. The relationship between the supervisor, trainee deacon and Group should be one of mutual trust and openness, with the observance of appropriate degrees of confidentiality rather than of secrecy. In no sense should the supervisor be seen as being excluded; rather the Group should see itself as providing the opportunity for a mutual exchange with the trainee deacon in a non-supervisory setting. At the end of the day it is the supervisor who has responsibility for the trainee deacon's work and learning.
6. Most important, this group is a feedback group (not an inquisition) conducted in a climate of support. It needs, wherever possible, to encourage and affirm a new deacon in his/her unaccustomed role within the Church. Hopefully it will be a positive experience for all concerned.

SAMPLE LETTER TO CONGREGATIONS

To congregations about to receive a candidate on probation

The Training Task Group of the Ministries Council is delighted that you are going to provide a training placement for a candidate on probationary placement. Most congregations find this a stimulating, enriching and enjoyable experience, but it also means change. The Task Group thought it might be helpful to outline its hopes for the placement, and the thinking that underlies it.

The background

The placement is made by the Task Group in careful consultation with the probationer. The aim is to ensure that the probationer receives the best possible training, and is given ample opportunity to receive constructive criticism, and to reflect on the relationship between their theological education and parish life. All salary costs and travelling expenses are met centrally. The placement is normally for 12 months.

Changes for your minister/deacon

It might seem that your minister/deacon will be having an easier time with a probationer to share the load. The task of training, however, is a major one, and will occupy a great deal of the supervisor's time, energy and imagination. This work is largely unseen, but it is vital for the probationer to receive a well planned range of experiences, good critical feedback on the work that has been done, and time to discuss, reflect and ask questions.

Changes for the congregation

There will be a new face, a new voice, perhaps a new approach to some areas of parish life. On occasions where in the past you would have seen only your minister or deacon, now you may see supervisor and probationer together, or perhaps the probationer on his/her own. Please understand that if the probationer visits you at home or in hospital, or is asked to conduct a funeral, this does not mean that your minister or deacon is not interested in you. These are important areas of work for the probationer to experience before going to his/her own post.

The Task Group hopes that you will warmly welcome the probationer, and offer to him/her (and where appropriate spouse and family), support and encouragement. Each probationer brings a unique blend of skills and gifts, and these need to be used to the full; at the same time, however, it is important to remember that there is no guarantee that a replacement probationer will be allocated, so it is unwise for the probationer to develop too many new initiatives which cannot be sustained when he/she has gone.

Changes for the probationer

For most probationers this is an exciting time; it is full-time ministry, an opportunity to get to know a congregation well, the challenge of fulfilling their calling. Parish life is very difficult from university life, and time is needed to adjust. Every probationer makes mistakes; so please be patient and understanding!

Conference programme

The Task Group arranges a series of four residential compulsory conferences for all probationers to enable them to work together on issues relating to ministry.

If things go wrong

Thankfully this is a rare occurrence; if there are problems, the Task Group will seek to deal with them in a caring and pastoral way.

Finally

The church's probationers represent the next generation of deacons, and this final stage of their pre-ordination training is an exciting and vital task. The Task Group hopes that you will enjoy sharing in it. At the end of the placement, your probationer will go to his/her first post. That congregation as well as the Task Group and indeed the whole church looks to you to prepare them as fully as possible.

We wish you God's blessing as you undertake this task.

Yours sincerely

Convener
Training Task Group
Ministries Council

9. SUPERVISORS' TRAINING

The Ministries Council approves all placements which probationers undertake and therefore trains supervisors as it deems appropriate; the Ministries Council seeks to build up a “pool” of supervisors representative of the broad nature of the Church of Scotland – both men and women, of different theological stances, in a variety of church settings. The Ministries Council’s policy is that supervisors must have served at least five years in the ministry and at least one year in his/her present charge/post; the supervisor should have attended a basic training course in supervision and be committed to ongoing training. A supervisor, who has a probationer undertaking a placement, should not be absent from the charge for a prolonged period of time e.g. on lengthy study leave; if circumstances change for a supervisor e.g. a move of charge or illness, it may be necessary to move the probationer to another placement; if there is an associate or a deacon in the charge, then all parties in the team must have been in the post for at least one year and relationships in the team should be settled.

There is a need to keep a good number of ministers/deacons on the supervisors’ list; however the limited number of candidates in training means that not all will be used and some, especially in some parts of the country, rarely used. It also greatly depends on where a probationer is resident although some choose to move for this placement as it is an extended one..

Supervisors have a key role to play in the placement scheme, trying to make sure that a probationer has adequate opportunity to make progress in their formation for ministry. The Ministries Council recognises and affirms that good supervision takes time – to have a probationer undertake a placement is not the equivalent of having an assistant – the candidate is there primarily to gain experience and reflect on that experience with the supervisor, and therefore rather than “saving time” by having someone else “do a job”, good supervision means that more of the minister’s time is taken up in this important and vital task for the good of the future ministry of the Church. The Ministries Council is extremely grateful to ministers who are able to give their time and experience in this way.

Candidates will meet with a representative of the Task Group and the TDO in the year **prior** to that in which they expect to begin their probationary placement. At this meeting four options will be discussed and agreed. At this point the candidate will do some research into the options and decide on a first and a second choice. These are then reported to the Task Group who will make the final decision. At this point the potential supervisor is contacted and when an affirmative response is received the candidate will be asked to contact the supervisor and a meeting between candidate and supervisor will then take place; thereafter both parties will separately confirm to the TDO whether or not they are happy for this placement to proceed. Once confirmed, full copies of all previous reports will be sent to the supervisor.

Full details of the reports procedure are contained in section eight of this booklet. Supervisors are asked to make sure return dates are strictly observed.

The supervisor alone will deem whether or not a candidate’s performance in the placement has been satisfactory or unsatisfactory, bearing in mind the candidate’s particular stage in training.

If problems do occur in a placement, every effort should be made to resolve these informally, through discussion between the candidate and the supervisor. It would be extremely unusual for a candidate or supervisor to raise problems in a final report that had not, in some way, been previously aired and attempts made to rectify the situation. The TDO is also there as a contact for both candidates and supervisors – if you feel that staff can help in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us at the Church Offices in Edinburgh.

Should informal efforts prove unsuccessful, there is a complaints procedure, which is in the Act passed at the General Assembly in May 2004.

Supervisors will not confine themselves to whether or not certain “ministry tasks” have been experienced or carried out, but a candidate’s ability to reflect on situations, work collaboratively and relate theology to practice; a candidate’s whole approach to ministry will be considered, including the continuing assessment of character, beliefs, vocation, motivation and general suitability for ministry.

The supervisor will also be responsible for setting up a Support Group for the duration of the placement – this is a requirement for the probationary placement.

The following information on supervision, prepared by Rev Dr David Lyall (former Principal of New College), may be helpful and give an example of some of the issues raised at supervision training. Also included are copies of letters which your supervisor may use, for example, in a Church newsletter, to prepare the placement congregation for your arrival (see paragraph four on previous page) and Congregational Support Group Guidelines.

Select Bibliography

- | | |
|---|---|
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SUPERVISION

The Ministries Council regards your placements (see section eight) as critical in the process of formation for ministry. These placements are not designed simply to give you 'work experience' (though hopefully you will 'learn by doing') nor to provide help for the supervisor (though sometimes - especially during the probationary placement - you might provide a modicum of such!) Rather you are in placement to help you to grow in ministry and the role of the supervisor is to facilitate this process.

Supervisors and their congregations are carefully selected as providing situations where ministers and deacons in training will be enabled to grow both personally and professionally. The supervisors themselves have attended a conference on supervision and the Ministries Council is in the process of developing ways of enhancing the supervisory skills of ministers and deacons.

What is supervision? It is certainly easy to say what it is NOT. It is not 'superintendence' (though of course your supervisor does carry responsibility to see that training requirements are met); and it is not more academic education (but don't be surprised if your supervisor recommends you read the odd book). There are two senses in which we can understand the process of supervision, a broad one and a narrow one. In the broader sense, your supervising minister or deacon is your supervisor from the moment the placement is formally agreed to the moment when your contact with him/her and the congregation ceases. During this period you will learn in many ways, by observation, by asking questions, by trying things out for yourself and receiving constructive feedback both from your supervisor and any congregational support group which exists.

There is however a narrower understanding of supervision to which more attention must be given. You and your supervisor will meet regularly and quite intentionally 'for supervision'. The frequency will vary according to the stage of your training but it will be a time especially set aside so that together you may explore what you are learning. The early meetings will inevitably focus upon the *Learning and Serving Covenant* which will help you to set realistic goals for that particular placement. The Learning and Serving Covenant is not however set in concrete and with the agreement of all parties may be renegotiated should new learning goals be identified.

Normally your supervisor will expect you to come prepared to talk about some previously agreed topic. It may be a service (or some part of it) which you have conducted; it may be your observation of what happened at a Kirk Session meeting; it may be your attendance at a funeral; it may be a pastoral visit to a home or hospital. Sometimes you will be asked to report verbally; at other times you may be asked to produce something in writing.

Preparing for Supervision

Whether you are giving an oral or a written presentation of your work you will gain most from it by preparing for it in advance. There are some key questions worth considering which your supervisor may (or may not) raise with you. Not all of these questions will be relevant for everything you present but it is worth considering whether they are.

What actually happened? It is important to develop your powers of observation and recall. You may find it helpful to make some notes as soon after an event as possible and will almost certainly need to do so if you are writing up a *verbatim* of a pastoral visit. Try to remember as honestly as possible how you actually responded to the situation.

What feelings were around? Try to identify how you were feeling at the time of the event. Interested? Bored? Angry? Anxious? Puzzled? Try to enter imaginatively into the feelings of others involved (but don't assume you are getting it right!)

How did you understand what was going on in the situation? Do you have any provisional understanding of how the events related to one another? Are there any theories which help? (but don't fit people into theories!)

What might you have done differently? Try to identify alternative courses of action and to imagine their possible consequences. What alternatives are open to you now (if the situation is on-going)

What did this incident teach you about yourself? Perhaps you have discovered strengths/abilities which you did not know you had. Maybe you have discovered an area in which you lacked experience or a skill which needed further development.

What did you learn about ministry from this event? Was it something which surprised you? Or did you come to realise that an issue was more complex than you had thought?

What has this incident taught you about God? Can you identify theological issues in the situation? Are there biblical incidents which are relevant? What have you learned about the relationship between theology and practice?

Interim Reports and Final Appraisals

Towards the middle of your placement you and your supervisor will both complete an interim report. This is followed by a final report at the beginning of the ninth month of your placement. These appraisals form part of the Candidate Review Process. Each of you will sign comments on the other's appraisal. These appraisals are read by the TDO and one or two members of the Training Task Group

They are assessed not only as either **COMMENDED** or (very rarely) **NOT COMMENDED** but will also be a record of the topics and issues which you and your supervisor have explored together. In good supervision there should be 'no surprises' in any report because all issues of importance will have been addressed in supervision. You and your supervisor will have been on a pilgrimage together. Hopefully you will feel affirmed in your achievements and be looking forward to the next stage of the journey with a degree of excitement as you seek to address a fresh set of learning issues (even at the end of your probationary placement). Perhaps also you will have appreciated the process of supervision so much that when you enter fully into ministry on your own you will find a group of colleagues with whom you can share in a process of mutual supervision or consultation.

The final report should be submitted in good time to enable your final review to take place timeously. This is important as it is only once this review has been satisfactorily completed that you are free to apply for a charge.

10. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Terms and Conditions
applicable to
the probationary period for training
to be undertaken by
NAME "the Probationer Deacon"

1. The probationary period for training the Probationer Deacon with a view to ordination to the Office of Deacon of the Church of Scotland shall commence on and, unless earlier terminated or extended in accordance with Clause 10 hereof, shall end on .
2. The Probationer Deacon shall throughout the probationary period be paid a training allowance monthly in arrears equivalent to the sum of £??? per annum (being 85% of the MDS stipend scale in force at that date). Unless the probationary period is extended in terms of Clause 10 hereof, no payment should be made beyond .
3. The Ministries Council ("the Council") will send to the Probationer Deacon a list of important dates. These will include the dates for submitting the final report form, for permission to apply for appointments and sustaining of the probationary period.
4. The Probationer Deacon shall undertake his or her training, as determined by the Council and shall whilst on placement, work under the direction of a supervisor, and under the general supervision of the Council. In the event of the Supervisor being unable to continue his or her direct supervision then another supervisor shall be appointed by the Council.
5. During the probationary period the Probationer Deacon and the Supervisor will give particular attention to the aims set out in the Learning Covenant to be issued to the Probationer Deacon. The completed Learning Covenant should be returned to the Council within six weeks of the commencement of the probationary placement. The terms of the Learning Covenant can be renegotiated at any time with the agreement of the Probationer Deacon, the Supervisor, and the Council.
6. The Probationer Deacon shall attend seminars, study sessions, and other training courses as directed by the Council.
7. The Probationer Deacon shall be responsible to the Supervisor for carrying out all the practical training duties of diaconal ministry which are entrusted to him/her. The Supervisor shall report to the Council by sending an Interim Report by the beginning of the sixth month and a Final Appraisal by the beginning of the ninth month.
8. Housing will not be provided for the Probationer Deacon.
9. The Council or Congregation(s) shall reimburse the Probationer Deacon for expenses incurred in the course of training during the probationary period as follows:-
 - a. Telephone calls, postage and stationery: The cost of business telephone calls and of business postage and stationery will be reimbursed. The cost of telephone installation and rental cannot be reimbursed.

b. Travelling Expenses:

By car from the place of work: The Probationer Deacon shall receive travelling expenses at the rate of 45p per mile for the first 833 miles in any month. Travel in excess of 833 miles will be reimbursed at a rate of 25p per mile. A Log Book must be kept and made available when necessary to the Council. Private mileage costs will not be refunded.

By public transport: Actual costs incurred of up to £450 per annum may be paid for necessary use of public transport or at a higher sum if agreed by the Task Group.

By motor cycle: A Probationer Deacon may claim at a rate of 24p per mile. A Log Book should be used to record the mileage covered.

The above rates are subject to periodic review by the Council.

10. The Probationer Deacon is required to send an Interim Report and Final Appraisal to reach the Task Group no later than the beginning of the sixth month and the beginning of the twelfth month. The Council shall inform the Probationer Deacon at the final review meeting whether or not the probationary period has been sustained. If the probationary period is sustained the Probationer Deacon can seek an appointment after obtaining permission from the Council, and if agreed by Presbytery, may then be ordained.

If the probationary period is not sustained the Council may require the Probationer Deacon to undertake a further period of training and in such an event the training period will be extended for a further period as so determined by the Council. Otherwise the Appointment will end on .
 11. The Probationer Deacon will be granted 6 weeks holiday (including Sundays) during a fifteen month Placement. In addition, there will be an entitlement to eight further days not including Sundays in lieu of public holidays, Christmas and Easter. Holidays will be arranged in consultation with the Supervising Minister.
 12. In the event of any disagreement arising between the Probationer Deacon and the Supervisor, the Probationer Deacon should make recourse to the Council.
 13. In the event of the Probationer Deacon being unable to perform his/her training duties on account of ill health then the Probationer Deacon will continue to receive the training allowance in full while absent through illness for a period or periods of up to three months during the probationary period. In the event of the Probationer Deacon being unable to return to work after being absent for three consecutive months then the probationary period will terminate and a further probationary period may be agreed at a future date. Any absence from work through illness should be supported by a medical certificate.
 14. The Probationer Deacon may terminate the probationary period by giving one month's written notice. In the event of the Probationer Deacon being unable to continue his/her training duties, other than on grounds of ill health (see Section 13) then the Council may terminate the probationary period by giving one month's written notice.
 15. The Probationer Deacon will be subject to the discipline of the Presbytery within whose bounds he/she is undertaking his/her probationary placement. The above terms and conditions do not affect the judicial functions of the Courts of the Church of Scotland.
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II. IMPORTANT DATES

Document / Meeting	Placement start	Due Date
Learning Covenant	July 1 st	August 16 th
	August 1 st	Sept 15 th
	Sept 1 st	Oct 15 th
	Oct 1 st	Nov 15 th
Interim Report	July 1 st	Jan 3 rd
	August 1 st	Feb 1 st
	Sept 1 st	Mar 1 st
	Oct 1 st	Apr 1 st
Interim Review	July 1 st	January
	August 1 st	February
	Sept 1 st	March
	Oct 1 st	April
Church Law Essay		May (date tbc)
Ministries Training Network	Essay on the practice of ministry	Date tbc
Final Report	July 1 st	June 1 st
	August 1 st	July 1 st
	Sept 1 st	August 1 st
	Oct 1 st	Sept 1 st
Final Review	July 1 st	End June
	August 1 st	End July
	Sept 1 st	End August
	Oct 1 st	End September
Free to apply from	July 1 st	July 1 st
	August 1 st	August 1 st
	Sept 1 st	Sept 1 st
	Oct 1 st	Oct 3 rd
Placement ends	July 1 st	September 30 th
	August 1 st	October 31 st
	Sept 1 st	November 30 th
	Oct 1 st	December 30 th

12. CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

There are vital areas of ministry which are not catered for in the academic setting, but which must be considered seriously in formation for ministry – the Ministries Council has devised a conference programme which will hopefully complement the learning experience of placements. These pre-ordination conferences are a compulsory part of training and are the result of research and feedback over recent years about the needs of ministers and deacons in training, and constructed after consultation with candidates' representatives. The Ministries Council welcomes such a consultation process and will continue to promote good communication at all times between itself and all candidates.

In the probationary placement, all candidates will attend four conferences, lasting three - four days each, details of these follow, with full programmes and provisional dates.

These conferences not only allow a consistent and coherent programme to be followed by all probationers, but also develop peer group formation from an early stage in training. The conferences allow space for reflection and collaboration with fellow trainee ministers and deacons and hopefully provide encouragement for one another and increase that sense of belonging to the Church.

PROBATIONARY PLACEMENT CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

I Exploring Worship (Fri - Sun)

- Leadership and Collaboration
- Worship & Music
- Prayer in Worship
- Church Law
- Remembrance
- Eucharist
- Prayer

3. Exploring Pastoral Ministry (Fri - Sun)

- Leadership and Collaboration
- Funerals and Bereavement Care
- Church law
- Marriage and the Law
- Baptism
- Towards Ordination

22. Exploring Mission: Tues – Fri

- Leadership and Collaboration
- Working with Young People:
- Working in Schools
- Mission
- Future Focus
- Pastor the Old, Nurture the New
- Tools for Engagement

4. Moving On: Wed – Fri

- Leadership and Collaboration
- Spirituality: Self-Care
- Preaching Workshop- Difficult Texts
- Creating a CV (optional)
- Enabling the Vision
 - Understanding the Parish
 - Planning agendas/chairing meetings
- Working with Elders

Probationers at the General Assembly: Tues – Wed of GA

At 121 George St, Tues afternoon: Understanding Congregational Accounts
OSCR, Trusteeship and data protection

Tuesday evening: Discussion of the reports for the following day's business at Assembly. At this point the probationers will consider the reports and will aim to unpack the salient points and issues.

Wed At the Assembly until the close of business
Debrief and discussion on the day

CONFERENCE ARRANGEMENTS AND ETIQUETTE

Welcome to the conference programme. The following information is important for you to note.

A series of conferences arranged by the Training Task Group forms an essential and compulsory part of ministry education and formation. The conference programme will provide opportunities for co-operation, collaboration and personal development. Time spent together with others will help cement life-long friendships and strengthen a team spirit. Social time will provide occasions for relaxation in the company of others. Ideally work, other than for the conference, should not be done in this time.

Admissions and Re-admissions

Often other ministers or deacons will join the conference programme for some or all of its parts. They are entering the ministry of the Church of Scotland through the **Admissions and Re-admissions** process as part of which they undergo a period of familiarisation. Please welcome these colleagues as part of the peer group.

Pre-Conference

Time-tabling events around attendance at conference is an important discipline so probationers are able to arrive on time and participate throughout. Advance arrangements should be made with supervisors to ensure minimum preparation for the following Sunday. The Task Group is aware that this time away from family and other responsibilities is not easy to achieve, but feel the group experience is an essential part of training.

All probationers must attend the four conferences in all parts:

Papers for Conferences

Probationers should bring all papers that have been sent by post along with any other books and materials they have been requested to bring. Any preparatory work should also be done as a matter of priority – you will only get out of the conference programme as much as you are prepared to put in.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, where it is likely a probationer will miss all or part of a conference, the following procedures should be followed:

- The probationer should make immediate telephone contact with the Ministries Council and speak in person to the Training Development Officer. In the event of that person being unavailable, another Ministries Support Officer should be contacted and an appropriate message left with a contact number for reply. It is vital that this is done as soon as possible for various practical reasons related to conference arrangements but more importantly to ensure that permission to be absent is given. In some circumstances probationers may be asked to provide written information or medical certification in support of their request. Candidates should report any bereavement within their own family to the TDO.
- Any emergency at the conference should be reported immediately to the TDO.

Conference Venue

Normally single room accommodation will be provided; however, on occasion it may be necessary for candidates to share if single room accommodation is not available.

Special diets should be sent in writing to the TDO or office by the probationer for each conference, as a number of different venues are used by the Ministries Council. At the venue the candidate should identify him/herself to the staff to ensure the correct diet.

Fire regulations are normally listed on the information given at the venue along with smoking regulations, key and other domestic arrangements.

Travel Expenses

The Ministries Council will pay travel expenses at the Task Group rate as outlined in the claim form. It is expected that those travelling a great distance will make advance bookings for the best prices.

Mobile Telephones

Mobile phones should be switched off during the conference sessions.

ABSENCE FROM CONFERENCES

Attendance at conferences is a compulsory part of training, and allows a consistent and coherent programme to be followed by all probationers. It also allows space for reflection, an opportunity for collaboration with fellow trainee ministers and deacons and an increased sense of belonging. It is therefore assumed that students will attend all conferences, treating attendance as being of the highest priority.

However, it is recognised that there will be times when a probationer will have an unexpected difficulty with attendance. It is essential that, as soon as the difficulty becomes apparent, the probationer must contact the relevant Training Development Officer and discuss the particular situation.

Where only a short absence is agreed to be necessary e.g. to attend a funeral, it is usually possible for a probationer to complete an essay to make up for the absence from the conference.

Each case will be discussed, and the particular set of circumstances considered, on an individual basis.

The aim will be to provide support for the probationer, minimise disruption for staff and candidate, and ensure that a full training is experienced by the probationer.

The Task Group will continue to monitor the policy and the details of absences.

13. MINISTRIES TRAINING NETWORK

The Ministries Training Network is a series of regional meetings designed to enable candidates to meet together for worship, peer support and learning. The written work from these meetings forms the basis of a portfolio of work which demonstrates the Candidate's integration of theory and practice and will be assessed by an independent marker. The proposals for a Training Network for candidates, which were approved by the Ministries Council, were also approved by the General Assembly of 2007.

SEQUENCE OF MEETINGS

There will be one meeting per month, organised locally in groups of about 6 - 8 Candidates. These will be held between October and May and will be considered part of the placement. In addition Candidates will be required to journal – about 200 - 300 words per fortnight, reflecting on the placement experience if they are on placement, otherwise on any worship, pastoral, academic experiences that cause them to reflect.

CONTENT OF MEETINGS

Meetings will consist of biblical/theological reflection and reflection on case studies/verbatim reports brought by each candidate in turn. Meetings will begin with worship.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment of development would be on the basis of growing spirituality, leadership skills and awareness of vocation. Once during the year candidates will be asked to reflect critically and theologically on externally provided material and such reflections would be assessed. The material will relate directly to the practice of ministry e.g. material on spirituality or leadership skills.

In probation there is no requirement to journal however the task Group strongly recommends this practice. It is hoped that by the time a probationer reaches this stage the value of journaling as a reflective tool will be clear.

Structure of Meetings and Guidelines for Submission

Structure of Meetings

- A 2-hour meeting a month from October to May, offset against placement time.
- Small groups of 6 – 8 candidates organised geographically.
- Opening worship (10 – 15 minutes)
- Biblical reflection (45 minutes)
- One verbatim/case study from each candidate (in each month one would be provided for discussion, analysis and reflection). (60 minutes)

One assessed exercise

- Essay on the practice of ministry - reflection on provided material. This material will relate directly to the practice of ministry e.g. material on spirituality or leadership skills. A bibliography will be provided for this, but should not be considered to be exclusive. This is a reflective piece outlining how the reading has influenced/shaped your understanding of ministry and how your practice will alter as a result. (1500 words max)

Submissions

Essay on the practice of ministry:

Submission in February date tbc

All submissions will be assessed as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. A satisfactory submission will show signs of engagement with and critical reflection on the issues, a self-awareness in terms of good or poor practice, the identification of learning needs and a commitment to improved practice in ministry.

Submissions should be emailed to Fiona Wyllie on fwyllie@churchofscotland.org.uk by the appropriate date. **Submission dates should be strictly observed and are issued early to allow for forward planning.** Late submissions are unhelpful to and inconsiderate of the assessor and may result in work having to be repeated. If an emergency arises, you should contact the appropriate member of staff in the first instance.

Each page should carry as a header:

- Candidate's name
- University
- Year of study (Church of Scotland not academic) eg 1 of 3
- Placement number (if applicable)
- Name of facilitator

Please note: all conversations, written exercises and observations are completely confidential and should not be discussed outwith the context of the reflective group.

14. CHURCH LAW

It is a requirement of the regulations that all candidates should have satisfactory attendance at, and performance in, a course in Church Law. This will be provided at the probationary placement / probationers' conferences and must be completed within this conference programme. One essay will be set over the course of the year and marked by the Board of Practice and Procedure as a process of assessment.

All documents can be accessed on the Church website through the extranet:
http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about_us/church_law/acts

- Submission date: May
- E-mail to Fiona Cunningham – fcunningham@churchofscotland.org.uk.
- Receipt of the submission will be acknowledged by email.
- Ensure that the submission is named and dated.
- Indicate whether you are a probationer or in the familiarisation process.
- Keep a copy.
- If some last-minute emergency occurs which will make the submission date difficult for you to adhere to, contact the TDO to discuss the situation.
- Submissions will be marked within 4 weeks (if submitted on time), and returned to you with comments.
- If a submission is not satisfactory, you will be given guidance as to re-submission.
- This submission forms part of your church requirements, and your year cannot be deemed satisfactory without successful completion of this piece of work.
- The submission date is set so as to give sufficient time for marking (and re-submission if necessary) before the first Final Review Meetings start (or familiarisation is due to end).

Probation			
Conference 1	Overview	Westminster Confession Articles Declaratory	Be aware of what it means to be Presbyterian. Why we are governed in the way we are, how it relates to scripture and Church history and what the relevance of this is to the Church today.
Conference 3	Local Church Review	2011 Act 1: Local Church Review	Understand the nature and purpose of Local Church Review as a tool to develop mission and vision
Conference 3	Baptism	2000 Act 5: Sacraments - consolidating act	Have a good understanding of Church Law relating to baptism and be aware of how this affects practice.
Conference 3	Marriage	1978 Act 3: Proclamation of banns 1977 Act 1: Recognition of marriage services 1959 Act 26: Remarriage of divorced persons Marriage Act Scotland	Have a good understanding of Church Law relating to marriage and be aware of how this affects practice.
Conference 4	Vacancy procedures	2003 Act 08: Vacancy Procedures	Understand Church Law as it related to vacancy procedures
Day Conference	OSCR Trusteeship Buildings		Have a good awareness of the relationship between OSCR regulations and Church Law and the role and responsibilities of Trustees. Understand Church Law as it relates to buildings
24 hour Conference: GA	General Assembly	Practice and Procedure	Experience of the General Assembly and an introduction to its practice and procedure

15. ROLE OF PRESBYTERY (INCLUDING PASTORAL CARE)

Pastoral Care

Whilst the Ministries Council seeks to support all candidates for ministry as it is able, through staff support, hardship funds, trained supervisors and placement support groups, the primary pastoral support of candidates is the responsibility of Presbyteries. It is important, as in the case with ordained ministers and deacons, that appropriate pastoral care is extended to candidates in training for the diaconate. Please contact the appropriate person in your Presbytery in this regard – if in doubt, contact the Presbytery Clerk.

Unless you opt to change, you remain under the care of your nominating Presbytery throughout your training, however you should take special note of section 19 of the Regulations which apply if you change your permanent place of residence outwith the bounds of the Presbytery which nominated you. It is a requirement that, at the start of the 12 month final placement, candidates transfer to the Presbytery in which the charge, where he/she is working, is situated if this is not their original nominating presbytery.

If your situation is such that you wish to change presbytery the following procedure should be followed. Write to your Presbytery asking to be transferred to the Presbytery in which you will be working, inviting them to send an extract minute to that effect to the receiving Presbytery and to the Ministries Council. Write to the Presbytery to which you wish to transfer asking them to assume responsibility as your nominating Presbytery and to send an extract minute to that effect to the Ministries Council. It would be helpful if you would also write to the TDO with the same information.

Presbyteries are required to reaffirm each candidate's suitability for training on an annual basis.

It may be possible to make candidates corresponding members – including those candidates resident within the bounds who have been nominated by other Presbyteries.

As a result of the General Assembly of 2004, the Candidature Review processes will be instituted with all candidates from 2004 onwards (as indicated in the Act) and Presbytery will be involved in the ongoing review, support and evaluation of a candidate's progress towards ordination.

If on reaching the end of your Probationary Placement you have not yet secured an appointment, the Presbytery assumes the primary responsibility for your care. In such circumstances it is recommended that the Presbytery seek to provide you with remunerative employment, if at all possible, as payment from the Ministries Council will cease at the end of the fifteen month period.

16. FINANCE

If you are experiencing financial hardship, it is possible to apply for hardship funds administered by the Church of Scotland through the Ministries Council however you must supply the Ministries Council with details of your financial status. Please be assured that such an application is treated in the strictest confidence. If it seems that you may be facing serious financial difficulties, then it is best to seek help sooner rather than later – the staff of the Ministries Council would be willing to help you find the right advice in this regard.

It should also be noted that the Ministries Council, in general circumstances, is not able to afford to pay for childcare costs, but will look at cases of genuine hardship.

The Church of Scotland car loan scheme is not open to Probationers, but some car leasing schemes may be. Contact the department for details.

Travel Expenses incurred in the course of your duties are paid by the department. A log book is provided for this purpose, sent to you with your introductory pack. Replacements are available from the department.

Reimbursement Rates

The Ministry Support Task Group recommended that the travel reimbursement rate for candidates in their placements should be paid at **45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile for any additional miles.**

Inland Revenue Rules

The mileage claimed has to be **wholly, exclusively and necessarily** in the pursuit of your duties in your placement and does not include travel to and from the church which for the purposes of the placement is designated as your place of work.

When a candidate is placed by the Training Task Group in a parish that is outwith a reasonable distance from home (more than 15 miles each way), a case should be made to the Task Group to allow travel reimbursement to the parish bounds at the Task Group expenses rate of 25p per mile.

General Information

The church or church office or similar 'space' given to you within the parish to work is defined for Inland Revenue purposes as your office. Please note that if travelling direct to a pastoral visit or elsewhere within the parish from home, the mileage can be charged at 40p.

Procedure

All travel reimbursement claims must be claimed through the log book.

All travel reimbursements will be paid through the payroll along with your placement salary.

The monthly claim form must be in by the 12th of the month following the claim. This will be paid at the end of that month, e.g. October mileage in by the 12th November will be paid in November's payroll.

Please note that November mileage must be in by 6th December.

For travel expenses other than mileage there is a place on the form to reclaim these e.g. bus fares.

DO NOT INCLUDE EXPENSES OTHER THAN TRAVEL ON THE FORM

If you have financial difficulties and want to apply to the hardship funds, please do not wait till the problem has become a crisis. Application should be made to Elaine Macadie, Asst Treasurer (Ministries), through your Training Development Officer, whenever the problem begins to surface. All applications will be treated in confidence and the help given related to your individual circumstances, but you must fill in a form (available from Elaine), giving details of your income and expenditure. Hardship funds are available to all who are encountering genuine distress and who have availed themselves of all other financial assistance.

Please do not feel embarrassed about asking for help.

17. MISCELLANEOUS

PROCEDURES IN CASES OF ILLNESS

All candidates must report all absence from work to the Ministries Council through the TDO. Initially this should be intimated by telephone, however the pro-forma notification of absence through illness or a similar statement should be sent on return to work or after seven days absence, whichever is the sooner. Where absence is for over 7 days, it is necessary to attach a medical certificate covering the period of illness. Certificates should then be submitted regularly until a final certificate shows the date of return to work/studies. Candidates must continue to advise the Ministries Council accordingly through the TDO.

The above information basically ensures that the Ministries Council's administrative procedures run smoothly, however please note that members of staff of the Ministries Council are always prepared to advise, assist and support any candidate in time of illness. In such cases, please write separately and mark the letter "confidential".

Presbytery, being the primary focus for pastoral support for candidates, should be notified in cases of illness, either by contacting the Presbytery Clerk or other appropriately appointed person within Presbytery.

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

Name

.....

Presbytery

.....

Congregation

.....

Date of Birth

.....

I hereby certify that I was unfit for duty from

..... (time)

on (day) (date)

(*delete if not appropriate)

* I resumed my duties on (day)(date)

* I continue to be unfit and enclose a Medical Certificate.

My Doctor's name and address is

.....

.....

Signed Date

Please return this form immediately if your illness lasts for more than 7 days, together with a Medical Certificate. Otherwise return the form upon your return to duty when the illness lasts for 7 days or less. Please note that when completing the form you should consider yourself as having a 7 day qualifying week.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

This form should be completed and returned to the Ministries Council as soon as possible if you are changing your address.

Name:

Address:
.....
.....
.....

Tel. No.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

This form should be completed and returned to the Ministries Council as soon as possible if you are changing your address.

Name:

Address:
.....
.....
.....

Tel. No.

APPENDIX I

CANDIDATE'S GUIDE TO THE INDICATORS FOR ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The Assessment Criteria outlined in this document are those which are used throughout the processes of assessment and training of all candidates for Church of Scotland ministry.

The qualities and skills named here are not all of equal importance, nor is the list comprehensive, but it does offer you a picture of the kind of considerations the Annual Review will take into account in making a decision about your suitability to continue as a candidate.

Integration of Life and Faith

How and in what ways does the Candidate bring together the different parts of life under the heading of spirituality? In what ways has their background and life experience influenced them and brought them to this point?

Interpersonal, Leadership and Teamwork Skills

How does the Candidate relate to and deal with people? What leadership potential is evident? How does the Candidate work as part of a team? How does the Candidate deal with conflict?

Openness to Learning

How does the Candidate learn and how open are they to ongoing learning (continuous ministerial development)? How does the Candidate handle criticism, both just and unjust?

Preparation and Reflective Skills

How is the Candidate preparing? How does the Candidate organise and manage their life and work? How does the Candidate assimilate, analyse and integrate their experience?

Handling and Facilitating Change

How does the Candidate initiate and respond to change and how does the Candidate help others to deal with it?

Discernment and Affirmation of Call

How does the Candidate view their calling? In what ways has their call been affirmed? What is their understanding of the distinct role of the Ministry for which they are applying in the life of the Church of Scotland?

APPENDIX II

ORDINATION VOWS

Do you believe in one God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and do you confess anew the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

I do.

Do you believe the Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, to be the supreme rule of faith and life?

I do.

Do you believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained in the Confession of Faith of this Church?

I do.

Do you acknowledge the Presbyterian government of this Church to be agreeable to the Word of God; and do you promise to be subject in the Lord to this Presbytery and to the General Assembly of this Church, and to take your due part in the administration of its affairs?

I do.

Do you promise to seek the unity and peace of this Church; to uphold the doctrine, worship, government, and discipline thereof; and to cherish a spirit of love towards all your brothers and sisters in Christ?

I do.

Are not zeal for the glory of God, love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire for the salvation of all people, so far as you know your own heart, your great motives and chief inducements to become a Deacon?

They are.

Do you engage in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ to live a godly and circumspect life; and faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully to discharge the duties as a Deacon, seeking in all things the advancement of the kingdom of God?

I do.

APPENDIX III

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND GOOD CONDUCT FOR THE MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Introduction

Applicability of the Code

The Code applies to all those serving in the recognised ministries of the Church of Scotland. Throughout the Code, the terms 'ministry' and 'recognised ministries' shall include ordained ministers, deacons and readers, and all paid employees in parish appointments, as defined in section 16(1) and 16(1)(a) of Act VII 2003.

Scope of the Code

The Code sets out the standards of conduct expected by the General Assembly. The Code is not intended to be an expansion or amplification of Act III 2001 anent Discipline of Ministers, Licentiates, Graduate Candidates and Deacons (as amended by Acts III and IX 2002, III 2003, X 2004, III 2005, XVI 2006, I and II 2007, VII 2008, I 2009, III 2010, III 2011 and VI 2012), and should not be regarded as containing an authoritative or exhaustive list of disciplinary offences. Presbyteries must always have primary regard to the terms of the Church's legislation, but are entitled to have regard to the terms of the Code in making their own assessment of the adequacy of conduct. The Code complements the policies and rules set out in the Ministers' and Employees Handbooks which cover such matters as balance of duties, absence, maternity and paternity leave, holiday arrangements, health and safety, discrimination, bullying and harassment. In addition the Code can be used:

- as a basis for education programmes to support good practice;
- as a document to reassure the public that all those serving in recognised ministries of the Church of Scotland are provided with a framework of standards and accountability;
- as a framework for analysing concerns and defining problems about conduct in all aspects of church life and work.

The Code is not a substitute for reflective and ethically disciplined practice, continuing learning and development, and regular supervision. Equally the Code is not to be used as a measure of ministerial capability. Such issues are matters for review under others headings such as accompanied review, support and development, further training, etc.

An ethical basis for the Code

The Church is concerned with the spiritual care, nurture and wellbeing of women, men, and children both within and outwith the membership of the Church of Scotland. Those engaged in the ministries of the Church of Scotland (as defined above) have ethical obligations in the way they carry out their ministry. These obligations prohibit harm and promote the good of the person. The context of ministry is one in which people are often vulnerable and in need of support. Establishing appropriate boundaries fosters trust, helps to clarify ethical actions and enables the relationships involved in ministry to function effectively.

Ministry usually proceeds without any explicit agreement. It takes place wherever there is need and it is often unplanned. Even in a caring relationship, however, there is also a possibility that attempting to do good may result in a degree of harm, and that in helping others, those involved in ministry may be fulfilling a personal need. Therefore in deciding what to do in any particular situation, those involved in ministry need to be able to exercise ethical reasoning and deliberation in order to justify their actions.

I. General Conduct

Those serving in the recognised ministries of the Church of Scotland are responsible for their personal and ministerial conduct and must be able to justify their actions and practice to those in their care and to colleagues. In particular they should:

- act at all times in ways that promote trust and confidence in their profession;
- act at all times to promote and safeguard the interests and wellbeing of those to whom they minister;

- affirm the equal dignity and worth of those to whom they minister;
- act with integrity and with due respect for diversity and differences including, but not limited to, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age and disability
- maintain good standing in the Church of Scotland;
- ensure that their conduct is consistent with their profession and appropriate to the setting in which they work.

2. Relationships between those in ministry and those they minister to

Relationships have the capacity to be nurturing and healing, but they also have the potential to be damaging and destructive. An important reason for this is the intrinsic imbalance of power in the relationship. Those involved in ministry, therefore, should be aware of issues of power and should exercise any perceived power with sensitivity, discernment and within ethical boundaries. Those involved in ministry will seek to develop appropriate pastoral and supportive relationships within the whole people of God and with those to whom ministry is freely offered. The primary focus will be meeting the needs of those being ministered to; in this it may be appropriate to express our own vulnerability; but it would be an abuse of a pastoral relationship for those in ministry to use it to meet their own needs.

3. Maintaining Trust

Ministry is both a privilege and a responsibility and those involved in ministry need to establish boundaries that enable trust and safeguard ethical relationships with those to whom they minister. In particular those involved in ministry should:

- behave in ways that honour the dignity and value of those to whom they minister;
- ensure as far as possible that no action or omission on their part and within their sphere of responsibility could be detrimental to the wellbeing of those to whom they minister;
- respect the trust established with those to whom they minister, while understanding the limits of confidentiality;
- respect the autonomy of those to whom they minister;
- recognise and act within the limits of their competence;
- maintain clear boundaries in the areas of self-disclosure, intimacy and sexuality;
- avoid any conflicts of interest; but in the event that the person involved in ministry has to withdraw on the grounds of conscience or ethical principles, endeavour to refer to someone else who can facilitate the transfer and continuity of ministry.

4. Respecting Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a condition of trust that enables people to seek help at a time of need and to talk about personal, private and secret matters relevant to their spiritual health and wellbeing. Ministry often involves access to confidential information. Those engaged in ministry, therefore, must respect confidences, and in particular they should:

- respect the right of individuals to control access to their own personal information and to limit its disclosure;
- establish the boundaries of confidentiality with those to whom they minister and respect as far as possible the limitations of disclosure that an individual can reasonably expect or request;
- treat information about those to whom they minister as confidential and use it only for the purposes for which it was given;
- guard against breaches of confidentiality by protecting information from improper disclosure at all times;
- ensure that confidential information is not disclosed to a third party unless there are clear grounds for disclosure including: (1) the consent of the individual; (2) the public interest, particularly where there is a risk of harm or self-harm; (3) and in accordance with an order of a court or other public body that has jurisdiction. In this regard particular attention is drawn to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 and the Church's Safeguarding Service's Safeguarding Handbook I, June 2011 which contains the Code of Good Safeguarding Practice for Kirk Sessions and Congregations in the Church of Scotland;

- discuss with those to whom they minister reasons why disclosing confidential information to other persons might be of benefit to the provision of good care;
- uphold the absolute confidentiality of information disclosed.

5. Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and legal rights by any other person or persons. It is behaviour that is a clear departure from the ethical conduct required of us all. It can result from a misuse of power or a betrayal of trust, respect or intimacy which causes harm or exploitation. It can be caused by purposeful or negligent actions as well as a failure to act where a duty exists. The main forms of abuse include spiritual, physical, psychological, verbal, sexual, and financial, and are defined here in the context of Christian ministry:

- Spiritual abuse is the imposition of values and beliefs on those to whom we minister; and while mission is part of the work of ministry, it is an abuse to fail to respect the freedom of those to whom we minister to make choices for themselves;
- Physical abuse is any form of physical contact which is likely to cause distress, pain or bodily harm;
- Psychological abuse is behaviour by a person in ministry which is exploitative, inappropriately manipulative, coercive or intimidating;
- Verbal abuse is spoken remarks by a person in ministry which are disrespectful, humiliating, intimidating or harmful to those to whom they minister;
- Sexual abuse is forcing, coercing or inducing any person to whom we minister to establish or pursue a sexual or improper emotional relationship and also the passing of hurtful remarks of a sexual nature;
- Financial or material abuse is the misappropriation of a person's money or assets by those involved in ministry through fraud or deception; or through misuse of a person's assets or money while having a legitimate access to them.

Though these definitions do not constitute any part of the specific terms of Act III 2001, the General Assembly believes that any Presbytery would be very likely to institute proceedings in terms of the Act upon receiving notice of circumstances indicating that such abuse may have been committed.

6. The Use of Touch

Touch is a basic human gesture and physical contact is an integral part of wellbeing. Touch conveys to many people reassurance, care and concern and it can be a valuable expression of a supportive or therapeutic relationship. But touch is not value-free, it is conditioned by social and cultural norms and it can convey powerful signals. Therefore touch may be perceived as threatening or manipulative, it could be physically painful and it can be a form of abuse.

People use touch informally as a gesture of care and formally within rituals to signify beliefs and theological actions. However, because the use of touch can be misunderstood or misinterpreted, or it may be unwanted, particular sensitivity should be exercised and assumptions about gender and personal space carefully considered. If in any doubt as to whether touch may be acceptable, permission should be obtained. The use of ritual that involves touch should be carefully explained and permission obtained.

7. Working with Colleagues

Working in ministry often depends on collaboration with colleagues both in other ministries and in other disciplines. In particular those in ministry should:

- respect the skills, contributions and integrity of colleagues;
- work in a collaborative and co-operative manner with colleagues and communicate effectively with them within the limits of confidentiality;
- respect the boundaries of other parishes, and take care not to undertake pastoral or sacramental duties within another parish for anyone other than a member of the congregation in which they minister. The

recognised exceptions are (1) the conduct of a marriage or a funeral by private invitation and (2) circumstances in which the express permission of the minister of the other parish has been secured.

- participate in the work of multidisciplinary teams they are members of and respect their confidentiality;
- challenge colleagues who appear to have behaved unethically or in contravention of this Code. In addition be prepared to bring concerns of misconduct to those charged with responsibility for colleagues.

8. Probity in Practice

The office of a recognised ministry in the Church of Scotland requires the highest standards of moral integrity and honesty. In particular those involved in ministry must:

- be honest and accurate in representing their professional affiliations, qualifications, and experience, and not make unjustifiable claims about their competence;
- distinguish between pastoral care and formal counselling and ensure that those to whom they minister understand the form of support being offered;
- not charge individuals personal fees for baptisms, weddings or funerals: in all circumstances ministers should follow the guidelines contained in the Year Book in respect of charging for weddings and funerals.
- refrain from encouraging inappropriately those to whom they minister to give, lend or bequeath money or gifts which will be of a direct or indirect benefit to themselves, or put pressure on those to whom they minister to make donations;
- manage any finances for which they are responsible with diligence and for the purpose for which they are intended;
- declare any involvement that might cause a conflict of interest;
- demonstrate honesty and objectivity when providing references for colleagues or completing and signing forms. Reasonable steps must be taken to verify any statement before they sign a document, and they must not write or sign documents which are false or misleading.

9. Dealing with Misconduct

There is a wide range of behaviour that contravenes the boundaries of ministry and which constitutes misconduct including:

- failure to meet the standards of the Church of Scotland in respect of matters of Life and Doctrine;
- failure to fulfil the obligations expected of an office bearer or the contractual obligations as an employee;
- infringement of the disciplinary rules of the church courts or employer, including professional misconduct;
- wilful, careless, inappropriate or unethical behaviour likely to compromise the standards of a professional ministry;
- committing criminal offences in particular circumstances outside the place of work

Professional misconduct is conduct that contravenes the standards of professional behaviour required by the General Assembly.

10. Discipline

Presbytery is responsible for the disciplining of all Ministers and Deacons. Where allegations involving issues of professional conduct are raised, Presbytery must proceed to investigate in terms of Act III 2001 anent Discipline of Ministers, Licentiates, Graduate Candidates and Deacons (as amended by Acts III and IX 2002, III 2003, X 2004, III 2005, XVI 2006, I and II 2007, VII 2008, I 2009, III, 2010, III 2011 and VI 2012).

Where an investigation establishes a suspected criminal action this must be reported to the police

APPENDIX IV

The Articles Declaratory

I. The Church of Scotland is part of the Holy Catholic or Universal Church; worshipping one God, Almighty, all-wise, and all-loving, in the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; adoring the Father, infinite in Majesty, of whom are all things; confessing our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son, made very man for our salvation; glorying in His Cross and Resurrection, and owning obedience to Him as the Head over all things to His Church; trusting in the promised renewal and guidance of the Holy Spirit; proclaiming the forgiveness of sins and acceptance with God through faith in Christ, and the gift of Eternal Life; and labouring for the advancement of the Kingdom of God throughout the world. The Church of Scotland adheres to the Scottish Reformation; receives the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as its supreme rule of faith and life; and avows the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic faith founded thereupon.

II. The principal subordinate standard of the Church of Scotland is the Westminster Confession of Faith approved by the General Assembly of 1647, containing the sum and substance of the Faith of the Reformed Church. Its government is Presbyterian, and is exercised through Kirk Sessions; Presbyteries, [Provincial Synods deleted by Act V, 1992], and General Assemblies. Its system and principles of worship, orders, and discipline are in accordance with "The Directory for the Public Worship of God," "The Form of Presbyterial Church Government " and "The Form of Process," as these have been or may hereafter be interpreted or modified by Acts of the General Assembly or by consuetude.

III. This Church is in historical continuity with the Church of Scotland which was reformed in 1560, whose liberties were ratified in 1592, and for whose security provision was made in the Treaty of Union of 1707. The continuity and identity of the Church of Scotland are not prejudiced by the adoption of these Articles. As a national Church representative of the Christian Faith of the Scottish people it acknowledges its distinctive call and duty to bring the ordinances of religion to the people in every parish of Scotland through a territorial ministry.

IV. This Church as part of the Universal Church wherein the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed a government in the hands of Church office-bearers, receives from Him, its Divine King and Head, and From Him alone, the right and power subject to no civil authority to legislate, and to adjudicate finally, in all matters of doctrine, worship, government, and discipline in the Church, including the right to determine all questions concerning membership and office in the Church, the constitution and membership of its Courts, and the mode of election of its office-bearers, and to define the boundaries of the spheres of labour of its ministers and other office-bearers. Recognition by civil authority of the separate and independent government and jurisdiction of this Church in matters spiritual, in whatever manner such recognition be expressed, does not in any way affect the character of this government and jurisdiction as derived from the Divine Head of the Church alone or give to the civil authority any right of interference with the proceedings or judgments of the Church within the sphere of its spiritual government and jurisdiction.

V. This Church has the inherent right, free from interference by civil authority, but under the safeguards for deliberate action and legislation provided by the Church itself, to frame or adopt its subordinate

standards, to declare the sense in which it understands its Confession of Faith, to modify the forms of expression therein, or to formulate other doctrinal statements, and to define the relation thereto of its office-bearers and members, but always in agreement with the Word of God and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith contained in the said Confession, of which agreement the Church shall be sole judge, and with due regard to liberty of opinion in points which do not enter into the substance of the Faith.

VI. This Church acknowledges the divine appointment and authority of the civil magistrate within his own sphere, and maintains its historic testimony to the duty of the nation acting in its corporate capacity to render homage to God, to acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ to be King over the nations, to obey His laws, to reverence His ordinances, to honour His Church, and to promote in all appropriate ways the Kingdom of God. The Church and the State owe mutual duties to each other, and acting within their respective spheres may signally promote each other's welfare.

The Church and the State have the right to determine each for itself all questions concerning the extent and the continuance of their mutual relations in the discharge of these duties and the obligations arising therefrom.

VII. The Church of Scotland, believing it to be the will of Christ that His disciples should be all one in the Father and in Him, that the world may believe that the Father has sent Him, recognises the obligation to seek and promote union with other Churches in which it finds the Word to be purely preached, the sacraments administered according to Christ's ordinance, and discipline rightly exercised; and it has the right to unite with any such Church without loss of its identity on terms which this Church finds to be consistent with these Articles.

VIII. The Church has the right to interpret these Articles, and, subject to the safeguards for deliberate action and legislation provided by the Church itself, to modify or add to them; but always consistently with the provisions of the first Article hereof, adherence to which, as interpreted by the Church, is essential to its continuity and corporate life. Any proposal for a modification of or addition to these Articles which may be approved of by the General Assembly shall, before it can be enacted by the Assembly, be transmitted by way of overture to Presbyteries in at least two immediately successive years. If the overture shall receive the approval, with or without suggested amendment, of two-thirds of the whole of the Presbyteries of the Church, the Assembly may revise the overture in the light of any suggestions by the Presbyteries, and may transmit the overture when so revised to Presbyteries for their consent. If the overture as transmitted in its final form shall receive the consent of not less than two-thirds of the whole of the Presbyteries of the Church, the General Assembly may, if it deems it expedient, modify or add to these Articles in terms of the said overture. But if the overture as transmitted in its final form shall not receive the requisite consent, the same or a similar proposal shall not be again transmitted for the consent of Presbyteries until an interval of five years after the failure to obtain the requisite consent has been reported to the General Assembly.

IX. Subject to the provisions of the foregoing Articles and the powers of amendment therein contained, the Constitution of the Church of Scotland in matters spiritual is hereby anew ratified and confirmed by the Church.