CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

READERSHIP HANDBOOK

January 2021 Version

CONTENTS

1. WHO TO CONTACT

2. THE MINISTRY OF THE READER

Background

Specific Role of Reader

Specific Restrictions on Readers in Training

3. SELECTION OF READERS

Introduction

Stage One: Contact & Preparation

Stage Two: The Discernment Process

Stage Three: Possible Decisions of the Local Review

4. THE READERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMME

Introduction

Academic Study

Residential Conferences

Practical Training

5. SETTING APART

Completion of Training

Setting Apart

6. SUMMARY OF PRESBYTERY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Regent

When an applicant first applies

When an applicant is accepted as a Reader in Training

Once it has been agreed to set a Reader apart

7. READERS IN SERVICE

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Course Fees Reimbursement Form

Appendix 2: Placement Report Form (R1)

Appendix 3: Readership Placement Guidance for Supervisors

Appendix 4: Readership Act

Appendix 5: FPA – Assessor Guidance

Appendix 6: FPA Report – Completion Guide

Appendix 7: FPA – Areas for Evaluation

Appendix 8: FPA Report – Template

Appendix 9: Placement Learning Agreement Exemplar

1. WHO TO CONTACT

Faith Nurture, Church of Scotland, 121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN

Telephone: 0131 225 5722

Faith Nurture is responsible for both initial training and in-service training of Readers. The administrator, Irene McConnell, deals with general enquiries and bookings for Readers in Training as well as keeping the database up to date and organising mailings. Irene will forward any other queries to the appropriate member of staff within Faith Nurture.

Administration for Readership: Irene McConnell

Telephone: 0131 225 5722 extension 2233

Email: IMcConnell@churchofscotland.org.uk

General Enquiries: ReaderTraining@churchofscotland.org.uk

**Reader in Training**

Faith Nurture should be notified

• When each placement commences and the contact details of the Supervisor (by the Supervisor)

• Of the academic provider that the Readership training modules are to be studied with and copies of appropriate pass certificates (by the trainee Reader)

• The date the trainee Reader has been set apart (via a minute extract from the Presbytery Clerk)

• If the trainee Reader has changed address (by the trainee Reader)

• If the trainee Reader is to be removed from the roll for any reason (by the Presbytery Clerk)

• Of any changes in contact details.

**Reader (in Service)**

Faith Nurture should be notified

• If the Reader has changed address (by the Reader)

• If the Reader has retired (by the Reader)

• If the Reader is to be removed from the roll for any reason (by the Presbytery Clerk)

• If there is a change in the Presbytery’s person responsible for Readers (by the Presbytery Clerk)

• Of any changes in contact details

2. THE MINISTRY OF THE READER

**Background**

The Office of Reader has undergone considerable change in recent years. Restored during the First World War as a way of providing pulpit supply in emergencies, it gradually became accepted as a regular ministry within the Church. Over time, the old ruling that you could use a Reader only if a Minister or Student was not available was eventually abolished. Then, in an Act of the General Assembly of 1992, a new concept was introduced: the Reader qualified for attachment to a charge.

All Readers now being trained need to be qualified for this new role. The new role envisages Readers who will work consistently with a Minister in a linkage or a single charge, regularly sharing in the leadership of worship and engaging in pastoral work. They are available to take funerals, to act as chaplains (or assistant chaplains) in schools, homes for the elderly or even small hospitals.

Whether or not a particular Presbytery chooses to attach a Reader to a charge is for them to decide and will be dependent on available places and available Readers. Several Presbyteries have a deliberate policy of attaching Readers, seeing this as a way of creating the kind of ministry teams which are likely to be increasingly important as patterns of ministry develop and change. Some Readers have been appointed by their Presbytery to work as part of a prison chaplaincy team or as locum in a vacancy.

**Specific Role of Reader**

• Readers can conduct public worship and preach anywhere within the Church of Scotland.

• Readers may accept invitations to conduct worship in churches of other denominations. They should not, however, perform for another denomination a role which Readers cannot perform in their own Church. Invitations to preside at the Lord’s Table or to conduct Baptisms should therefore be declined.

• Readers can perform any worship-related task assigned to them by Presbytery. They may be attached to a charge to work as part of a ministry team under the leadership of the Minister. They may be appointed to a chaplaincy, provided that the institution concerned does not require appointees to be ordained ministers. They may undertake a special role for Presbytery. They may be appointed to act as locum, under the direction of an ordained Minister.

• Readers are not members of Presbytery, although they are under the supervision of Presbytery. Presbyteries are encouraged, however, to grant them the status of corresponding member.

• Readers form one of four categories of recognised ministry within the Church of Scotland under the direct supervision of Presbytery. All four categories take the same vows, which are listed in the Act anent the Readership. There are overlapping functions between the four, but each has its own specific focus:

**MINISTERS** are responsible for a ministry of word and sacrament. Most are charged with the care of a congregation and its parish, are responsible to Presbytery for the conduct of worship and preside over the Kirk Session. Some may fulfil other roles, such as a ministry of education, a chaplaincy or a role in the Church Offices. They are ordained as “teaching elders”, are members of Presbytery, and, by custom, use the title Reverend. Most receive a stipend for their work.

**ORDAINED LOCAL MINISTERS** play a similar role, but in support of a Minister. They always work as part of a team, and receive no stipend. They are authorised to function only within their particular assignment. They are ordained as “teaching elders”, are members of Presbytery, and, by custom, use the title Reverend.

**DEACONS** exercise a ministry of service. Many work as Ministries Development Staff (MDS) within a team-ministry, while others have non-stipendiary roles within the Church, and others play roles – for instance, in counselling or education outwith the Church, and are not part of any formal ministry-team. They are ordained to their office, are members of Presbytery, and, by custom, use the letters DCS (Diaconate of the Church of Scotland) after their names.

**READERS** exercise a ministry of Word, but not of sacrament. When in a peripatetic role, their task is to provide pulpit supply. When attached to a charge, their role is similar to that of the OLM or Auxiliary Minister, but without his or her sacramental role, and often with less emphasis on pastoral care. They are admitted or “set apart” to their office, are not members of Presbytery, and have no distinguishing title or letters.

• No Reader should conduct a service of public worship including funerals within the bounds of a parish without the approval of the parish minister.

• Readers can conduct any act of public worship except the following:

1. Presiding at Holy Communion

2. Administering Christian baptism

3. Conducting a marriage.

**Specific Restrictions on Readers in Training (RITs)**

• Trainee Readers should not conduct public worship in the Church of Scotland except under supervision, unless doing so as elders in their own congregation as part of an approved scheme. “Under supervision” means in the presence of someone who is authorised (i.e., a Minister, Reader or Deacon). The authorised person must be present throughout the service, and ultimately carries responsibility for all that happens.

• A trainee Reader on placement to a congregation should not conduct worship when neither the minister nor any other authorised person is present. Sometimes, churches have in emergency to use unauthorised people, and it is acceptable for a trainee Reader to respond when the only alternative would be for the service not to take place. When this happens, the congregation is obliged to notify Presbytery of the circumstances within fourteen days.

**3. SELECTION OF READER**

**Introduction**

Anyone considering becoming a Reader is required to undertake the Discernment Process. The process aims to

• help applicants reflect on their sense of vocation

• enable the wider Church to test and reach a decision about the applicant’s suitability as a potential candidate for Readership training.

There are four main stages to the process:

**Stage One: Contact & Preparation**

The first point of contact in thinking through a sense of vocation is Faith Nurture. Staff there will register your interest and provide advice about the way forward:

Recruitment Coordinator Angie McNabb

Telephone: 0131 225 5722 ext 2348;

Email: AMcNabb@churchofscotland.org.uk

Ministry@churchofscotland.org.uk

At this point the enquirer will also receive a questionnaire, which is intended for personal use in identifying his/her own strengths and limitations. This is not seen by anyone other than the enquirer, but can be an important tool in self-analysis of where gifts and skills might best be employed in the wider life of the Church.

**Faith Nurture: Overview of Discernment Process for Ministry**

* Initial enquiry to [ministry@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:ministry@churchofscotland.org.uk)
* The Vocations Team will send paperwork to be completed and returned by the enquirer.



**Contact and Preparation**

**Discernment Conversation**

**Initial Screening**

**Make Application**

* Meeting to review your PoD.
* Review Group: yourself; Mentor; Presbytery Assessor; National Assessor; Staff Member/Note Taker (non-assessing)
* Paperwork includes: reports from yourself, your Mentor, Presbytery Assessor, Screening Report
* Decision made as to whether or not you can proceed (to Assessment Conference for OLM, ONM, Diaconal applicants/to training for Readership).
* Four possible decisions: 1 – proceed; 2 – extended PoD; 3 – no, but opportunity to reapply after given time period – maximum 3 applications; 4 – final consideration made that it will not be possible for you to proceed.
* Faith Nurture assign a Mentor and Presbytery, a Presbytery Assessor.
* Reflection and discernment of call. Possibly some practical experience.
* Lasts 3-6 months
* Attend Placement Church minimum 1 Sunday per month - meet with Mentor at other times during the month.
* Dedicate 8 hours per week to placement.
* Presbytery Assessor meets with you at least once per month (6 times).
* Online Screening Questionnaire.
* Decision as to whether or not to allow you to proceed into Discernment.
* Report produced which goes forward into Discernment.
* If not allowed to proceed, opportunity to reapply after given time period – maximum 3 applications.
* Application Pack available from vocation@churchofscotland.org.uk.
* Enquirer attends a compulsory Discernment Conversation in 121 with a member of the Vocations Team.



**4. THE READERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMME**

Introduction

Having successfully completed the Discernment Process described above there follows a period of Readership training. This involves undergoing an integrated programme of conferences, academic study and practical training (placements). When no prior training has been carried out this programme is expected to be carried out over a period of three years. In the circumstances where appropriate training has been carried out the programme could feasibly be carried out within a two year period, which would effectively result in the year 1 and 2 activities below being combined. A training programme guide is given below.

Year 1 Programme for RITs:

• The trainee Reader commences academic study.

• The trainee is expected to attend three conferences organised by the Faith Nurture.

• The trainee and the Presbytery person responsible for Readership (Regent) should have been in touch with each other at least twice during the year in order to monitor progress, to share any concerns and offer support.

Year 2 Programme:

• The trainee Reader undertakes the first six-month placement arranged by Presbytery, with due consideration of the academic study pattern.

• The trainee is expected to attend two conferences organised by Faith Nurture.

• Presbytery and Faith Nurture receive a report from the supervisor of the placement.

• The trainee and the Regent should have been in touch with each other at least twice during the year in order to monitor progress, to share any concerns and offer support.

Year 3 Programme:

• The trainee Reader undertakes the second six-month placement arranged by Presbytery,

taking into consideration the time demands for academic study.

• Presbytery and Faith Nurture receive a report from the supervisor of the final placement.

• Towards the end of the second placement a formal preaching assessment (FPA) is undertaken by an appointee of Faith Nurture working with the placement supervisor. A representative from Presbytery is usually present (although this may be the supervisor). A report is sent to the Presbytery and to Faith Nurture.

• At the end of the training the Presbytery decides whether to set the trainee Reader apart, and, if so, whether to give any guidance for continuing and in-service training.

**Academic Training**

The programme for the academic element of the training is to the standard of a Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE), equivalent to 120 credit points. At present, Aberdeen University Christian Studies Programme (by distance learning) and the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) Highland Theological College (HTC) are the providers recognised by Faith Nurture.

Where applicants already have academic qualifications in theology, this will be considered and recognised as appropriate. It should be noted that specific training and reflection on the practical skills required by Readers will always be required, and attendance at conferences will be expected. All those undertaking Readership training will be required to sign an agreement to enable the Training Officer to have reasonable access to their assessed work and to module results from the academic provider.

Faith Nurture will also consider applications for a 100% refund of the course fees incurred, if submitted within three months of issue. Applications should be made to the Faith Nurture on form AF1, a copy of which is contained in the appendix 1.

NB: Although the final CertHE may not be issued until after the Examination Boards of the universities meet (usually late autumn) in most cases it should be possible to issue the Readership Certificate soon after the course is complete and confirmation received that everything has been completed satisfactorily. This will allow Presbyteries to set apart those who have achieved the standard of the CertHE but may have to wait for several months to receive the Certificate from the University.

**Conferences**

Trainee Readers are required to attend conferences organised by Faith Nurture which focus on development of knowledge, skills and competence in preparing and leading worship, personal and spiritual development, pastoral care, team work and preaching as well as Safeguarding. They also provide an opportunity to meet and share with others in training, to reflect and evaluate together on the process. RITs will attend five conferences during the programme. Trainee Readers may be expected to undertake some preparation for these conferences.

**Practical Training**

In addition to the academic study and conferences, placements offer practical experience to develop skills and an opportunity to reflect on learning in different contexts of congregational and parish life. Trainees will be expected to provide evidence that such reflection has taken place in a variety of appropriate ways during the programme.

A trainee Reader’s practical training concentrates on worship leadership, which might include public worship, small-group worship, creative approaches to worship, all-age worship, and in hospitals, residential homes or schools. While not formally assessed, the trainee Readers growing ability to work well within a team ministry is vitally important.

Each placement is for six months. It can be a single six-month block, or, if it fits local arrangements better, it can be divided into two three-month or three two-month blocks. The two churches placed in should, where possible, differ in context (urban, rural, large, small), theological emphasis and worship-style. However, local circumstances will be taken into account, and there is scope for flexibility in arrangements for placements and supervision. These should be discussed within the Presbytery, and in consultation with Faith Nurture.

During the first year, the Presbytery should arrange the first of two six-month placements with a congregation other than the candidate’s home congregation. The minister of each charge that a placement is carried out in takes the role of supervisor. Ideally this Minster will be a trained Ministry candidate supervisor, although this is not always possible in certain local circumstances. A separate booklet (contained in appendix 3) is provided for placement supervisors, giving details of what is required during each placement. It is recommended that the trainee Reader and the placement supervisor collaborate to develop and agree a learning agreement. Appendix 9 is an example learning agreement, which may be a helpful model or guidance. The candidate is responsible for asking/reminding the Presbytery to make the necessary placement arrangements, and should raise this matter in good time.

During the second year, the Presbytery should provide a second six-month placement. Again, the trainee Reader may need to ask/remind Presbytery to put this in place. At the end of this placement a final preaching assessment is undertaken, by representatives of the Presbytery, Faith Nurture and the placement supervisor. This is a formal assessment of worship leadership skills and qualities.

More detailed guidance about the two placements is provided below.

**The First Six-month Placement**

The aim of the first placement is to provide a context in which all the basic skills of worship leadership can be developed to an initial level of competence.

Before coming to their placement, trainees will have had six months in an assessment church hopefully having opportunities to develop confidence, speaking-skills, and have their first attempt at preaching. Trainees are aiming to move to the next stage, to the point where their leadership of worship is acceptable to the congregation, even if not yet with the depth and polish that might eventually be developed. The emphasis in this placement is therefore on skills.

(NB: Activities in the placement church should not require of the trainee more than 5 hours work per week, not including the Sunday morning service)

During the first formal placement, we look for the trainee Reader to:

• Take some part in the leadership of public worship three Sundays a month;

• On one of these Sunday each month, take major responsibility for the service;

• On at least one of those Sundays every two months (once a month if there is a linked charge) to preach the sermon;

• Share in discussion with the minister as he or she plans the worship over the period, to gain insight into the planning process;

• Visit a local school on a number of occasions, probably with the minister, and undertake a supervised role in leading school worship at least once (NB: It is recognised that people with full-time jobs might not be able to do this). Alternatively visits to hospitals or residential homes where services are taken by the minister may be appropriate;

• Observe the minister conducting a funeral at least three times, and discuss with her or him the preparation, form and conduct of the service.

• Undertake no more than 15 hours of worship-related pastoral work.

**The Second Six-month Placement**

The aims of the second placement are to ensure that the trainee is of sufficient calibre to undertake the work of a Reader-attached-to-a-Charge. The Academic Provider will be supplying formal tuition, but the placement is where the trainee can practise what is being learned, and where the level of engagement and performance can be effectively monitored.

The standard required of a trainee by the end of the placement is not simply that they should be adequate to stand in on the odd occasion, but that they could sustain effective worship for a congregation in which they were frequently leading and preaching.

The aim is therefore to ensure that they have reached an adequate standard of competence in

• preaching

• constructing an order of service (including choice of hymns, etc.)

• leading public prayer

• speaking to and interacting with children in worship

• leading worship in at least two of the following: schools, homes for the elderly, small groups or hospitals

• conducting funerals

• maintaining the kind of pastoral relationships which would be appropriate in a congregation should they have an attachment to the charge.

(NB: Activities in the placement church should not require of the trainee more than 5 hours work per week, not including the Sunday morning service);

During the second placement, the Reader in Training should

• Take some part in the leadership of public worship on all but one Sunday a month.

• Preach the sermon, if arrangements permit, one Sunday a month (twice a month if a

linkage makes this possible), and certainly no fewer than four times over the six months.

• Lead a period of all-age worship, where this is part of the Sunday pattern, once a month.

• Lead the main part of the service once a month.

• Share in an appropriate way in the conduct of at least three funerals.

• Lead worship in at least one of the following; homes for the elderly, hospitals or schools. The

• number of times this is done depends on circumstances not least of which may be the

availability of the trainee in regard to work and other commitments.

• Share in discussion with the minister as he or she plans worship over the period, in order to

develop insight and capacity for reflection concerning the planning process.

• Engage in no more than 15 hours of worship-related pastoral work over the six months.

• Conduct at least two whole diets of worship, one of which should be at the end of the

placement, and will be the occasion for the student’s final preaching assessment (when a

Faith Nurture representative will attend).

• Participate in team life, developing their understanding of how the Reader contributes to and enhances team ministry.

**Final Preaching Assessment (FPA)**

At the end of the second six month placement the trainee leads a service and preaches in the presence of a panel of three church representatives who will be in the congregation:

• a Faith Nurture appointed assessor

• a member of Presbytery

• the supervisor from the second placement

As a general rule those locally involved in the FPA (Reader in Training/Candidate, supervising minister from the second placement and the Presbytery representative) come to an agreement about possible dates for the FPA and send them (& confirmation of the location) to the Readers in Training Administrator. The Faith Nurture assessor can then be sourced by the Readers in Training Administrator

The FPA is followed immediately by a meeting of the RIT with the three representatives.

At the final preaching assessment, the panel will want to satisfy itself:

That the trainee is capable of conducting worship and preaching to such a standard that a congregation could benefit by being regularly led in worship by her/him, having its spiritual needs met and being enabled effectively to worship God. The word “regularly” is important. The test is not, ‘Could a congregation manage with him/her occasionally?’, but, ‘Could a congregation benefit if led by him/her frequently?’

The panel may also want to discuss the trainee’s future deployment. Is it to be working in a charge or chaplaincy or providing pulpit supply? What aspects of the possible work of a Reader is the trainee best suited to? How much time does s/he have available?

The panel may want to discuss future in-service training for the RIT. Are there particular areas of skill which need to be further developed? Are there particular deficiencies in knowledge or experience which need to be made good, or interests and expertise which could be further developed?

Following this meeting a recommendation is made about whether the trainee should be set apart.

As detailed in the Readership Act (contained in appendix 4), one of three recommendations must be made:

1. That the trainee be set apart as a Reader

2. That the trainee complete a probationary period as determined by the Presbytery, giving attention to specified aspects of the Readership, before a further decision is made

3. That the trainee be not set apart.

More information on the final preaching assessment is provided in Appendices 5 to 8.

**Supervision**

The Minister to whom the Reader in Training is attached takes on the role of placement supervisor. S/he should complete a report at the conclusion of the placement and send to the Presbytery. Form R1 should be used for this purpose (see appendix 2). One copy is sent to the Presbytery, and one to Faith Nurture. All placement supervisors should receive a copy of the Guidance Handbook. The student should check whether the Minister has one, and, if not, ask Faith Nurture to send one.

Legally, a Minister or Reader should be present whenever a trainee Reader is leading public worship or preaching. This doesn't apply to worship on private premises such as residential homes. Whoever is present in this role should go through the service with the RIT afterwards, helping him or her identify strengths and areas for development.

5. SETTING APART

**Completion of Training**

Completion of the Readership Training Programme is achieved when these requirements have been met

• the Academic Provider has confirmed successful completion of the Readership modules

• the RIT has attended all five conferences

• the two six month placements have been successfully completed and the two corresponding report forms (R1) have been submitted

• the final preaching assessment and interview has been carried out and the corresponding report has been submitted.

At this stage the Presbytery has to determine whether or not to set the trainee apart as a Reader. As discussed in section 4 above, one of three recommendations will have been made at the meeting that follows immediately after the trainee’s final preaching assessment. Having reviewed all the documentation Faith Nurture will write to the Presbytery making their formal recommendation. Many Presbyteries are content to receive this recommendation, and do not feel the need to arrange any further interview.

On the other hand, the decision lies with Presbytery, and it is responsible for the trainee’s future work as a Reader. It may, therefore, feel it wishes to take more active steps to make its own judgement at the end of a trainee’s course and conduct an interview. Prior to an interview the panel or committee will want to ensure that they have received and have to hand:

• the supervisor’s report of the trainee’s first formal placement;

• the supervisor’s report of the trainee’s second formal placement;

• the report from the final preaching assessment meeting;

• notice from the Faith Nurture that all academic requirements and conferences have been completed

• notice from Faith Nurture that Safeguarding Training has been completed and satisfactory Disclosure received.

At the interview the Presbytery will want to satisfy itself that:

• the trainee is capable of answering honestly and adequately the questions set down in the Act honestly and adequately

• the trainee is capable of good relationships with others, has pastoral sensitivity, and would be able to work in ways which would enable other people

• if charged by Presbytery, the trainee is capable of being a member of a ministry team which he/she would not himself/herself be leading

• the trainee’s life and doctrine are such that it would be appropriate for the Presbytery to admit her/him to a recognised ministry of the Church.

**Setting Apart**

On satisfactory completion a certificate is issued by Faith Nurture which becomes valid once it is countersigned by the Presbytery, to signify their agreement that the Reader should be set apart. It will usually be presented to the Reader by Presbytery, possibly during the service of setting apart which is the process by which the RIT is formally admitted to the office of Reader. The setting apart is done at a meeting of Presbytery, usually at a special service when Presbytery convenes for the purpose. The Church’s Panel on Worship created a revised service for the purpose and there are certain elements which legally have to be incorporated. These are a series of seven questions put to the Reader (listed in the Act anent the Readership 1992), and the signing of the Formula, which is the same as for ministers. There will also be a formal statement of admission to the office of Reader.

6. SUMMARY OF PRESBYTERY RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Regent**

The Regent is the person selected by Presbytery to monitor the training of a trainee Reader on the Presbytery's behalf, and to offer support to the RIT. In practical terms, this means

• Meeting with the trainee Reader at least twice a year, to monitor progress.

• Contributing to the meeting at the final preaching assessment (FPA) at which there is discussion about the recommendation to be made to Presbytery.

• Arranging any additional local training and development the trainee Reader might require, for example, speech training or additional academic support.

• Maintaining contact with Faith Nurture as appropriate.

• Reporting annually on progress to the Presbytery committee responsible for Readers in Training.

• Ensuring that the Presbytery remembers to make the arrangements it should make, regarding placements and the selection process.

The Regent does not have to be a Minister but should be someone who is closely connected with the Presbytery committee responsible for Readers in Training. There is no reason why one person should not act as Regent for more than one trainee.

**When an applicant first applies**

The Presbytery is responsible for appointing a Regent for the RIT, to watch over the training process on the Presbytery's behalf.

**When an applicant is accepted as a Reader in Training**

The Presbytery is responsible for:

• Arranging a first six-month placement for some time during the following twelve months to fit in with the timing of the academic study. This should be in consultation with the RIT.

• Notifying Faith Nurture (contact IMcConnell@churchofscotland.org.uk or ReaderTraining@churchofscotland.org.uk) that arrangements have been made, and providing the relevant information.

• Satisfying itself that the trainee Reader is making satisfactory progress.

• Receiving a report from the supervisor of the first six-month attachment, a copy of which should also be sent to Faith Nurture (on form R1).

• Consulting the Regent and ensuring that any concerns expressed by the Regent or the trainee are being addressed appropriately.

• Arranging a second six-month attachment for some time during the second or third year.

• Receiving a report from the supervisor of the second six-month attachment, a copy of which should also be sent to the Council (on form R1).

• Obtaining a final preaching assessment report, a copy of which should also be sent to the Council, which will take into account the views of the placement supervisor and the other representatives. The Regent may also be involved in this. The Presbytery may if it wishes also seek a separate report from any of these.

• The representative of Faith Nurture will present a report to Presbytery which will

1. certify that all requirements of the course have been met

2. make a recommendation as to future action by the Presbytery.

* On receipt of the report the Presbytery will take such other reports as it may choose, and will interview the trainee Reader. It will then make one of the following decisions:

1. That the trainee Reader be set apart (provided that this is in accordance with

the recommendation of the report)

2. That the trainee Reader complete a probationary period as determined by

Presbytery, during which attention be given to the development of specified

aspects of the ministry of the trainee Reader. Thereafter the Presbytery

may if it so resolves set apart the trainee Reader

3. That the trainee Reader be not set apart.

• Arranging a service of setting apart.

• When the trainee Reader is set apart, notifying individually the following by the forwarding of an extract minute:

1. Faith Nurture

2. The Training Task Group

3. The Editor of the Year Book

4. Life and Work

• If the trainee Reader is not to be set apart, Faith Nurture should be notified of what has been done.

NB: Presbytery should not fix a date for setting apart without confirmation that all the elements of the programme have been achieved. Normally this is signalled by the receipt of the Readership Certificate from Faith Nurture as soon as possible after the results of the academic modules have been received and all other elements completed. Please remember that results are not available until several weeks after the module has been completed, and it may be necessary to allow time for resubmission of assignments if required by the academic provider.

**Once it has been agreed to set a Reader apart**

The Presbytery is responsible for:

• Deciding how the Reader is to be deployed. This may be:

1. in pulpit-supply

2. by attachment to a charge

3. in a role defined by Presbytery

• Making arrangements for the superintendence and pastoral care of the Reader.

7. READERS IN SERVICE

Ongoing training and development is provided by Faith Nurture for Readers who have been set apart, to continue the process of ministerial formation. Readers are required, at least once every three years, to attend in-service training approved and funded by the Faith Nurture.

APPENDIX 1

COURSE FEES REIMBURSEMENT FORM

**Church of Scotland**

**Form AF1**

**Academic Fees Reimbursement Form**

**Readership**

**Faith Nurture Forum**

**121 George Street**

**Edinburgh**

**EH2 4YN**

**Tel: 0131 225 5722**

**This form should be completed for the reimbursement of academic fees for required modules for Readership training.**

**An invoice/receipt must be included with this form.**

**All payments will be made by BACS unless you request, in writing, an alternative payment method.**

PERSONAL DETAILS:

Title: Surname: First Name:

Address:

Postcode: Telephone: Email:

Bank Sort Code: Bank Account number:

Academic Provider:

Modules being claimed for and academic year of claim for each:

*(You should claim for one academic year only and apply again for subsequent years)*

Cost of modules being claimed for: £

Amount being claimed from Faith Nurture Forum: £

Signature: Date:

**On completion return to** [**IMcConnell@churchofscotland.org.uk**](mailto:IMcConnell@churchofscotland.org.uk) **or** [**ReaderTraining@churchofscotland.org.uk**](mailto:ReaderTraining@churchofscotland.org.uk) **marked Confidential**

APPENDIX 2

PLACEMENT REPORT FORM (R1)

**Church of Scotland**

Name of student:

**Readership**

**Faith Nurture Forum**

FORM R1 **Report Form**

**For use by the Supervisor of a Reader in Training at the completion of the placement**

|  |
| --- |
| **When completed, please send one copy of this form to the Presbytery and a second copy to** [**IMcConnell@churchofscotland.org.uk**](mailto:IMcConnell@churchofscotland.org.uk) **or** [**ReaderTraining@churchofscotland.org.uk**](mailto:ReaderTraining@churchofscotland.org.uk) |

**Details of the Placement:**

Name of congregation:

Dates of attachment:

Supervising Minister:

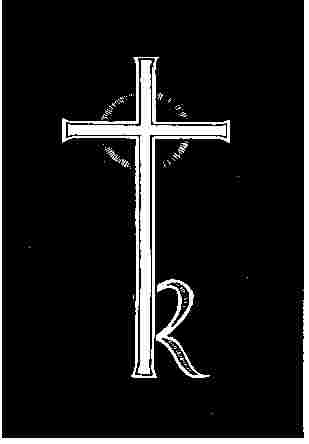
Which of the student’s placements was this?

*Please tick appropriate box* 1st Placement 2nd Placement

|  |
| --- |
| **Preaching** |
| How many times did the student preach? |
| Please give a general evaluation of his or her preaching under the following headings |
| Delivery: including voice, tone, demeanour |
| Structure and style: including language, use of illustration, interest, coherence, and the way sermons are put together |
| Content: including use of the bible, relevance and adequacy of the message, background study and preparation |
| **Leading worship** |
| Outline the role the student has played in the leading of worship |
| Please give a general evaluation of the student’s performance in the leading of worship using the following headings: |
| Structure of worship: including order of service, balance of styles, congregational participation |
| Prayers: including use of language, relevance to congregation, range of types of prayer |
| Use of hymns, songs and music |
| Readings |
| All-age worship: including children’s addresses, all-age services |
| Other items |
| **Special worship occasions: including Funerals, Hospital services, Care homes.** |
| What was done? |
| What evaluation would you give of the student’s performance? |
| **Pastoral relationships** |
| Please give an evaluation of the student’s pastoral relationships with the congregation during the attachment |
| **Overall evaluation** |
| What general evaluation would you give of the student’s skills and abilities?  (e.g.: excellent, good, needing some improvement, still needing considerable improvement) |
| What improvements still need to be made? |

APPENDIX 3

READERSHIP PLACEMENT GUIDE FOR SUPERVISORS



Readership Placement

Guidance for Supervisors

Contents

**1 The Office of Reader**

**2 The first six month placement**

a aims

b tasks

c supervision

d supporting the reader in training

e report

**3 The second six month placement**

a aims

b tasks

c supervision

d supporting the reader in training

e report

f. conclusion of training

**4 The concept of supervision**

The supervisory contract

The supervisory relationship

Conflict of roles

**The Office of Reader**

Act XVII defines a Reader as:

*A Reader is a person who has been set apart by a Presbytery to an office which qualifies him or her to carry out duties within the Church of Scotland which are principally concerned with the ministry of the Word and the conduct of public worship.*

Readers in Service work with a Minister in a linkage or a single charge, regularly sharing in the leading of worship and engaging in pastoral work. They are eligible to take funerals, to act as chaplains (or assistant chaplains) in schools, care homes and in small hospitals.

We aim to ensure that Readers are trained for the various functions of the role and are equipped to deliver frequent, sustained worship in any congregation.

### Placements

Placements are arranged locally through Presbytery and focus on leading worship.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Placement** | **Duration** | **Timeframe** | **Details** | **Time commitment** |
| Year 1 | 6 months | Flexible | Part-time | 5 hrs max per week plus Sunday |
| Year 2 | 6 months | Flexible | Part-time | 5 hrs max per week plus Sunday |

**The first six-month placement**

**Aims**

To develop the basic skills of worship leading to an initial level of competence.

The emphasis in this placement is on skills development and reflective practice.

Your role in this placement:

Support the Reading in Training (RinT) to the point where their leading of worship is acceptable to the congregation.

**Details**

|  |
| --- |
| **Placement 1** |
| * Worship involvement 3 Sundays per month * Major responsibility 1 Sunday per month * Preach once in 2 months (twice if a linked charge) * Gain experience of other services (e.g. schools, care homes) * Discuss worship planning with supervisor * Observe at least 3 funerals and reflect on experience with supervisor |

Note:

* The RinT should not take part in more than 15 hrs of worship-related pastoral work over each 6 month placement.
* Activities in the placement church should not require more than 5 hours work per week, not including the Sunday morning service.

The placement can be split or lengthened to take into account the requirements of academic study, residential conferences and work or family commitments.

**Supervision**

Supervision should focus on content and conduct of worship, and on basic competence in the relevant pastoral relationships with members of a congregation.

At the start of the placement you should:

* Discuss aims and aspirations, and agree areas to work on.
* Work together to create a learning agreement.
* Schedule a weekly meeting to review the previous Sunday’s worship, talk through any pastoral contact over the previous seven days, and look at the next week’s worship.
* Consider whether a support group from the congregation would be suitable to provide mentorship and constructive feedback.

It would be helpful for the supervisor to read over sermon scripts before they are preached, and discuss with the RinT how they might be improved.

Presbytery will appoint a regent for each candidate, who may be a member of a support group organised locally for the candidate. The regent is responsible for the Presbytery’s pastoral care of the candidate for the duration of their training.

You should maintain contact with the RinT’s Regent, and/or the responsible person within the Presbytery’s Ministries Committee (or equivalent), especially if there are any areas of worry about their progress.

**Report**

At the end of the placement, you should complete a report to summarise the training the RinT has received, your assessment of their skills and your overall evaluation of their placement.

To help the Presbytery set up the next placement you should identify:

* the areas of work in which you have not been able to offer much experience (e.g. all-age worship or working in schools, taking funerals etc.)
* aspects of the role in which you feel the RinT needs further development (please be as specific as possible)
* the kind of church required to provide experience and learning which would complement and enhance the RinT ‘s training with you.

Please send a copy of the report to:

* Ministries Council at [ReaderTraining@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:ReaderTraining@churchofscotland.org.uk);
* the Presbytery Clerk; and
* the RinT.

**The second six-month placement**

**Aims**

The aim of the second placement is to ensure that the trainee has sufficient training to do the work of a Reader in Service. The RinT should be deepening their understanding and practice in construction of prayers and sermons, as well as focussing on the pastoral relationship dimensions of the RinT’s activities in the Church.

By the end of the 2nd placement the RinT should be equipped to sustain effective worship for a congregation in which they were frequently leading and preaching.

The aim is therefore to ensure that they have reached an adequate standard of competence in:

* preaching
* constructing an order of service (including choice of hymns, etc.)
* leading public prayer
* speaking to and interacting with children in worship
* leading worship in at least two of the following: schools, homes for the elderly, small groups or hospitals
* conducting funerals
* maintaining the kind of pastoral relationships which would be appropriate in a congregation should they have an attachment to the charge.

**Details**

|  |
| --- |
| **Placement 2** |
| * Worship involvement 3 Sundays per month * Preach 1 Sunday per month (twice if a linked charge) * Lead all-age section worship once a month * Lead the main part of the service once a month * Share in the conduct of 3 funerals * Lead worship in a school, care home or hospital * Discuss worship planning with supervisor * Conduct at least two whole services of worship, one which will be the final preaching assessment. |

Note:

* The RinT should not take part in more than 15 hrs of worship-related pastoral work over each 6 month placement.
* Activities in the placement church should not require more than 5 hours work per week, not including the Sunday morning service.

The placement can be split or lengthened to take into account the requirements of academic study, residential conferences and work or family commitments.

**Supervision**

Supervision at this stage should be focussed on quality, depth and all-round competence.

At the start of the placement you should:

* Discuss aims and aspirations, and agree areas to work on.
* Work together to create a learning agreement.
* Schedule a weekly meeting to review the previous Sunday’s worship, talk through any pastoral contact over the previous seven days, and look at the next week’s worship.
* Consider whether a support group from the congregation would be suitable to provide mentorship and constructive feedback to the RinT.

You should maintain contact with the Regent and/or responsible person within the Presbytery and Ministries Committee (or equivalent), especially if there are any areas of worry about their progress.

**Report**

At the end of this placement, the RinT’s final assessment takes place. Ministries Council needs to be satisfied that the RinT has reached an acceptable level to have passed the practical element of the course. The Presbytery need to be satisfied that the RinT is ready to be set apart as a Reader.

Your role is to contribute to this process in two ways:

1 Complete the report form R1 (see Appendix 2 of the Readership Handbook for a template) and return it to the Ministries Council, sending a copy to the Presbytery and to the RinT. In it you are asked to assess and judge the RinT’s competence.

2 Contribute at the final assessment meeting. This will take place in your church directly after the student has taken a whole service for final assessment. The assessment panel comprises a Ministries Council appointee, a representative from Presbytery and the placement supervisor (you). Representatives from the congregation should also be involved if possible. You will seek to agree a recommendation to be made to the Ministries Council, and then bring in the RinT to share comments and your conclusion with them.

There are three options for recommendation, based on the final preaching assessment and dependent on all other aspects of training being completed satisfactorily.

1) That the trainee be set apart as a Reader

2) That the trainee complete a probationary period as determined by the Presbytery, giving attention to specified aspects of the Readership, before a further decision is made

3) That the trainee be not set apart.

**Conclusion of Training**

Before the Ministries Council issues the certificate of completion of training to the Presbytery so that it may proceed to the setting apart, it will require to be assured of the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Training element** | **Responsibility** |
| Final Preaching Assessment has been done and the report received | Ministries Council Assessor |
| Final Placement Report received | Supervisor |
| Required academic study has been completed | RinT |
| Safeguarding training has been undertaken and satisfactory Disclosure received | RinT/Presbytery |
| Full conference attendance | RinT |

APPENDIX 4

READERSHIP ACT

XVII. READERSHIP ACT (AS AMENDED BY ACT XII 2003, IV 2005, VI 2006, VI 2007, XlV 2012, XII 2014, XIII 2018, V 2019 AND XVII 2020) Edinburgh, 18th May 1992, Session 4.

The General Assembly enact and ordain as follows:-

Definition A Reader is a person who has been set apart by a Presbytery to an office which qualifies him or her to carry out duties within the Church of Scotland which are principally concerned with the ministry of the Word and the conduct of public worship.

1. Application and acceptance as a candidate (a) The provisions of sections 2, 4, 5(1), (2) and (5) and 7-11 of the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004), and (in respect of decisions in terms of (c)(iv) below) the appeals process referred to therein, shall be followed mutatis mutandis by any person wishing to apply for recognition as a candidate for the readership. (b) An application cannot be accepted from any person less than 17 years old. No upper age limit shall apply to application for acceptance for training. Applicants may, at the discretion of the Faith Nurture Forum, be required to undergo a medical examination to demonstrate their fitness to undertake training for ministry. (c) A Local Review, established as described in section 5(3) of Act X 2004 mutatis mutandis, will arrive at one of the following written determinations: (i) That the applicant is suitable to commence training as a candidate for the readership; (ii) That the applicant should undergo a further period of discernment before a decision in terms of sub-paragraph (i) can be made; (iii) That the applicant is not ready to commence training as a candidate for the readership; or (iv) That the applicant is not suitable to be a candidate for the readership. (d) Any applicant in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of sub-paragraph (c)(iii) above may apply to undertake up to two further periods of discernment. (e) An individual whose application is successful will be known as a candidate for the readership. (f) A decision in terms of section 1(c)(iii) or (iv) shall be subject to the right of appeal set out in section 10.

2. Training of Candidates (a) Each candidate must complete the training described in this section within five years from the date on which he or she becomes a candidate. Failure to complete the course on time will normally result in the loss of status as a candidate for the readership. The requirements shall consist of the academic course described in sub-section (b), the conference programme described in sub-section (c), and the placements described in sub-section (d).

(b) (i) The academic course shall consist of a Certificate of Higher Education from any institution which may be approved from time to time by the Faith Nurture Forum. The course and its constituent modules shall be approved by the Forum. Candidates may undertake their course by distance learning where

that is offered by the academic institution. An individual may commence the academic course before becoming a candidate, but must complete the course successfully before being set apart as a reader.

(ii) When a candidate already has relevant training or education, the Faith Nurture Forum shall have power to give credit for it and to prescribe whatever additional training may be necessary. This further training shall be drawn from the courses or modules referred to in paragraph (b)(i) above.

(c) A conference programme shall be organised and provided by the Faith Nurture Forum for those recognised as candidates in terms of section 1 above. The content of each conference shall be determined by the Forum, and the programme shall include such training in Safeguarding and Child Protection issues as shall from time to time be required by the General Assembly. Attendance at all sessions of all conferences shall be mandatory.

(d) Each candidate shall, in the course of his or her candidature, complete (to the satisfaction of his or her Presbytery in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum) two training placements in congregations other than the congregation in which the candidate is a communicant member. The placements shall be chosen and arranged by the Presbytery.

(e) The Presbytery shall appoint for each candidate a regent, who may be a member of a support group organised locally for the candidate, and who shall be responsible for the Presbytery’s pastoral care of the candidate for the duration of his or her course.

(f) Before completing the course, and during the second training placement, each candidate must pass a Final Preaching Assessment, demonstrating skills in the conduct of worship to the satisfaction of (i) a representative of the Faith Nurture Forum, (ii) a representative of the Presbytery and (iii) the supervisor of that placement. The candidate may be assessed on more than one occasion, if necessary, to fulfil the requirement.

(g) Upon fulfilment of all the requirements in sub-sections (b)-(d) and (f), the appointee of the Faith Nurture Forum shall report to the Presbytery that the course has been completed and convey the Forum’s recommendation to the Presbytery. The Presbytery shall make such further enquiry as it wishes, and shall interview the candidate. It shall decide in terms of one of the following resolutions:

(i) That the candidate be set apart as a reader in terms of section 3 below;

(ii) That the candidate complete a probationary period as determined by the Presbytery, giving attention to specified aspects of the readership, before a further decision is made in terms of this sub-section; or

(iii) That the candidate be not set apart.

These decisions shall be subject to the right of appeal set out in section 10.

3. Admission to the Office of Reader Persons who have completed the approved course of training shall be admitted to the office of Reader by Presbytery upon giving satisfactory answers to the following questions:- (i) Do you believe in one God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and do you confess the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour? (ii) 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? (iii) Do you believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith contained in the Confession of Faith of this Church? (iv) Do you acknowledge the Presbyterian government of this Church to be agreeable to the Word of God; and do you promise to be subject to this Presbytery, or to any other Presbytery within whose bounds you may reside, and to the General Assembly? (v) 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 the Lord? (vi) 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 enter into the office of Reader? (vii) 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 of Reader, seeking in all things the advancement of the Kingdom of God? After these questions have been answered satisfactorily, the Formula, which is the same as for ministers, shall be signed and the person shall be admitted to the office of Reader.

4. Duties of Readers It shall be competent for a Reader set apart in the terms of this Act to (a) provide occasional pulpit supply in terms of Act II, 2000 (b) be attached to a charge within the bound of the Presbytery. In such an attachment the Reader may be invited to - conduct services within the charge subject to the approval of the Parish Minister or Interim Moderator and the Presbytery after consultation with the Kirk Session - act as chaplain to residential accommodation or hospital with the approval of the Parish Minister or Interim Moderator and the Presbytery and where appropriate the Faith Nurture Forum - conduct funeral services with the approval of the Parish Minister or Interim Moderator and the consent of the family concerned - conduct school assemblies at the invitation of the appropriate school authority and with the concurrence of the School Chaplain, or Parish Minister or Interim Moderator, where there is no Chaplain - perform any other duty which the Parish Minister or Interim Moderator may assign to the Reader which is principally concerned with the conduct of worship but which may include related pastoral work. (c) Any arrangement made under section 4 (b) of this Act shall be for an initial period of no more than three years and shall be reviewed annually by the Presbytery. (d) A Reader set apart in the terms of any Act of the General Assembly prior to this Act may normally only provide occasional pulpit supply. Nevertheless, a

Presbytery may, after consultation and agreement with interested parties and with concurrence of the Faith Nurture Forum permit such a Reader to carry out duties under section 4 (b) of this Act. (e) Any Reader of the Church of Scotland is authorised to conduct public worship anywhere within the church.

5. Remuneration (a) A Reader who provides occasional pulpit supply shall be entitled to the appropriate fee as laid down by the regulations of the General Assembly. (b) A Reader who is attached to a congregation, or to linked congregations, shall be paid such fees as are agreed by the Presbytery in consultation with the Kirk Session or Kirk Sessions and the Faith Nurture Forum. Such fees shall be reviewed and agreed annually by Presbytery. (c) A Reader who is attached to a congregation, or to linked congregations, shall be paid travelling expenses at the rate approved by the General Assembly for pulpit supply. (d) A Reader who acts as a chaplain shall be paid such fees and expenses, if any, as may be agreed by the Presbytery and the body making the appointment. Any such arrangement shall be made prior to the Presbytery agreeing to the appointment. (e) A Reader performing any other duty approved by Presbytery for which fees, expenses, or other remuneration are not paid shall be reimbursed by the Presbytery for out of pocket expenses and for travelling expenses at the rate approved by the General Assembly for pulpit supply.

6. Supervision (a) Each Presbytery shall maintain and revise annually a Roll of Readers under its supervision. (b) A Reader shall have the choice of being on the Roll of Readers of the Presbytery in which they reside or the one in which they have their congregational membership. A Reader shall only be on the Roll of one Presbytery at a time. A Reader may choose to remove their name from the Roll of Readers at any time. (c) Presbyteries shall send the names and contact details of those whom it admits to the office of Reader, and those whom it removes from its Roll of Readers, to the Faith Nurture Forum and the Editor of the Year Book no later than 30th June in each year. (d) On leaving the Roll of Readers of one Presbytery, and seeking to be transferred to the supervision of another Presbytery, a Reader shall, on request to the Presbytery Clerk, receive a certificate of status, valid for a period of one year. He or she may lodge this certificate with the Clerk of the Presbytery in which they wish to be enrolled. Once enrolled by the new Presbytery, the Reader’s name shall be added to the Roll of Readers of the latter Presbytery, whose Clerk shall notify the Faith Nurture Forum and the Editor of the Year Book. (e) Presbytery shall invite all Readers on its Roll, giving one month’s notice, to appear annually at a Presbytery meeting in recognition of their ministry. All Readers on a Presbytery’s Roll shall be invited to be corresponding members of that Presbytery. (f) A Reader shall be advised by Presbytery that they risk being removed from its Roll of Readers if they do not, without good cause, appear before Presbytery as referred to in subsection 6(e) above. In the event of a Reader not attending Presbytery without good cause for two consecutive years, they should be invited

to engage in a supportive conversation to ascertain reasons. In the event that this does not result in a positive outcome within 6 months, the Reader will be removed from the Roll and advised accordingly. (g) Presbytery shall undertake the regular review of each Reader, not less than once every two years, and shall support their continuing development in the Readership. Presbyteries shall consult with Faith Nurture Forum on the resourcing of the above. (h) Presbytery, shall, before making any appointment of a Reader in the terms of section 4(b) of this Act, satisfy itself that the Reader is an enrolled Reader in terms of this Act.

7. Transfer to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament This section was deleted by Act V 2019.

8. Admission of Readers from other Churches Readers, and individuals with equivalent status in other Churches, may be admitted to the readership of the Church of Scotland upon becoming communicant members of this Church, and the following procedure shall be followed:

(a) The person wishing to transfer (“the applicant”) shall intimate to the Presbytery in which he or she resides, and to the Faith Nurture Forum, his or her intention to apply for recognition as a reader. The Presbytery shall appoint one of its members to represent it in the admission process, and the representative shall undertake such training for the role as the Faith Nurture Forum shall from time to time require. (b) The Faith Nurture Forum shall determine whether the applicant’s status is recognised by the Church of Scotland, and may use only that ground to refuse to accept an application. The decision shall be subject to the appeals process specified in paragraph (g) below. (c) The Faith Nurture Forum shall specify in each case what written materials are required in support of the application: these shall always include an application form; Scottish Criminal Records Office disclosure form and declaration; and references (including one from the minister of the Church of Scotland congregation of which the applicant is a member, and one from the previous denomination confirming status and whether the applicant is in good standing). (d) The Faith Nurture Forum shall establish a Review Panel consisting of one representative of the Forum and the Presbytery representative referred to in paragraph (a) above. The Panel shall interview the applicant, with a member of the staff of the Faith Nurture Forum present. (e) A report from the Panel shall be sent to the Faith Nurture Forum, and shall contain recommendations relating to approval of the application and any training requirements to be imposed. The Faith Nurture Forum shall make a final determination of the training requirements that shall be imposed, and convey that determination and its overall recommendation to the Presbytery and to the applicant. (f) The Presbytery shall resolve whether to admit the applicant to the status of reader in the Church of Scotland, adopting without amendment the training requirements determined by the Faith Nurture Forum. The Presbytery shall arrange for a service of admission of the reader as soon as any requirements have been completed to the satisfaction of the Faith Nurture Forum.

(g) These decisions shall be subject to the right of appeal set out in section 10.

9. Repeal Act XXVIII 1974 and Act XIV 1978 are hereby repealed.

10. Appeals An appeal in terms of section 1, 2, 6 or 8 of this Act shall be heard by the Ministries Appeal Panel in terms of the Ministries Appeal Panel Act (Act VI 2007) and may be taken on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the process was conducted contrary to the principles of natural justice. Notification of the intention to appeal shall be sent to the Faith Nurture Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the decision was intimated to the applicant or candidate, as the case may be (“the appellant”). At the Appeal Hearing the appellant shall be entitled to appear in person. The appellant may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak.

APPENDIX 5

FPA – ASSESSOR GUIDANCE

**FINAL PREACHING ASSESSMENT (FPA) – Assessor Guidance**

**Background**

The Faith Nurture Assessor takes a leading role in making sure that the Final Preaching Assessment (FPA) runs smoothly. As a general rule the Assessor will be contacted by Faith Nurture once those locally involved in the FPA (Reader in training/Candidate, Supervising minister from the second placement and the Presbytery representative) have come to an agreement about possible dates for the FPA and sent them and confirmation of the location to Faith Nurture.

**Tasks required of the Assessor**

* Faith Nurture will supply:
  + name and contact details of the Reader in training
  + proposed date(s) and time of FPA service
  + address of the FPA church;
  + copies of available placement reports
* the Assessor will then:
  + make contact with the Candidate to confirm the arrangements for the service and assessment meeting afterwards
  + ensure that the appropriate representatives will be present.
* The Assessor may wish to meet before the service to brief the assessment team. This briefing should cover:
  + spread of assessors around the congregation to carry out evaluations of audibility etc. from varied locations.
  + use of the ‘FPA - Areas for Evaluation’, ‘FPA Report – Completion Guide’ and ‘FPA Report’ template contained in the appendices of the Readership Handbook.
* After the service the assessment team will gather to consider their recommendation to the Presbytery. The Assessor chairs and guides the team through discussions.

The meeting should proceed broadly along the following lines:

* + As a general rule the assessment team should wait until they have had their discussion with the candidate before individuals express their judgement
  + The candidate is asked to join the team and the Assessor leads the questioning, covering such areas as:
    - their own assessment of how the service had gone and if there was anything they would have chosen to have done differently;
    - whether they use the Lectionary;
    - whether they use full script, headings and prompts, headings or other strategies for their sermon notes;
    - discuss experience in anything relevant that was not included (or carried out by the Candidate) in the service (Scripture reading, children’s talk etc.);
    - discuss experience in other areas such as funerals, pastoral work, worship in other settings etc.
  + Other members of the assessment team should be given an opportunity to ask any other pertinent questions.
  + The Candidate is asked temporarily to leave the meeting.
  + Members of the Candidate’s placement support group might also be asked into the meeting for a period to gather further background information.
  + The Assessor asks each member of the team to provide comments on the suitability of the Candidate to the Readership ministry. All comments should be evidence based arising out of the member’s involvement with the Candidate’s training, whether from the placement or FPA.
  + Once the Assessor judges that they have sufficient information to write their FPA report, each member of the team is asked to express which of the three recommendations they believe to be appropriate. The team must endeavour to reach a unanimous or majority decision.
  + The Candidate is asked to re-join the meeting and is advised of the recommendation.
  + Having expressed appreciation for the input of the team the Assessor is in a position to close the meeting.
* The Assessor should complete the FPA report quickly so as not to hold back any Presbytery arrangements for setting apart the Reader.
  + An initial draft of the report should be completed and emailed to the other members of the assessment team for comment.
  + The final draft of the FPA report should be emailed to the Presbytery Clerk and Faith Nurture within 5 working days.

APPENDIX 6

FPA REPORT – COMPLETION GUIDE

**Church of Scotland**

**READER IN TRAINING**

**FINAL PREACHING ASSESSMENT (FPA) REPORT – Completion Guide**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Candidate |  | |
| FPA Church & Presbytery |  | |
| Date & Time of FPA |  | |
| Signed |  | Date |

|  |
| --- |
|  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Assessment Team |  |
| Faith Nurture representative |  |
| Presbytery Representative |  |
| Supervising Minister |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Service details**   * Which elements of the service that the Reader in training conducted. * Whether the Supervising minister was present. * The order of service. * Service starting and ending times. Also note the duration of the other elements of the service. * Evaluative comments in the following areas (more details given in Appendix 7: FPA – Areas for Evaluation): delivery, prayers, children, sermon style, sermon content, hymns & praise and timing. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Assessment meeting comments**  **Areas of strength**   * Identified from the evaluative notes made during the service and comprising a combination of comments from the whole assessment team.   **Areas of potential development**   * Identified from the evaluative notes made during the service and comprising a combination of comments from the whole assessment team.   **Areas that need improvement**   * Identified from the evaluative notes made during the service and comprising a combination of comments from the whole assessment team. * Comments made in this section would arise from significant concerns about specific areas and would provide the basis for a recommendation other than that the candidate be set apart.   **Candidate’s own assessment / comments about their preaching** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recommendation (complete one as appropriate)** | |
| It was the unanimous / majority recommendation that the candidate, on completion of any  outstanding academic work and on receipt by Presbytery of certification that all the training  requirements have been met, be set apart to the office of Reader of the Church of Scotland. |  |
| It was the unanimous / majority recommendation that the candidate complete a probationary  period as determined by the Presbytery, giving attention to specified aspects of the Readership,  before a further decision is made. |  |
| It was the unanimous / majority recommendation that the candidate be not set apart. |  |

APPENDIX 7

FPA – AREAS FOR EVALUATION

**READER IN TRAINING**

**FINAL PREACHING ASSESSMENT (FPA) – Areas for Evaluation**

Name of Candidate:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Delivery** |  |
| Audibility |  |
| Tone |  |
| Use of gesture |  |
| Confidence |  |
| Eye contact |  |
| Mannerisms |  |
| Reading out loud |  |
| Use of audio visual and other IT equipment |  |
|  |  |
| **Prayers** |  |
| Relevance |  |
| Use of language |  |
| Use of imagery |  |
| What is needed  not too long |  |
|  |  |
| **Children** |  |
| Rapport with children |  |
| Communication skills with children |  |
| Sensitive to children’s needs, concerns, context |  |
|  |  |
| **Sermon Style** |  |
| Ability to give good examples & illustrations |  |
| Ability to hold listener’s attention |  |
| Ability to focus on one sufficient message |  |
| Rapport with listeners |  |
|  |  |
| **Sermon Content** |  |
| How it was developed in relation to readings & lectionary |  |
| Ability to use Bible well |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Ability to deliver relevant and apt message |  |
| Understanding of the gospel |  |
| Freshness of what is said |  |
| Sensitivity to congregation’s needs, concerns & context |  |
|  |  |
| **Hymns & Praise** |  |
| Appropriate to context and message |  |
|  |  |
| **Timing** |  |
| Prompt start |  |
| Appropriate time given to different elements of service |  |
| Appropriate finish time |  |
|  |  |

APPENDIX 8

FPA REPORT – TEMPLATE

**READER IN TRAINING**

**FINAL PREACHING ASSESSMENT (FPA) REPORT**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Candidate** |  | |
| **FPA Church & Presbytery** |  | |
| **Date & Time of FPA** |  | |
| **Signed** |  | **Date** |

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| --- | --- |
| **Assessment Team** |  |
| **Faith Nurture representative** |  |
| **Presbytery Representative** |  |
| **Supervising Minister** |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Service Details** |

|  |
| --- |
| **Assessment Meeting Comments**  **Areas of Strength**  **Areas of Potential Development**  **Areas that Need Improvement**  **Candidates own assessment / comments about their preaching** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recommendation (complete one as appropriate)** | |
| It was the unanimous / majority recommendation that the candidate, on completion of any  outstanding academic work and on receipt by Presbytery of certification that all the training  requirements have been met, be set apart to the office of Reader of the Church of Scotland. |  |
| It was the unanimous / majority recommendation that the candidate complete a probationary  period as determined by the Presbytery, giving attention to specified aspects of the Readership,  before a further decision is made. |  |
| It was the unanimous / majority recommendation that the candidate be not set apart. |  |

APPENDIX 9

PLACEMENT LEARNING AGREEMENT EXEMPLAR

Learning Agreement for Reader in Training

The placement and the life of the congregation(s)

The **Supervisor** and congregation(s) will ensure that the requirements of the placement can be fulfilled *within the calendar of public worship during the period of the placement.*

*The* ***Reader* in Training** will accept reasonable variation of the programme of training in the light of changes to the congregational programme caused by baptisms, unavoidable absence of the Supervisor, and similar problems.

Opportunities for conduct of worship

The **Supervisor** will ensure that the requirements of a first placement have been covered in the course of the period of the placement, and that opportunities for remedial work are supplied, at the request of either the Reader in Training or the Supervisor, as necessary.

The **Reader in Training** will provide material to the Supervisor for comment in advance of it being used in the conduct of worship, where this is requested. The **Reader in Training** will also take every possible step to give the Supervisor the earlier possible notice of circumstances preventing the fulfilment of any element of the conduct of worship.

Assessment of conduct of worship

The **Supervisor**, and any other minister or assessor invited to make formal assessment of the work of the Reader in Training will provide assessment so far as possible using the criteria of assessment provided for the Final Assessment at the end of the Second Placement. Assessment will be provided within one week of the service assessed, except by mutual consent where circumstances prevent it.

The **Reader in Training** will indicate if they disagree in principle with any element of assessment, or believe it is unreasonable or unjustified; and otherwise will take the assessment into account in the preparation of future services or parts of services during the placement.

Requirements, other than worship in church

The **Supervisor** will provide opportunities for the Reader in Training to make supervised contributions to services in schools and/or other locations as set out in the handbook. In addition, the **Supervisor** will provide opportunities for the Reader in Training to observe and discuss the conduct of funerals except if no funerals are required during the placement. Where this occurs the advice of Faith Nurture staff will be sought to fulfil this requirement at a later date or in another place.

The **Reader in Training** will make all reasonable effort to fulfil the non-church based requirements of the first placement.

Meetings with the Supervisor

Meetings between the **Reader in Training** and the **Supervisor** will normally be held in the Manse, or at another venue mutually agreed.

Meetings will be held within one week after the Reader in Training has conducted the greater part of any service, and/or has preached the sermon. By mutual agreement, additional meetings may be held in advance of services where the Reader in Training is conducting the greater part and/or preaching.

Support Group

The **congregation(s)** will provide a Support Group, which will meet towards the beginning, middle and end of the placement, and otherwise at the request of the Reader in Training.

Problems and their resolution

Any problems or complaints will, if appropriate, be raised by the **Reader in Training** directly to the **Supervisor**, or vice versa. Any issues that come to the notice of the Support Group should be reported immediately to the Supervisor. Where a problem or complaint is not or cannot appropriately be resolved locally, the Presbytery through the Regent, or Faith Nurture through the appropriate staff member, should be contacted to assist resolution.

‘Readership Placement Guidance for Supervisors’

The **Supervisor** will fulfil all the guidance contained in the document ‘Readership Placement Guidance for Supervisors’.

Final Report

The **Supervisor** will show the **Reader in Training** a draft of the Final Report and give at least one week’s opportunity to offer comment before it is submitted to the Presbytery and Faith Nurture.

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**Supervisor**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Reader in Training**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**