**DISCERNMENT ‘CURRICULUM’**

The Criteria for Selection have developed into a framework and tool for the discernment process, Selection Panels and SEI’s formation outcomes for ordinands; conversations and reports are shaped around the Criteria. So it is important for candidates to engage with the Criteria from an early stage. They will have to provide evidence for having fulfilled each Criterion, and so it may be helpful to have suggestions for areas to be explored and work to be done by the candidate.

This ‘Curriculum’ does not have the rigidity of a ‘course’, but should be viewed more along the lines of accumulating a ‘portfolio’. Candidates should undertake some but not necessarily all of the suggested reflections and activities.

1. **Vocation**

*Candidates should be able to articulate a sense of vocation to the ordained ministry and reflect on the effect of this on their life. They should be able to speak of the development of their inner conviction and the extent to which others have confirmed it. They should be able to show an understanding of what it means to be a deacon or a priest. Their sense of vocation should be obedient, realistic and informed.*

* Reading (see Reading list)
* Filling out the Registration Form
* Reflection on the Ordinal – write 1500-2000 words on ‘The office of a priest’?
* Reflection on realistic practicalities of ordained ministry

1. **Ministry in the Scottish Episcopal Church**

*Candidates should show an understanding of their own tradition within the Scottish Episcopal Church, an awareness of the diversity of traditions and practice, and a commitment to learn from and work generously with difference. They should be able to speak of the distinctiveness of ordained ministry within the Scottish Episcopal Church and of what it means to exercise public ministry. They should be able to reflect on changes in contemporary society and the implications of this for ministry and the Church.*

* Ecclesiology of the SEC (e.g. look at Grosvenor Essay 4 (2007) from the Doctrine Committee of SEC ‘The shape of our Church’)
* Reflect on authority, service and servant ministry, discipline, hierarchy
* Do a local context survey
* Visit to or placement in a church in a different context and/or different tradition of SEC

1. **Spirituality**

*Candidates should show evidence of a commitment to a spiritual discipline, which involves individual and corporate prayer and worship. They should be committed to a developing pattern of disciplined prayer, Bible study and the regular receiving of Holy Communion. They should be able to show how they discern God’s activity in their life, how their spiritual practice may have changed over time and how it is changing them. They should be able to reflect on how engagement with the world and others both affects, and is affected by, their practice of prayer. Their spiritual practice should be able to sustain and energise them in daily life and future ministry.*

* Spiritual Director / accompaniment
* Write a reflection on worship experienced at a church other than candidate’s home church
* Explore different modes of spirituality
* Ignatian-style reflection or creative piece on discernment of God’s presence in own life/life of world

1. **Personality and Character**

*Candidates should be sufficiently self-aware, mature and stable to show that they are able to sustain the demanding role of an ordained minister. They should be able to demonstrate how they have faced change and pressure in a balanced and flexible way and how they manage stress. Candidates should be seen to be people of integrity who can generate trust and display honesty. They should be able to speak of how they have coped with difficult life experiences, how they have reflected upon them and incorporated them within their life and understanding.*

* Assessment of self – e.g. using MBTI, …
* Life-map/history and what it reveals about character and personality – responses to events
* Breadth of interests/self-development …
* Psychological assessment? (only if needed)

1. **Relationships**

*Candidates should show the capacity to build healthy personal, professional, and pastoral relationships. They should demonstrate an awareness of the need for, and ability to establish and sustain, appropriate boundaries between personal and professional life and within pastoral relationships. They should be able to manage conflict and show an ability to negotiate difficult relationships. Candidates should demonstrate good interpersonal skills, the willingness to learn from experience, and a commitment to building inclusive relationships within diversity. They should show the potential to exercise effective pastoral care.*

* Do some pastoral exercises (NB one exercise is required for Provincial Panel)
* Reflection on conflict situations
* Experience of diversity of various kinds - e.g. by visits to groups outside usual experience or comfort zone

1. **Leadership and Collaboration**

*Candidates should demonstrate an ability to offer leadership in the Church community and in the wider community as appropriate. This ability includes the capacity to offer an example of faith and discipleship which is inspiring to others and witnesses to the servanthood of Christ. They should show a commitment to identifying and nurturing the gifts of others and be able to collaborate effectively. Candidates should be able to identify their own leadership style, and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of this and of the different ways in which leadership may be exercised within the Church. They should be able to be flexible and adaptable in leadership and demonstrate ability to guide and shape the life of the Church community in its mission to the world.*

* Study leadership styles and be aware of own leadership style (questionnaires can be made available)
* Get some experience of presenting a topic and leading a group discussion (before Panels)
* Reflect on the experience of leading change; collaborating; leading teams

1. **Faith**

*Candidates should show an understanding of the Christian faith and a desire to deepen their understanding. They should demonstrate a personal commitment to Christ and a mature, robust faith which shapes their life and work. Candidates should show an ability to reflect critically on their faith and make connections between faith and contemporary life. They should demonstrate a capacity to communicate their faith engagingly and effectively.*

* Plot your faith journey, asking questions such as ‘who was God for me at this point?’, ‘where was God?’, ‘how did I develop in faith?’ and so on. (Could use visuals etc. as well as words)
* Take a well-known hymn and explore/identify its ideas as examples of Christian doctrine
* Identify the theological significance of the major feasts of the Church year
* Write on ‘What it means to be a Christian’ for several different contexts, e.g. church magazine; local newspaper; church study group …

1. **Mission and Evangelism**

*Candidates should demonstrate a personal commitment to mission that is reflected in thought, prayer and action. They should show a wide and inclusive understanding of mission and the strategic issues and opportunities within contemporary culture. Candidates should be able to articulate the good news of the Kingdom appropriately in differing contexts and speak of Jesus Christ in a way that is exciting, accessible, and attractive. They should enable others to develop their vocations as witnesses of the good news. They should show potential as leaders of mission.*

* The Written Reflection – start from an experience and reflect on it theologically
* Look at 5 Marks of Mission and put them in order of priority (for you) and explain why
* Identify a current film, TV programme, novel, game which could be used as a basis for evangelism and demonstrate how
* Reflect on an example of Mission Action Planning (or similar) and its appropriateness to context

1. **Quality of Mind**

*Candidates should have the necessary intellectual capacity and quality of mind to undertake satisfactorily a course of theological study and ministerial preparation and to cope with the intellectual demands of ministry. They should demonstrate a desire to learn through the integration of academic study and reflection on experience and a commitment to this as a lifelong process of learning and formation. Candidates should show flexibility of mind, openness to change and challenge, and the capacity to facilitate learning and theological reflection within the Church community.*

* Identify your learning style and preferences, and any potential disabilities (e.g. dyslexia)
* Participate in some form of discussion (any subject) with people of a different perspective from yours
* Describe an experience and identify a Biblical passage or character which helps you to reflect theologically on it
* Write an article on a contemporary issue from a Christian point of view