

## Scottish Episcopal Church

### Structures for the Selection Process

This guidance is provided to accompany Section 2 of the Vacancy Procedures for Vestries document. It is offered as a resource and is not intended to be prescriptive but aims to provide an example of how the formal selection process can be undertaken and give some good practice guidance on the process.

The selection process should include formal and informal sessions with the candidate(s). Depending on the size of the selection panel, it may be appropriate for different people to be involved in different areas of the selection process. This is a two-way process which will give the opportunity for both the selection panel and the candidate(s) to explore and discern whether there is a good match between the candidate and the vacancy.

Below is an example of how the informal and formal sessions could be structured. It assumes that the session will include a presentation, sermon or homily, and in depth questions, which in this example have been split between the life in the church and the life facing outwards from the church. How you split the question themes is less important than having a clear and logical structure and adhering to the questions you have framed.

Within each section you should identify one person to act as the convenor, to take charge of ensuring all those nominated to ask questions do so, and all areas are covered. It may also be worthwhile identifying one person who may not necessarily have a set list of questions but will have a role of picking up on any answers that could profit from further exploration (what is sometimes called the 'sweeper' role).

Depending on the size of your selection panel, you may allocate individuals to different sessions. For instance, a selection panel with say, 15 members may all attend the initial presentation, and then be split in to two question groups covering different areas. In most selection panel situations it is best to restrict the numbers asking questions to a maximum of 5, so even if more than 5 people are part of the question group, it would be best if only 5 asked questions. If this is the case, make this clear to the candidate, so they do not wonder when the others will be asking questions. As a rule, always give clear guidance and signpost what you are going to be doing, if you wish your candidates to give their best at the selection panel. It is not in your best interests to make it more of an ordeal than it needs to be.

<b>Session</b>	<b>Example Activities</b>	<b>Example of Timing</b>
Welcome	A nominated person acts as the main lead, welcoming the candidate, taking care of their coat, suitcase, etc, and showing them where toilets are etc., and offers them refreshments. The nominated person introduces the candidate to the other members of the selection panel and explains the structure of the session.	15- 20 minutes
Presentation	If the candidate has been asked to talk to a specific bible passage, a text of their choosing or asked to provide a presentation on a particular subject, then this should have been provided in advance and a set	8 – 15 minutes

	amount of time stated for giving the presentation.	
	You should allow time for questions from the selection panel, managed by the nominated convenor of this session; it would be normal to schedule up to the same amount of time allowed for the presentation.	8 – 15 minutes
Opening general questions	As a whole group, several questions that open up areas for further discussion, may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What attracted you to this charge?</li> <li>• What special gifts will you bring?</li> <li>• What would be the biggest challenge for you?</li> <li>• How can this role help you develop and grow?</li> <li>• What do you believe are the signs of a healthy church?</li> </ul>	20 – 30 minutes
Break	A chance for a short break with refreshments.	10 – 15 minutes
'Inner' church questions	The nominated convenor of this session should introduce the group, and preferably repeat the names of those involved in this session. Questions may cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring the candidate's journey in faith; for example, what changes in their faith have they experienced since ordination, and who were their main influences in their faith journey.</li> <li>• Asking about music, liturgy, worship styles: preferences, what has worked well for them, how that matches the congregation.</li> <li>• Their own churchmanship: their position on major faith issues as it impacts on the congregation and the local context (gender, sexual orientation, divorce, social exclusion, etc.)</li> <li>• Exploring pastoral issues; experiences and any special interests.</li> <li>• Exploring congregational development, faith education.</li> <li>• Exploring styles of leadership and experience of working with lay and clergy teams.</li> </ul> The 'sweeper' should be asked by the convenor if they have any questions.	30 – 45 minutes
Church Plant tour	The nominated convenor of this session should give the candidate a tour of the church, associated halls etc., and the Rectory, and any other relevant buildings or grounds adjacent to the church. If the Rectory is not close by the church it be necessary undertake this session at the end of the two formal question sessions, but a ten to 15 minute break should be allowed in that case.	20 – 40 minutes
'Outer' church questions	The nominated convenor of this session should introduce the group, and preferably repeat the names of those involved in this session. Questions may cover:	30 – 45 minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement in Diocese, Province etc.</li> <li>• Formal and informal roles in the local community; experience and how it may develop in the local context</li> <li>• Ecumenical experience and approaches</li> <li>• Interfaith experience and issues</li> <li>• Outreach experience and issues</li> <li>• Congregational growth and presentation of the church to the local community</li> <li>• Overseas links and issues</li> <li>• Church projects, twinning with other churches, etc.</li> </ul> <p>The 'sweeper' should be asked by the convenor if they have any questions.</p>	
Team members	If the congregation has a ministry team, an opportunity for the candidate(s) to meet the NSMs and other ordained members should be given. This should be a more informal session and perhaps allow the candidate an opportunity for refreshments	15 – 30 minutes
Closing session	A short formal session mainly for the candidate(s) to ask the selection panel any questions they may have. It is recommended that the nominated convenor identifies an individual to respond to the question and then allow any others to provide supplementary information. One final question from the convenor may be to check if the candidate(s) is, at this stage, interested in being considered further for the position.	10 – 15 minutes

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