

Lay Readers Discernment Process



**A Handbook
Scottish Episcopal Church
2023**

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This handbook provides candidates for Lay Readership and Wardens of Lay Readers, together with their incumbents and bishops, with an outline of the core responsibilities of Lay Readers and the discernment process for their selection. It aims to promote clarity, good practice and consistency across the province of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Ministry

The Ordinal (1984) of the Scottish Episcopal Church declares:

“The Church is the People of God, the Body of Christ and the dwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. In baptism every disciple is called to make Jesus known as Saviour and Lord and to share his work in renewing the world.”

The fundamental call is to the baptised people of God to proclaim Christ and work for the Kingdom of God. Each Christian is called to represent Christ in the world in their particular way, offering the gifts which God has given them.

Some may be called to public ministry, with specific roles and responsibilities. This is a calling to be a visible focus of Christian life and action, to use particular gifts, and to undertake certain tasks on behalf of the Church.

All those in public ministry are also called, as Christian disciples like anyone else, to deepen their relationship with God through prayer and study; to seek opportunities to grow in faith; to give generously of their time and money for God’s purposes; to share the Good News of God’s Kingdom and to care for those in need and for Creation.

Lay Readers: Role and public duties

Lay Readers are theologically-trained lay people who are called to proclaim the Gospel and lead worship, serving alongside clergy to support and develop the life of a congregation. Their role is governed by Canon Law and they are episcopally-licensed.

Whilst there are certain core responsibilities and expectations of Lay Readers, the shape of their ministry depends on the gifts they bring and the context in which they serve. Lay Readers constitute a diocesan resource, and are deployed according to the needs identified by their bishop. In congregations, they serve as part of the ministry team under the leadership of the Rector. Lay Readers receive no stipend but should be offered agreed expenses of office.

Lay Readers differ from those lay people designated as having ‘recognised ministries’ – Pastoral Assistants, Eucharistic Assistants and Worship Leaders – who are not canonically recognized and who are simply authorized to one charge. They offer a lay hermeneutic of the Gospel to the church and interpreting the church to the world. Preaching, teaching and catechesis thus play a major part in their service. Lay Readers may lead and preach at Morning and Evening Prayer, and at Services of the Word. They may preach and assist at the Eucharist, but not preside; they may administer Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament. With the approval of the Incumbent they may conduct funerals. They may not baptise (except, like any lay person, in emergency) or conduct weddings.

The core responsibilities of a Lay Reader include:

- **Leading the Ministry of the Word or non-Eucharistic public services**
 - **Administering Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament when requested**
 - **Conducting funerals**
 - **Teaching and preaching on Sundays and during the week, both to adults and young people**
 - **Encouraging faith development, for example in study groups**
 - **Preparing candidates for baptism**
 - **Pastoral work, e.g. visiting and taking the Reserved Sacrament to the sick**
-

Criteria for Selection

Evidence for a vocation to Lay Readership is gathered from the extent to which candidates fulfil the Criteria for Selection. Every candidate will have certain areas of particular gifting, but to fulfil the demanding public ministry of a Lay Reader, there should be evidence that they already fulfil each Criterion to some extent, or have a clear potential to do so.

The Criteria are:

A: CHRISTIAN TRADITION, FAITH AND LIFE

A1. Candidates have a personal commitment to Christian faith which is mature and developing. They can describe their faith journey, the challenges to faith they have experienced in their lives and the ways in which it has been strengthened.

A2. Candidates show a knowledge and understanding of the key beliefs of the Christian faith as expressed in the Scriptures and creeds. They can reflect critically on their faith and have both the desire and the ability to deepen that understanding and grow in faith.

A3. Candidates can communicate their faith engagingly and effectively. They can articulate what excites them about their faith and know how to do so in ways that are appropriate to the situation.

A4. Candidates respect and engage with those whose understanding of faith is different from their own. They have the flexibility of mind to appreciate the range of perspectives on faith, doctrine, and practice within the Scottish Episcopal Church.

A5. Candidates live out their faith in their life. They can discern God at work in their lived experience and can demonstrate that the Gospel has begun to shape who they are and what they do. They can make connections between Christian faith and contemporary life.

B: SPIRITUALITY AND WORSHIP

B1 Candidates show evidence of a commitment to a spiritual discipline which involves individual and corporate prayer and worship, and which sustains them in their walk with God. They should show evidence of a developing pattern of prayer, Bible study and the regular receiving of Holy Communion. They receive regular spiritual direction or accompaniment.

B2 Candidates show how their spirituality is deepening, by reflection on the way that their relationship with God has developed through their lives, and how this has changed and transformed them. Their spirituality informs their relationships with others and with the wider world.

B3 Candidates have a growing understanding of spirituality and worship and have explored traditions that are different from their own. They are committed to the sacramental life of the Church while being open to new forms of worship. They receive the support and guidance of a spiritual director or soul friend. Lay Reader candidates welcome the Church's call to assist in leading worship and preaching.

B4 Candidates have some experience of leading prayer and worship with others and can reflect on how they can encourage others to discern the presence of God in their lives.

C: PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

C1 Candidates have a secure sense of self. They have a healthy awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, and the way they come across to others. They are self-accepting, relaxed and at ease with who they are.

C2 Candidates know how to care for themselves. They have considered the impact that public ministry has on personal life and have a range of personal interests and social supports to sustain them.

C3 Candidates have the resilience to operate in complex situations. They have responded creatively to life experiences including failure and have demonstrated their potential for growth through them. They can integrate new experiences and emotions in a way that helps them grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually.

C4 Candidates have an honesty and integrity that is not subverted by insecurity, and which generates trust. They know how to respect confidentiality.

C5 Candidates have a robust personality and character. They have the stamina and confidence to cope with change and stress. They can draw on all their personal resources to respond to new people and situations, adapting but remaining authentic.

C6 Candidates enjoy being with other people. They are secure and integrated enough in themselves to be outward-facing and appreciative of others.

D: RELATIONSHIPS

D1 Candidates' relationships are grounded in the love and compassion of God. They have a range of healthy personal and professional relationships and know how to sustain them.

D2 Candidates maintain appropriate boundaries between personal and professional life and within pastoral relationships. They can reflect on the complexities and demands of relationships within public ministry.

D3 Candidates have good interpersonal skills. They enjoy engaging with others, appreciate diversity and difference, and can negotiate difficult relationships. They have a good listening ability.

D4 Candidates have the potential to exercise effective pastoral care. They are approachable, empathetic, and compassionate. They have a servant heart which is committed to the dignity and flourishing of others.

E: MISSION, EVANGELISM AND DEVELOPING DISCIPLESHIP

E1 Candidates demonstrate their commitment to mission and evangelism in their thought, prayer, and action. They can reflect on what mission and evangelism can mean in a local church context. 6

E4 Candidates are committed to developing the discipleship of others. They are able to nurture the faith of others and to equip others to witness to their faith in Christ.

F: LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY

F1 Candidates have the potential to exercise appropriate leadership in a team. They have had experience of leadership and can reflect on what it tells them about their leadership style. They have the confidence to use their own and others' gifts in Christ's service. They are aware of how power may be used and abused.

F2 Candidates have good communication skills. They can speak and write clearly and effectively, in a way that inspires and engages others. They are comfortable with communicating in different ways, appropriate to the situation.

F3 Candidates collaborate with others. They value and encourage the skills and gifts of a diverse range of people, and they are team-players.

G: VOCATION AND MINISTRY WITHIN THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

G1 Candidates can articulate an inner sense of call to Lay Reader ministry, which has persisted over time. They have reflected on the significant moments of their discernment journey and can describe the impact on their lives of their sense of vocation.

G2 Candidates have had their call affirmed by others. They can identify those who have recognised their potential vocation to ordained ministry and the grounds for their support.

G3 Candidates are obedient to the Church's call to ministry. They are open to the requirements and needs of the Church with regard to formation and deployment and have reflected on the sacrifices involved in living out their vocation.

G4 Candidates are informed about their potential ministry. They have explored what it means to be a Lay Reader. They can reflect on the range of opportunities for ministry in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

G5 Candidates have knowledge of and commitment to the Scottish Episcopal Church. They are aware of the life and contemporary role of the Scottish Episcopal Church and have experienced its diversity. They are baptised and confirmed and can demonstrate a sustained active membership of a congregation in the Scottish Episcopal Church. They understand the authority structures of the Scottish Episcopal Church, particularly the role of the bishop, and accept the discipline that canonical obedience would bring.

G6 Candidates have a realistic vocation. They fulfil adequately this and the other Criteria for Selection; their circumstances and ability enable them to complete the required course of training, and they have the overall potential to be formed for authorised ministry in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

The Discernment process

The discernment process aims to provide clear and evidence-based grounds for recommending a candidate for formation as a Lay Reader in the Scottish Episcopal Church. (It is not a recommendation for licensing as a Lay Reader, which is made only after the final appraisal conference in formation and training; the decision to license is made by the Bishop.)

The outcome of this discernment process is a recommendation consistent with Provincially-agreed criteria and evidence.

Preliminary discussion before entering the formal process

Where a member of the church feels called to Lay Readership, they may seek a preliminary discussion with the diocesan Warden of Lay Readers, to find out more about the role and functions of a Lay Reader and the commitments that will be required to training and formation, if they are accepted as a candidate.

Discernment with the incumbent

- (1) The candidate should be a communicant member of a SEC congregation for at least 2 years. They should discuss their sense of call to Lay Reader ministry with their incumbent, who may also obtain the Vestry's endorsement of the enquirer as a possible candidate.
- (2) The incumbent or chaplain completes an Enquirer's Recommendation Form, using the agreed Criteria for Selection. This Form is sent to the Provincial Director of Ordinands (PDO). The PDO assigns a Vocations Advisor who makes an assessment as part of the local discernment stage of the SEC Discernment process (*See Appendix 2, pp.II-IV*)

Discernment with the Vocations Advisor (VA)

The Enquirer meets the VA over several months exploring their sense of vocation with regard to the agreed Criteria for Selection. A VA Assessment Report is sent to the PDO and the diocesan bishop decides if the Enquirer should become a Lay Reader candidate.

Discernment with the Warden of Lay Readers

- (3) The **candidate meets with a Warden of Lay Readers from the Province**. Topics for discussion may include:
 - (i) the stages of the selection process
 - (ii) the background history and church experience of the candidate
 - (iii) the educational background of the candidate and the expectations of the SEC regarding training
 - (iv) the nature of Lay Reader ministry
 - (v) the Criteria for Selection of Lay Readers and how far the candidate fulfils them
 - (vi) any issues relevant to the particular candidate or raised by them

The Warden completes an Assessment Report and sends it to the PDO. The diocesan Bishop decides whether the Candidate attends a Discernment Meeting as part of the SEC Discernment process. The Discernment Meeting is chaired by a lay member. A Warden of Lay Readers from the Province is a member.

The Discernment Meeting

(4) Paperwork is gathered:

- (a) The initial Recommendation Form from the incumbent (*Appendix 2, pp.II-IV*) about the candidate and the future envisaged role for him or her as a Lay Reader in the congregation, updated by the incumbent if appropriate
- (b) Assessments from the discernment process with the VA and a Warden of Lay Readers
- (c) A Registration Form (*Appendix 3, pp.V-XI*).

(5) The ***Discernment Meeting assessment*** is offered by the lay chair and the PDO to the diocesan bishop. The diocesan bishop may recommend the Lay Reader candidate to an ***Advisory Selection Panel*** in preparation for final selection to SEI for formation and training. The Lay Reader candidate joins candidates for ordination at the Advisory Selection Panel over two days organised by the PDO.

(6) The outcome of the ***Advisory Selection Panel*** after assessment from three advisors is a **recommendation** to the diocesan bishop as to whether or not the candidate should proceed to formation and training as a Lay Reader.

Discernment by the Bishop

(7) The **PDO reports to the bishop** of the recommendation following the Advisory Interview.

(8) The **Bishop may see the candidate** at this point if he or she has not already done so.

(9) The **Bishop communicates his or her decision** to the candidate and diocesan Warden of Lay Readers

(10) The **Bishop confirms entry to SEI for formation & training** to the PDO and Principal of SEI

Procedure for Data Protection

The SEC Discernment process encourages transparency throughout the process. Enquirers and Candidates are encouraged to discuss fully at each stage assessments written about them.

During the process of discernment in the SEC files of written material are held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (Data Protection Act 2018).

This information is kept securely, and the data is processed under the guidance of the Secretary General of the General Synod.

The PDO holds the completed files and information is shared between those involved in the SEC Discernment process: Diocesan Bishop, Assistant Director of Ordinands (ADO), Vocational Advisor (VA), Discernment Meeting Members, and Advisory Selection Panel Members. The data held will only be used for the purposes of the discernment of vocation in the SEC and subsequent training or formation for ministry.

All involved in the SEC Discernment process are acting provincially and the data controller is the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church (Scottish charity number SC015962). Formal application by an individual to see data held about them can be made to the data controller.

Files will typically include correspondence, assessment reports, references, and special category data as defined by the Act (e.g., religious beliefs, details of personal biography, health, and any criminal record). The basis of processing of this data is "legitimate interest" and satisfies the GDPR Article 9 condition "legitimate activities".

If an Enquirer is not sponsored to become a Candidate by a diocesan bishop their folder containing the initial recommendation form and VA assessment report will be held for 5 years in accordance with General Synod practice to facilitate a resumption of the discernment process if that is required. Any other documents collated in the process will be shredded or deleted.

If a Candidate is not sponsored for an Advisory Selection Panel (ASP) their folder containing the initial recommendation form, VA assessment report, Registration Form, and ADO assessment report will be held for 5 years in accordance with General Synod practice to facilitate a resumption of the discernment process if that is required. Any other documents collated in the process will be shredded or deleted.

Following an ASP, whether a Candidate is recommended or not for formation and ordination training, their folder containing the initial recommendation form, VA assessment report, Registration Form, ADO assessment report, Discernment Meeting report and ASP report will be held for 10 years in accordance with General Synod practice to facilitate a resumption of the discernment process if this is required. Any other documents, including Charity Trustee Declaration, Safeguarding Declaration collated in the process will be shredded or deleted. For those who are recommended and commence training and formation subsequent meeting notes with the PDO and or the Principal of SEI may be added.

Enquirers/Candidates are asked to sign a form, for the PDO, indicating they understand the procedures and have received this information and consent to the processing of their data.

Appendix 1: Canon 20 Of Lay Readers

Note: This Canon applies to those who are at the point of licensing, after discernment and formation as Lay Readers. The Canons and Forms of declaration and licence may be found in the Code of Canons of the Scottish Episcopal Church at <http://www.scotland.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Code-of-Canons-2015.pdf>, p.62 (Canon 20) and pp.168-9 (Appendix no. 19).

(Appendix 19 referred to in Canon 20 does not appear in this Handbook)

1. The Bishop of any diocese may appoint men or women Lay Readers to serve in that diocese as that Bishop may deem expedient, always subject to the limitations laid down in Canon 37, Section 3.
2. The Bishop shall require every Lay Reader to sign a declaration in terms of Form B, Appendix No.19, and may thereafter issue a licence in terms of Form C, Appendix No.19, or in such other form as the Bishop may deem right.
3. Every Lay Reader so appointed shall be subject to the regulations bearing on the discharge of duties of Lay Readers prescribed by the Bishop of the diocese, and the licence given may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of the Bishop.
4. No Lay Reader shall be appointed to serve in any part of the diocese in which there is a Rector without the consent of that Rector. A newly appointed Rector may apply to the Bishop within twelve months of taking up the appointment to have the licence terminated.

Resolution under Canon 20

Resolution 1

A Rector who desires to have a Lay Reader appointed, shall, with the permission of and subject to the approval of the Bishop of the diocese, make a nomination in terms of Form A, Appendix No.19, such nomination to be accompanied by the names of two adult communicants ready to testify to the character and fitness of the proposed Lay Reader, should confidential inquiry be made of them by the Bishop.

Appendix 2: Incumbent Enquirer Recommendation Form

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DISCERNMENT OF MINISTRY

INITIAL ENQUIRY FOR VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT

*Please read the notes at the end before completing,
and then return to PDO@scotland.anglican.org*

Candidate's name: Click or tap here to enter the candidate's name in full

Address: Click or tap here to enter the candidate's postal address

Email: Click or tap here to enter the candidate's email address

Telephone: Click or tap here to enter landline/mobile phone number

Charge(s): Click or tap here to enter text.

How long have you known this person?

Click or tap here to enter the number of years/months

Have they been a member of the congregation for the minimum 2 years? Click to choose yes/no

What types of church activity do they get involved in?

Click or tap here to list the types of activity

How long have you been discussing the idea of vocational discernment with them?

Click or tap here to enter the time in years/months

Have you any concerns about their personal life?

(Please read Guidance Regarding Domestic Circumstances of Candidates for Ordination below)

Click or tap here to enter any concerns after reading the guidance below

Please comment on the candidate in relation to the summary Criteria for Selection:

A CHRISTIAN TRADITION, FAITH AND LIFE

Candidates have a personal commitment to Christian faith. They show a knowledge and understanding of the key beliefs of the Christian faith, and can communicate their faith engagingly and effectively. Candidates respect and engage with those whose understanding of faith is different from their own. They live out their faith in their life.

Comment:

Click or tap here to enter your comment under Christian tradition, faith and life

B SPIRITUALITY AND WORSHIP

Candidates show evidence of a commitment to a spiritual discipline, and their spirituality is deepening. Candidates have a growing understanding of spirituality and worship, and have some experience of leading prayer and worship with others.

Comment:

[Click or tap here to enter your comment under spirituality and worship](#)

C PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

Candidates have a secure sense of self and know how to care for themselves. Candidates have the resilience to operate in complex situations. Candidates have honesty and integrity. Candidates have a robust personality and character and enjoy being with other people.

Comment:

[Click or tap here to enter your comment under personality and character](#)

D RELATIONSHIPS

Candidates' relationships are grounded in the love and compassion of God. They have a range of healthy personal and professional relationships, and maintain appropriate boundaries between personal and professional life and within pastoral relationships. Candidates have good interpersonal skills and have the potential to exercise effective pastoral care.

Comment:

[Click or tap here to enter your comment under relationships](#)

E MISSION, EVANGELISM AND DEVELOPING DISCIPLESHIP

Candidates demonstrate their commitment to mission and evangelism in their thought, prayer and action. They have a knowledge and understanding of mission and evangelism and effective communication skills for them. Candidates are committed to developing the discipleship of others.

Comment:

[Click or tap here to enter your comment under mission, evangelism and developing discipleship](#)

F LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY

Candidates have the potential to exercise leadership in the Church and the wider community. They have good communication skills. Candidates have the potential to lead strategically and they collaborate with others. Candidates understand and work with the dynamics of a community.

Comment:

[Click or tap here to enter your comment under leadership, collaboration and community](#)

G VOCATION AND MINISTRY WITHIN THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Candidates can articulate an inner sense of call and have also had their call affirmed by others. They are obedient to the Church's call to ministry and what that may involve. Candidates are informed about their potential ministry and have knowledge of and commitment to the Scottish Episcopal Church. Candidates have a realistic vocation and the overall potential to be formed for ministry in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Comment:

[Click or tap here to enter your comment under vocation and ministry within the SEC](#)

NOTES FOR INCUMBENTS/PRIESTS

- 1. This form is to be used for potential candidates enquiring about Ordained ministry and Lay Readership, as well as authorised ministries established locally.**
Vocational Diaconate and Priesthood (assistant and incumbent) and most chaplaincies require ordination. Lay Readership requires the same period of formation and training. Authorised ministries, including lay chaplaincies are locally discerned but the discernment process is overseen provincially. After completion of this form the enquirer will be assigned a Vocations Adviser, who will explore all these possible pathways for ministry and explain the Discernment Process. Although you may inform a candidate of a particular ministry, a different one may be discerned for them during their vocational journey. Completing this form does not indicate any form of authorisation at the outset. Only bishops can recommend an enquirer for authorised ministry and training for ordained ministry.
- 2. Make sure that you know the candidate sufficiently well to recommend them.** Could you describe the quality of their activities in the church? Do you know whom they relate well to and whom not so well? How do they react to conflict, failure or disappointment? What do they do in their leisure time? If you find these questions hard to answer, you may need to take more time to get to know them better.
- 3. If you think someone is unsuitable, say so now.** Be careful that you are not influenced to put forward a candidate because of their personal needs or pressure from others. The further an unsuitable candidate goes in the discernment process, the more painful an eventual non-recommendation is.
- 4. Do allow the work of the Holy Spirit to unfold gradually.** Candidates will work with Vocations Advisers, Assistant DDOs, the PDO, the Advisory Selection Panel and the Bishop to discern what God may be calling them to, and you do not need to anticipate this work. You are being asked to make observations in the light of the Criteria, not to guide the candidate through these Criteria. However, your observations are very valuable, because you will have known them the longest.

Appendix 3: Registration Form

(example only – contact the PDO)

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Registration Form

for selection for training for ordained or lay reader ministry

CONFIDENTIAL

This form should be completed electronically using sentence case font (not block capitals)

Where options are given, please **highlight** or **embolden** the appropriate option.

Section 1

TITLE:	Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr - or type other:		
SURNAME:		INITIALS:	
PREVIOUS SURNAME: (if different)		AGE:	
FORENAME(S):		The name you prefer to use:	

Section 2

ADDRESS FOR COMMUNICATIONS – if appropriate indicate dates for contact (please inform us of any change at once)			
PERMANENT		PRESENT (if different)	
Postcode:		Postcode:	
Dates if appropriate:		Dates if appropriate:	
TELEPHONE AND EMAIL CONTACTS			
TELEPHONE DAY:		MOBILE PHONE:	
TELEPHONE EVENING:			
EMAIL ADDRESS:			

Section 3

DATES (DD/MM/YY)			
BIRTH:		BAPTISM:	
NATIONALITY:		CONFIRMATION:	
PRESENT OCCUPATION:		NAT INS NO:	

Section 4

MARITAL STATUS:	Single/Engaged/Married/Separated/Divorced/Widowed/Civil Partnership/Civil Partnership Dissolved		
IF MARRIED, DATE OF MARRIAGE:			
SPOUSE'S NAME:		OCCUPATION:	

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HAVE YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE/FIANCE(E) BEEN MARRIED PREVIOUSLY TO A PARTNER WHO IS STILL LIVING?			Yes/No
NAME(S) OF CHILDREN:		DATE(S) OF BIRTH:	
IF IN A CIVIL PARTNERSHIP, DATE OF REGISTRATION:			
CIVIL PARTNER'S NAME:		OCCUPATION:	

Section 5

SPONSORING DIOCESE:			
CHURCH YOU USUALLY ATTEND			
HAVE YOU BEEN ADMITTED TO THE OFFICE OF LAY READER?			Yes/No
If so, when?		Where?	

Section 6

FOR WHICH MINISTRY ARE YOU A CANDIDATE?:	Ordained Ministry: Vocational Deacon/ Ordained Ministry: Priest/Lay Reader Ministry
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Section 7

SECONDARY EDUCATION - Give details of any courses you have undertaken at school and since leaving school, eg SQA National 3-5, Higher, Advanced Higher, HNC, Dip HE etc.
 List in chronological order, **starting with the earliest dates**. (Enter degrees or professional qualifications at sections 8-10)

DATES From . . . To	NAME AND TYPE OF SCHOOL or OTHER PLACE OF EDUCATION	DATE	EXAM LEVEL	SUBJECTS STUDIED	PASS/FAIL/ GRADE

If sections 8 to 10 do not apply to you, please leave blank and continue at section 11.

Section 8

FIRST DEGREE QUALIFICATION					
DATES From . . . To	UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE ETC	SUBJECTS STUDIED	FULL TITLE OF DEGREE	CLASS and DIVISION	DATE AWARDED/ EXPECTED

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Section 9

POSTGRADUATE STUDY		
DATES From . . . To	UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE ETC	DETAILS OF POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS (list grades if applicable)

Section 10

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS				
DATES From . . . To	QUALIFICATIONS	AWARDING BODY	DATE	RESULTS (Grade if applicable)

Section 11

CHRISTIAN TRAINING
Give details of any courses of lay training or study of Christian faith that you have undertaken. Theology degrees should be included at sections 8 or 9.

Section 12

EMPLOYMENT SINCE LEAVING FULL-TIME EDUCATION		
List in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent		
DATES From . . . To	NAME, LOCATION AND BUSINESS OF EMPLOYER (if applicable)	POSITION HELD AND RESPONSIBILITIES (with reason for leaving)

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Section 13

TIME NOT ALREADY ACCOUNTED FOR

DATES
From . . . To

If your time since leaving school is not fully accounted for by the replies given elsewhere, account for the remainder here. Mention here any vacation or other casual employment, and time given to other responsibilities.

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Section 14

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

Give details of positions of individual and team responsibility or leadership which you have held outside the Church and which you consider relevant to this application. Include positions in paid employment or as a volunteer.

List them in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent.

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Section 15

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE WITHIN THE CHURCH

Give details of positions of individual and team responsibility or leadership which you have held within the Church. List them in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent.

--

Section 16

LEISURE INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

What are your main leisure interests and hobbies? What attracts you to them?

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Section 17

PREVIOUS CANDIDATURE

(i) Have you previously attended a Bishops' Advisory Panel or SEC Panel?	Yes/No
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If yes, please give details:

(ii) Have you ever been considered for the ordained or lay ministry in any Church other than the Scottish Episcopal Church?	Yes/No
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If yes, please give details:

Section 18

OTHER PLANS

What alternatives would you consider if you were not recommended for ministerial training at this time?

Section 19

CHURCH INVOLVEMENT AND EXPERIENCE

Give details of Christian congregations where you have worshipped regularly.

List them in **reverse chronological order**, starting with your current place of worship.

Section 20

MAIN INFLUENCES AND EVENTS

Looking at your life as a whole, indicate the events which you feel have most affected you, eg. changes relating not only to education and work requirements, but also to home, location, family and personal circumstances.

List the events separately, and in chronological order, starting with those earliest in your life.

Give a brief indication of how they influenced your life.

YEAR	AGE	EVENTS	INFLUENCE ON YOUR LIFE

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Section 21

SELF ASSESSMENT

Briefly describe yourself and your temperament, including your gifts and preferences, strengths and weaknesses.

Section 22

CHRISTIAN FAITH

What is at the heart of the good news you want to share with other people?
What is central to your own faith?

Section 23

MISSION AND EVANGELISM

How have you engaged with Mission and Evangelism? What do you understand by those terms?

Section 24

SENSE OF CALLING

What has made you think that God may be calling you to the ministry for which you are a candidate?
What effect has your sense of vocation had on you?

Section 25

PRAYER LIFE

Describe your pattern of individual and corporate prayer. Indicate the sources of your spiritual support and guidance

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Section 26

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

To whom do you relate most closely? What networks of support do you have and who might sustain you in your future ministry?

Section 27

How do you envisage yourself contributing to the ministry of the Scottish Episcopal Church?

Section 28

DISABILITIES

If you consider yourself disabled, please give details of any specific support that you will need in order to participate in the Provincial Discernment Board?

Section 29

PERSONAL REFLECTION Having written at length about yourself and your vocation, what have you learned? What has most moved, excited and/or challenged you? Please write 300–500 words

BEFORE YOU SIGN THIS FORM, PLEASE CHECK THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN ACCOUNT OF THE FOLLOWING:

- This form is YOUR opportunity to tell Provincial Advisers about yourself before they meet you at the Advisory Selection Panel. It is therefore important to give them the information you want them to know, taking care to follow the instructions for each question.
- Advisers make their assessments against the Criteria for Selection approved by the College of Bishops. You will find it helpful to have read the Summary of the Criteria.
- The PDO will use the personal information supplied by you, your sponsoring diocese and your referees to enable you to be assessed by a Provincial Advisory Selection Panel and, if you are recommended for training, SEI will have access to your Registration Form and Provincial Advisory Selection Panel Report to assist in making arrangements for your training.

I agree that the PDO may use my personal information as described above.

Signed..... Date

The completed form should be returned to the Warden of Lay Readers or PDO.

Appendix 4: Comparative Tables

1) Comparison of core responsibilities

LAY READER	INCUMBENT PRIEST	ASSISTANT PRIEST	CHAPLAIN	DISTINCTIVE DEACON
	Praying for those committed to their care.	Praying for those committed to their care	Praying for those committed to their care	
Leading the Ministry of the Word or non-Eucharistic public services. Administering the Reserved Sacrament at services when requested. If authorised, conducting funerals.	Presiding at worship and celebrating the sacraments. Preparation and development of liturgy.	Presiding or assisting at worship and celebrating the sacraments, at the direction of the Incumbent	Providing opportunities for spiritual practice as appropriate	Assisting priests at the Eucharist. Reading the Gospel. Leading intercessions. Conducting baptisms.
Teaching and preaching on Sundays and during the week. Encouraging faith development, for example in study groups. Preparing candidates for baptism.	Teaching and preaching on Sundays and during the week. Nurturing Christian faith	Teaching and preaching on Sundays and during the week. Nurturing Christian faith	Teaching the Christian faith to those who seek it. Nurturing Christian faith	Teaching and preaching the Christian faith. Training intercessors. Drawing people to Christian faith. Preparing candidates for baptism.
Encouraging and equipping God's people in mission	Leading and equipping God's people in mission.	Encouraging and equipping God's people in mission.	Being a Christian presence in the chaplaincy context	Serving the wider Church in its tasks of building up the people of God and encouraging and equipping its mission to the world.
Pastoral work, eg. visiting and distributing the Reserved Sacrament to the sick.	Pastoral care through visiting and sacramental ministry.	Pastoral care through visiting and sacramental ministry.	Sharing time with those in the institution; offering counselling and a listening ear.	Distributing the Reserved Sacrament to the sick.

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LAY READER	INCUMBENT PRIEST	ASSISTANT PRIEST	CHAPLAIN	DISINTICTIVE DEACON
	Establishing relationships with secular groups, schools and civic bodies.		Being an advocate for those in their care who need a voice.	Serving in the community and challenging it in the name of the Kingdom
	<p>Chairing the Vestry</p> <p>Ensuring the administration of the congregation is done.</p> <p>Serving the diocese and Province, by taking on particular responsibilities e.g. serving on committees, chapters and Synods, or caring for and promoting a particular aspect of the wider Church's life.</p> <p>Exercising oversight of other local priests, such as through regular meetings, coordinating mission strategies, chairing the vestries of other charges, leading worship occasionally at their churches and reporting to the bishop.</p>	Undertaking duties associated with a congregation or chapel as requested by the incumbent.	Serving the diocese and Province appropriate, and making all possible connections between the place of chaplaincy and the wider Church.	Serving the bishop in diocesan tasks, such as fostering missional work in congregations.

2) Criteria for Selection

A: CHRISTIAN TRADITION, FAITH AND LIFE		
<p>Candidates have a personal commitment to Christian faith which is mature and developing. They can describe their faith journey, the challenges to faith they have experienced in their lives and the ways in which it has been strengthened.</p> <p>Candidates show a knowledge and understanding of the key beliefs of the Christian faith as expressed in the Scriptures and creeds. They can reflect critically on their faith and have both the desire and the ability to deepen that understanding and grow in faith.</p> <p>Candidates can communicate their faith engagingly and effectively. They can articulate what excites them about their faith and know how to do so in ways that are appropriate to the situation.</p> <p>Candidates respect and engage with those whose understanding of faith is different from their own. They have the flexibility of mind to appreciate the range of perspectives on faith, doctrine and practice within the Scottish Episcopal Church.</p> <p>Candidates live out their faith in their life. They can discern God at work in their lived experience, and can demonstrate that the Gospel has begun to shape who they are and what they do. They can make connections between Christian faith and contemporary life.</p>		
B: SPIRITUALITY AND WORSHIP		
<p>Candidates show evidence of a commitment to a spiritual discipline which involves individual and corporate prayer and worship, and which sustains them in their walk with God. They should show evidence of a developing pattern of prayer, Bible study and the regular receiving of Holy Communion. They receive regular spiritual direction or accompaniment.</p> <p>Candidates show how their spirituality is deepening, by reflection on the way that their relationship with God has developed through their lives, and how this has changed and transformed them. Their spirituality informs their relationships with others and with the wider world.</p> <p>Candidates have a growing understanding of spirituality and worship, and have explored traditions that are different from their own. They are committed to the sacramental life of the Church while being open to new forms of worship.</p> <p>Candidates have some experience of leading prayer and worship with others, and can reflect on how they can encourage others to discern the presence of God in their lives.</p>		
<p><i>Lay Reader candidates</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> welcome the call to assist in leading worship and preaching. 	<p><i>Incumbent and assistant priest candidates</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> welcome the call to exercise sacramental ministry. 	<p><i>Deacon candidates</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have explored the liturgical role of the deacon and how it relates to missional engagement in the community.

C: PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

Candidates have a secure sense of self. They have a healthy awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, and the way they come across to others. They are self-accepting, relaxed and at ease with who they are.

Candidates know how to care for themselves. They have considered the impact that public ministry has on personal life, and have a range of personal interests and social supports to sustain them.

Candidates have the resilience to operate in complex situations. They have responded creatively to life experiences including failure, and have demonstrated their potential for growth through them. They can integrate new experiences and emotions in a way that helps them grow intellectually, emotionally and spiritually.

Candidates have an honesty and integrity that is not subverted by insecurity, and which generates trust. They know how to respect confidentiality.

Candidates have a robust personality and character. They have the stamina and confidence to cope with change and stress. They can draw on all their personal resources to respond to new people and situations, adapting but remaining authentic.

Candidates enjoy being with other people. They are secure and integrated enough in themselves to be outward-facing and appreciative of others.

Deacon candidates

- are keenly aware of and responsive to need in individuals and in society. They are particularly challenged by injustice and oppression.

D: RELATIONSHIPS

Candidates' relationships are grounded in the love and compassion of God. They have a range of healthy personal and professional relationships, and know how to sustain them.

Candidates maintain appropriate boundaries between personal and professional life and within pastoral relationships. They can reflect on the complexities and demands of relationships within public ministry.

Candidates have good interpersonal skills. They enjoy engaging with others, appreciate diversity and difference, and can negotiate difficult relationships. They have a good listening ability.

Candidates have the potential to exercise effective pastoral care. They are approachable, empathetic and compassionate. They have a servant heart which is committed to the dignity and flourishing of others.

E: MISSION, EVANGELISM AND DEVELOPING DISCIPLESHIP

Candidates demonstrate their commitment to mission and evangelism in their thought, prayer and action.

Candidates are committed to developing the discipleship of others. They are able to nurture the faith of others and to equip others to witness to their faith in Christ.

Candidates for Lay Readership can reflect on what mission and evangelism can mean in a local church context.

Candidates for ordained ministry

- **can reflect on their own** experience of reaching out in loving service and witness, and have practical experience of what mission and evangelism can mean in a local church context.
- **have a knowledge and understanding of mission and evangelism.** They can speak of the role of mission and evangelism in the life of the Church, the difference between them and the strategic issues that may be involved. They are alert to the opportunities for engagement with contemporary culture and are sensitive to the demands of particular contexts.
- **Candidates have effective communication skills for mission and evangelism.** They can speak of the Gospel in ways that are attractive and appropriate to the listener. They are familiar with a range of media.

Incumbent candidates

- show potential to engage in and lead mission-shaped ministry.

Deacon candidates

- demonstrate an excitement about the loving and saving purpose of God for the world, and have a firm desire to share this by word and deed.
- recognise and have some experience of both the missional aspect and the prophetic element of diaconal ministry.

F: LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY

Candidates have the potential to exercise leadership appropriate to their ministry in the Church and the wider community. They have had experience of leadership and can reflect on what it tells them about their leadership style. They have the confidence to use their own and others' gifts in Christ's service. They are aware of how power may be used and abused.

Candidates have good communication skills. They can speak and write clearly and effectively, in a way that inspires and engages others. They are comfortable with communicating in different ways, appropriate to the situation.

Candidates collaborate with others. They value and encourage the skills and gifts of a diverse range of people, and they are team-players.

Candidates for Lay Readership

- are able to work effectively in a team
- have the potential to exercise accountable leadership where appropriate

Candidates for ordained ministry

- **have the potential to lead strategically.** They are able to look forward in an imaginative and theologically-informed way. They can take the initiative and have a creative, entrepreneurial approach. They are prepared to take risks and to implement a process of change with flexibility and resilience.
- **understand and work with the dynamics of a community.** They can describe the context of their local community. They are open to the possibilities of working with other denominations and faiths. They seek to engage with the secular community and to foster partnerships that support and nurture community life.

Incumbent candidates

- show potential for creative leadership of a congregation and of teams

Deacon candidates

- have the confidence and skill to speak up for others
- have some experience of working with groups and in the community
- demonstrate an ability to recognise, equip and mobilise the gifts of others.

G: VOCATION AND MINISTRY WITHIN THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Candidates can articulate an inner sense of call, which has persisted over time. They have reflected on the significant moments of their discernment journey, and can describe the impact on their lives of their sense of vocation.

Candidates have had their call affirmed by others. They can identify those who have recognised their potential vocation to ordained ministry and the grounds for their support.

Candidates are obedient to the Church’s call to ministry. They are open to the requirements and needs of the Church with regard to formation and deployment, and have reflected on the sacrifices involved in living out their vocation.

Candidates are informed about their potential ministry. They have explored what it means to be a Lay Reader or ordained minister and have studied the Ordinal of the Scottish Episcopal Church. They can reflect on the range of opportunities for ministry in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Candidates have knowledge of and commitment to the Scottish Episcopal Church. They are aware of the life and contemporary role of the Scottish Episcopal Church and have experienced its diversity. They are baptised and confirmed, and can demonstrate a sustained active membership of a congregation in the Scottish Episcopal Church. They understand the authority structures of the Scottish Episcopal Church, particularly the role of the bishop, and accept the discipline that canonical obedience would bring.

Candidates have a realistic vocation. They fulfil adequately this and the other Criteria for Selection; their circumstances and ability enable them to complete the required course of training, and they have the overall potential to be formed for ordained ministry in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Lay Reader candidates

- can speak of a personal call to Lay Reader ministry
- have the potential to exercise authorised Lay Reader ministry to the Scottish Episcopal Church

Incumbent candidates

- have the potential to exercise a ministry of oversight and missional leadership

Deacon candidates

- have had practical experience of lay ministry
- have some grasp of the historical understanding of the diaconate
- are open to the possibilities of diaconal ministry as deployed by the bishop in the local church and beyond

Appendix 5: Further reading

- Sally Buck, Graham Dodds and Phillip Tovey: *Instruments of Christ's Love. The Ministry of Readers* (SCM, 2016)
- Susan G. Farnham and others: *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community* (Morehouse Publishing, re-edition 2011)
- Paula Gooder and Cathy Rowling: *Reader Ministry explored* (SPCK, 2009)
- Gordon Kuhrt: *An Introduction to Christian Ministry* (CHP, 2000)
- Gordon Kuhrt: *Bridging the Gap – Reader Ministry Today* (CHP, 2002)
- John Lees: *Self-Supporting Ministry: A Practical Guide* (SPCK, 2018)
- Margaret Magdalen, *Vocation. Exploring Call and Identity* (Grover Booklet S 105, 2008)
- Stephen Platten, *Vocation: singing the Lord's song in a strange land* (SPCK, 2007)
- Charles Read and Philip Tovey: *Reader Ministry Today* (Grove Booklet W 203, 2010)
- Phillip Tovey: *The Liturgical Ministry of a Reader* [geared to the C of E] (Grove Books W230, 2017)
- Helen Thorp. *When the Church says 'No'* (Grove Booklet P 98, 2004)
- Archbishops' Council *A Vision for Lay Ministries* (2020) [here](#)
- Faith and Order Commission Church of England *Kingdom Calling The Vocation, Ministry and Discipleship of the Whole People of God* (2020) [here](#)
- Church of England GS 2056 - *Setting God's People Free* A Report from the Archbishops' Council [here](#)

Websites:

<https://www.aftersunday.org.uk/main-resources/exploring-vocation/resources-for-exploring-vocation> - an approach to vocation in general

<https://transformingministry.co.uk/> - useful for resources but please note the SEC has its own Discernment and Selection process

<http://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/vocation-and-ministry/> - the Scottish Episcopal Church's vocation and ministry page on the Provincial website

<http://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/publications/liturgies/communion-from-the-reserved-sacrament-1997/> - Scottish Episcopal Liturgy for Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament with guidelines

<http://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/publications/liturgies/> - Liturgies of the Scottish Episcopal Church

<http://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/publications/code-of-canons/> - Code of Canons of the Scottish Episcopal Church

Appendix 6: Wardens of Lay Readers and SEI staff

Wardens of Lay Readers:

Diocese	Name	Email	Tel.no
Aberdeen	Mrs Avril Hern	avrilhern@mac.com	01467 642536
Argyll and the Isles	Dr Chris Brett	c.t.brett@talk21.com	07711 944807
Brechin	Mrs Sue Rowe	mrssusanrowe@gmail.com	01382 779723
Edinburgh	Mrs Janet McKinnell	janet.mckinnell@btinternet.com	01368 850604
Glasgow	Mr Ray Gascoigne	raygascoigne@blueyonder.co.uk	01236 611392
Moray, Ross and Caithness	Mrs Patsy Thomson	patsy.j.thomson@gmail.com	01381 600708
St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane	Mrs Lis Burke	layreaderswarden@standrews.anglican.org	01738 624150

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