



Candidating for Ministry

Introduction

You may be reading this because you have been to an Enquirers' Event or had a chat with your local Minister or Synod Moderator, in which case you have already begun to test that sense that God is calling you to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Work.

ā ü' öö'ý öö' öi' üö' y' ü' i' öi' ó'p'ñüöð' þ' ö÷' üöi' ó' i' i' üyð' event because you have already heard the call but have yet to share that with anyone else.

Whatever your situation, now is a good time to think about the series of conversations and interviews – in which you will share if you decide to test your call.

You will talk to your local Minister or Interim Moderator, Synod Moderator and/or Synod Candidating Secretary (where no Synod

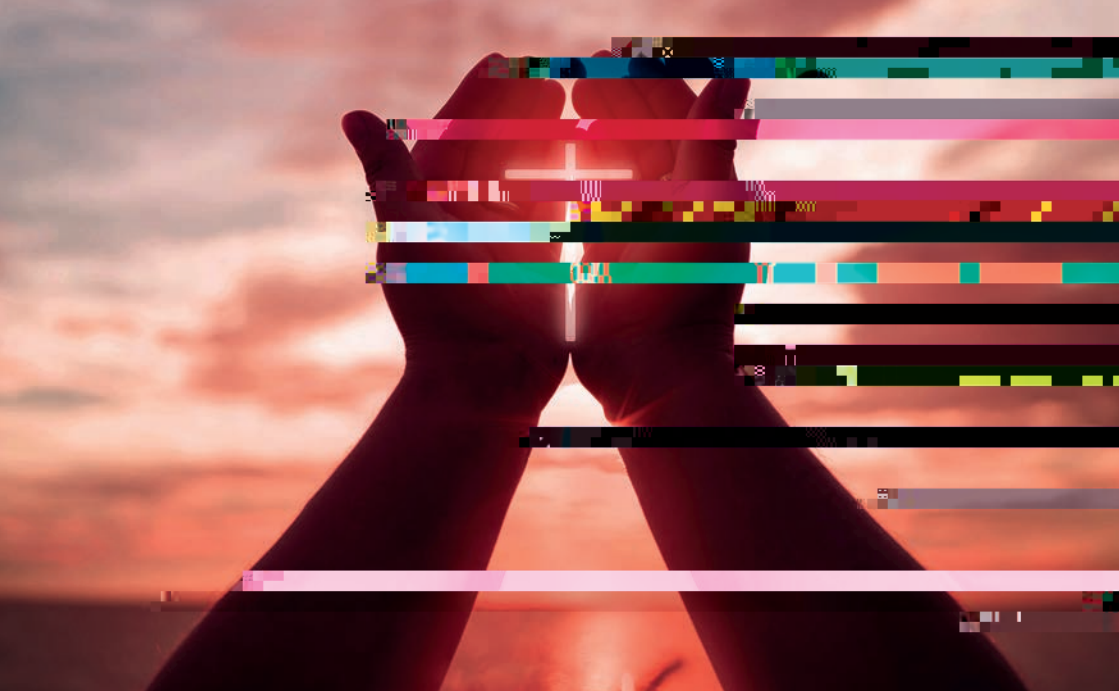
Moderator is in place). It is at this point you will need to meet the pre-assessment criteria (see page 5).

'... you will not exist in isolation from other Church members.'

Your candidacy will need to be approved by your local church and

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ëöö'ð÷' ó' öü' 'x'ý' üñ÷' ýö' öö'xö' ñö' i' ó' i' ü' ó'p' ó' öü' öð'÷' öö' process. The whole Church is involved because, as a Minister of the Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Worker, you will not exist in isolation from other Church members. This is a



testing time in more ways than one. The purpose of the conversations and interviews is to seek God's will and calling in your life, not to interview you for a job.

The objects of the assessment of candidates are:

- To explore the sense of call
- To recognise individual qualities
- To identify the potential to acquire further skills and knowledge through training.

Calling

The journey from the exploration of a call to ministry, through selection, training and introduction and then to ordination or Christian can make. It involves a willingness to open your life and your vocation to the testing and discernment of the Church. It demands a great deal in terms of commitment, vulnerability and openness.

It is a journey that, at every point, has no assured outcome and no pre-determined end. In itself it is a test of a person's readiness to be shaped by the disciplines of the Church community and to engage in

At every step of the journey, both Church and candidate are engaged in testing a call and at every stage it may become apparent that candidate are seeking to work out what is right. The Church is committed to making any judgments about vocation with care and rigour, in a spirit of prayer and discernment, recognising that discernment is a two-way process. Such decisions will need to be made at the Assembly Assessment Conference as they consider entry to training by Resource Centres for Learning as candidates take and progress through courses, and by local congregations or communities as they ask whether someone is called to a particular post or pastorate.

As decisions are made and oversight is exercised, the greatest care will be taken to act with justice and wisdom. Those who engage in this journey are asked to be continually open to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, acting through the councils, people and processes of the Church, as God's people seek to listen for God's will and to act in God's name.



The prospective enquirer needs to:

- have been in membership of the United Reformed Church for at least two years prior to candidating;
- conform to the age criteria applied in 2006 following the General Assembly resolution 1997 (the lower age criteria relate to training – 18 for Ministry of Word and Sacraments, 21 for Church Related Community work.) Candidates may begin the process before this lower age and young candidates should not be discouraged. The upper age criteria require application before a candidate's 53rd birthday for stipendiary service. There are no upper age criteria for non-stipendiary service;
- in the case of candidates for the Ministry of the Word and the Sacraments, provide evidence of having conducted at least one service and preached one sermon, to submit with your application. At the Assessment Conference the candidate will be asked to make a 10-minute presentation on their understanding of Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, answering the question 'In what ways can our faith produce the actions that make a $\beta\acute{y} \div \div \acute{\sigma}\grave{\delta} \div \acute{\sigma} \acute{\sigma}\acute{\eta}\acute{\sigma} \acute{y} \acute{\rho}\acute{\omicron}\acute{\gamma}\acute{\rho}\acute{\omega}\acute{\iota} \acute{\iota}\acute{\upsilon}\grave{\delta} \acute{\iota} \acute{\omicron}\acute{\sigma} \div \acute{\eta}\acute{\gamma}\acute{\upsilon} \acute{\upsilon} \acute{\iota} \div \acute{\epsilon} \acute{\iota}$.
- in the case of candidates for Church Related Community Work, have evidence of experience of some form of community work. At the Assessment Conference these candidates will be asked to make a 10-minute presentation on their understanding of CRCW ministry, answering the question 'In what ways can our faith $\beta \acute{y} \acute{\delta} \acute{\eta}\acute{\sigma} \acute{\iota} \acute{\eta} \acute{\sigma}\acute{\iota} \acute{\eta} \acute{\gamma}\acute{\upsilon} \acute{\iota} \acute{\omicron}\acute{\iota} \acute{\iota} \acute{\upsilon} \acute{\iota} \acute{\upsilon}\acute{\sigma}\acute{\iota} \acute{\rho}\acute{y} \div \div \acute{\sigma}\grave{\delta} \div \acute{\sigma} \acute{\sigma}\acute{\eta}\acute{\sigma} \acute{y} \acute{\rho}\acute{\omicron}\acute{\gamma}\acute{\rho}\acute{\omega}\acute{\iota} \acute{\iota} \acute{\upsilon}\grave{\delta} \acute{\iota} \acute{\omicron}\acute{\sigma} \div \acute{\eta}\acute{\gamma}\acute{\upsilon} \acute{\upsilon} \acute{\iota} \div \acute{\epsilon} \acute{\iota}$.
- understand, accept and be committed to the Basis of Union of the United Reformed Church, in particular the ordination and commissioning promises and the statement of the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church and;
- have attended Church Meeting and synod;
- $\beta\rho\acute{\upsilon} \acute{\iota} \acute{\iota} \acute{\omicron} \acute{\omicron}\acute{\eta} \div \acute{\sigma}\acute{\iota} \acute{\eta}\acute{\eta}\acute{y} \acute{\upsilon} \acute{y}\acute{\omicron}\times\acute{\omicron} \acute{\eta}\acute{\omicron} \acute{a} \acute{\omicron}\acute{\omicron} \acute{\mu}\acute{\omicron}\acute{\iota} \acute{\upsilon}\grave{\delta} \acute{\iota} \acute{\upsilon}\acute{\delta} \acute{\iota}$ attended;
- $\acute{\iota} \div \acute{\delta} \acute{\iota} \acute{\omicron}\acute{\omicron} \acute{\omicron}\acute{y} \div \acute{\omicron}\acute{\omicron} \acute{\iota} \acute{\omicron}\acute{\delta} \acute{\acute{\eta}} \acute{\upsilon}\acute{\omicron} \acute{\iota} \acute{\upsilon} \acute{\acute{\eta}} \acute{y}\acute{\upsilon} \acute{\acute{\mu}}\acute{\acute{\delta}} \acute{\acute{\eta}} \acute{\acute{\mu}}\acute{\acute{\delta}} \acute{\acute{\iota}} \acute{\upsilon}\acute{\omicron} \acute{\acute{\omicron}} \acute{\acute{\iota}}$ training, ordained or commissioned;
- complete the form relating to disclosure of criminal convictions and court orders.

In addition, prospective candidates must show they are able to undertake the academic aspects of ministerial training. The minimum requirements will be those agreed from time to time by General Assembly on the advice of the Education and Learning Committee. In order to be accepted as a candidate for training for both Stipendiary and Non-Stipendiary ministry, the candidate will need to have reached the following educational standard:

- GCSE (Grade 9-4) or Scottish National 5



This pre-assessment phase needs to be undertaken carefully and unhurriedly and may take two or more years. pre-assessment criteria should not prevent prospective candidates from enquiring about the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Work and beginning to explore their sense of calling.

What kinds of questions will I be asked?

We don't provide a list of questions but what might be helpful is to know the areas you will be assessed on. This is a long list but everything in it is important in a life of Ministry. These criteria should be kept in mind by everyone involved in the assessment process and explored in depth at the Church Meeting, synod and

placed on ministers

- Their awareness of the attitudes and skills needed in pastoral care.

Church Related Community Work

- Their understanding of being a community development worker and a practical theologian
- Their understanding of being an agent of local church transformation and change
- Their understanding of being a social analyst, cultural researcher and an interpreter of power relationships
- collaborator, educator and storyteller
-

- Their ability and willingness to respond positively to ministerial education and training
- How they organise and prioritise their present work and leisure time and their ability to relax
- Each is most suitable.

The community of the Church

- Each is most suitable.

What happens at an Assessment Conference?

The **objective** is to reach a decision on behalf of the Church as to

encourage the use of music, drama, dance and visual symbol in worship and in the communication of the gospel.

- vii) We need ministers who know that they must be learners all through life, who recognise that their initial training can be only a small beginning, who remain to the end eager to reach out for fuller understanding, greater competence, deeper discipleship.

The **Assessment Panel** at an Assessment Conference is drawn from the Assessment Board appointed by the General Assembly. It includes experienced ordained, commissioned and lay members, those with theological perception, those with personal knowledge of various styles of ministry, community development work and from other areas of the church.

A panel will normally consist of 4 members, balanced as far as possible in the various categories. Each candidate will have 2 in-depth interviews with members of the panel working in pairs. The task is demanding, searching and at times deeply moving, and assessors are all too well aware of the responsibility laid upon them.

The panel receives all the paperwork in the candidate's application. Interviewers read these and discuss them in detail.

but the conference provides the opportunity to go much deeper. ā óú' öóñí üð-èí ó ì ó'ä ñòð' ÷öÿ ó ÿü ì ðÿ ' öó÷'ä ÷öÿ ' themselves which have never occurred to them before, and it is clearly a learning process for them, let alone the assessors. For all candidates, the interviews will include a 10 minute presentation on



to all candidates, whether or not they are commended for training.

Worship is an important part of the Assessment Conference and is led by the chaplain.

‘Assessment Conferences shall take careful account of any needs expressed by a candidate’



through which the candidate (now a student) will be trained. The Education and Learning Board will also outline the nature and length of that training.

No candidate will be informed immediately of the decisions of the Assessment and Education and Learning Boards. Arrangements need to be made with the Secretary for Ministries for a meeting between
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Flow chart for the candidating process from the meeting with the Moderator

Candidate meets Moderator – NOT LESS THAN SIX MONTHS BEFORE AN ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE

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TAKES AT LEAST SIX MONTHS WITHOUT COMPLICATIONS

Local Interview on behalf of Synod (where held) – HELD NOT LESS THAN 13 WEEKS BEFORE THE ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE AND NOT SOONER THAN ONE WEEK AFTER CHURCH MEETING IN ORDER FOR ALL PAPERWORK TO BE SENT TO INTERVIEWERS. Send report to the Synod next day or ASAP.

Synod interview – requires application form, references, note of decisions, PERS PAPERS AFTER RECEIVING REPORT FROM LOCAL INTERVIEW AND HOLD THE INTERVIEW NOT LATER THAN 12 WEEKS BEFORE ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE.

Papers now include vocational report to Assessors following the Synod interview. Decision to recommend. immediately so that candidates can be given at least **one month** notice of attendance at Assessment Conference with travel details etc. Candidate's papers sent to

Assessors

Assessment Conference – candidates to be interviewed. Decision to recommend. immediately so that candidates can be given at least **one month** notice of attendance at Assessment Conference with travel details etc. Candidate's papers sent to

subject to completion of the required medical screening, attendance at the You're Welcome Course, and

This is one in a series of booklets about the United Reformed Church's programme for Education for Ministry Phase 1 (EM1).

The booklets can be read and downloaded at:
www.bit.ly/EM1-info



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