



Selection Procedure for LLM (Reader) Training in the Diocese of Guildford

Introduction:

1. The procedures for selection start at parish level and go through to a Selection Day convened and run by the Diocesan Board of LLMs, with the authority of the Bishop of Guildford, who appoints the senior officers of the Board.
2. The Ministry Division policy paper on Bishops' Regulations for Reader Ministry states: "Readers bear considerable responsibility in the church as lay ministers authorised by Canon with a teaching and preaching ministry in a pastoral context."
3. Another Ministry Division Paper states: "We stress the need for a common understanding and standard of selection since Readers are nationally accredited and deployed throughout the Church of England."
4. The selection of candidates for LLM training operates within the framework set out above. The Diocese of Guildford encourages and welcomes applications for LLM training, but it is necessary for the Incumbent to satisfy the Diocese about the prospective role for the candidate. Thus, the Incumbent has an important role in nurturing candidates and due weight will be given by the selectors to the Incumbent's detailed written reference, together of course with the references received from others. Prospective candidates will need to have the full support of their Incumbent and also PCC approval to proceed with the application.
5. The first step for potential candidates is to have time for prayer and reflection with the Incumbent, which will help the Incumbent to be clear about the reference that he/she supplies later on. The Incumbent might usefully explore the nature of the candidate's call to public ministry (and Licensed Lay ministry in particular), his/her spiritual development over a period of time, and the place that a demanding training course will have within the context of work, and family. There is more about this on the LLM area of the diocesan website. See also paragraphs 14-16 for further notes on Incumbent's references.
6. It should be noted by all concerned that the training is a three-year commitment that will require a significant amount of the candidate's time and energy. The Parish and Incumbent must be prepared to release the candidate from other parish obligations and support them in their vocational training.

7. The Candidates Secretary will need to receive the application form correctly completed with a record from the PCC secretary and incumbent's letter of reference to affirm that the candidature has been discussed and agreed. The PCC Secretary's record should include the minute of the meeting which carried the following resolution:

This PCC supports N spiritually, prayerfully and financially as its candidate for Licensed Lay Minister Training Selection on the understanding:

- (a) **that it will be required to fund the candidate to the value of around £1000 per annum during three years of training and to a lesser extent thereafter in expenses incurred in service within the parish,**
- (b) **that N will be released from all obligations in the parish during the three years of training, and**
- (c) **it agrees that on completion of training N will be accepted and regularly used as a full member of the Parish Staff or Ministry Team.**

This resolution must be carried in full and in one sitting. Decisions on funding and deployment must be agreed at the same meeting and may not be deferred. Where a PCC is of the opinion that candidacy and support should be treated as separate issues, then support should be considered to be other than wholehearted and the resolution Not Carried.

8. Please contact the Candidates Secretary as quickly as possible so that she is aware of the likely application and can allocate a place at a Selection Meeting, at the same time asking the candidate to keep the date free. Selection days are usually held at Diocesan House in Guildford on Saturdays in the Spring and early Summer.

The deadline for applications to be completed and lodged with the Candidates Secretary is early June. Applications for the following September received later than this will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances.

9. It is the Incumbent's responsibility to ensure PCC discussion of the candidature at a sufficiently early date. The PCC must resolve to support wholeheartedly, in prayer, encouragement and finance, the named candidate for Reader training in the full understanding that, if all goes well, the candidate will be admitted as a Reader and will be a member of the parish staff. The resolution to be passed can be found at paragraph 7 above.

10. **The application for Selection includes basic personal details, and a full statement (of approx. 250 - 500 words) from the candidate in support of the application is required. It should be typed or printed in black on A4 paper to assist photocopying. It should:-**

- (a) **confirm that the candidate has considered with the Incumbent other possible forms of ministry, and**

- (b) **explain in some detail, giving any relevant background information, why the candidate feels it is right to offer him/herself now for the specific training of a Licensed Lay Minister.**
11. The initial training course normally lasts for three years, commencing each September, and includes a commitment to training meetings run by the Local Ministry Programme (Guildford) on Monday evenings in Guildford, home study and essays and other written work, two annual residential weekends and a parish placement in the third year.
 12. Further enquiries about the course should be addressed to the LMP Dean, Revd Dr John Valentine John.Valentine@cofeguildford.org.uk

References:

13. The selectors read copies of all materials before the Selection Meeting. Confidential written references from three referees nominated by the candidate are a vital part of the background materials. These references will be confidential to the Candidates Secretary, the Warden/Registrar and the Selectors. The originals alone will be retained by the Warden after the selection conference and all copies will be shredded at Diocesan House.
14. The Incumbent should send a detailed written reference to the Candidates Secretary once it is agreed that an application will be prepared. The Incumbent is required to give full and frank comments, which will be confidential to the Candidates Secretary, the Warden/Registrar, the Selectors, the LMP(G) Dean and Year Tutor. In particular the Incumbent is required to comment on the anticipated future role of the candidate as a parish LLM.
15. Should an Incumbent wish to support an application by more than one candidate from the parish in any year, this should be made clear at the outset. Consideration of the first application may need to be deferred so that all applications from one parish (and the anticipated roles for each) are known before any individual decisions need to be made.
16. The Incumbent should also comment on:
 - (a) how long the candidate has been known and how well
 - (b) how firm s/he feels the candidate's Christian faith is, illustrated by examples
 - (c) how emotionally equipped the candidate is for ministry
 - (d) how supportive the family background (if any) is likely to be
 - (e) how, in practice, the candidate currently lives out his/her faith and reveals it to others within the parish and in other settings, e.g. at work
 - (f) how well the candidate is likely to cope with the discipline of continuing study which is expected of all Readers
 - (g) how well the candidate works (or fulfils roles) alongside others
 - (h) one area in which the candidate might grow.

17. The candidate is required to nominate three other people who know him/her well enough to provide a full and frank written reference on similar lines to note 16. The permission of the prospective referees must have been obtained prior to their nomination. Two referees are expected to be lay members of the parish, at least one of them being in a leadership role such as, churchwarden or PCC member. The third referee should be a person who knows the candidate personally in another context. At least one referee should be a person of the opposite gender to the candidate.

The Selection Meeting:

18. This takes place in a relaxed environment, but it is nevertheless a searching and demanding occasion. It includes one-to-one interviews, two-minute talks, a group exercise and a meeting about the training course. The Candidates Secretary is responsible for agreeing the dates with candidates and arranging the practical details. The aim is to interview a maximum of 6 candidates on each day.
19. Ministry Division recommends all Dioceses adopt core criteria in their selection procedures. In Guildford these are addressed at the Selection Meeting and include:
 - (a) Christian Tradition, faith and discipleship – does the candidate have the desire to learn from Scripture, tradition and the development of Christian thought? Is there evidence of faith and commitment to God and an ability to communicate it?
 - (b) Mission, evangelism and making disciples – does the candidate have a personal commitment to Christ and the desire to share the good news?
 - (c) Spirituality and worship – does the candidate have the desire to grow closer to God?
 - (d) Personality and character – does the candidate show maturity, stability, and integrity?
 - (e) Relationships and community – how well does the candidate relate to others?
 - (f) Collaboration and shared leadership – is the candidate able to work with others?
 - (g) Vocation and ministry in the Church of England – is the candidate called to the ministry of a LLM in the church? Is the candidate willing to commit to learning and formation for ministry?
20. The chairman of selectors is a senior selector nominated by the Warden of LLMs with the approval of the Bishop. Three other selectors will normally include the Dean of LMP(G) or a year tutor, a member of the Diocesan Board of LLMs and/or a Licensed Lay Minister. All are supplied with copy papers in advance and will have made their own preparations for the individual interviews in consultation with the chairman.

Follow up and the Future:

21. After the Selection Meeting, the Selectors assess the suitability of each candidate by reference to all available information.
22. Within seven days, each candidate will receive a letter (copy to Incumbent) indicating whether he/she is recommended to the Bishop for acceptance for LLM training in the current year, is to be accepted for training after deferment for further preparation or is not accepted for training, in which case an explanation will be given.
23. After the meeting the names of selected candidates will be passed on to the Dean of the Local Ministry Programme who will contact them direct. It is expected that those candidates for whom this is not considered a suitable ministry will have follow up meetings with their Incumbent to discuss the next steps in their ministry within the parish.

**Completed Application Forms and other Selection papers should be sent to:
The Candidate Secretary LLMReader@cofeguildford.org.uk**