The Church of Scotland

Rethinking Initial Training

Ministries Council | Phase 1 Report

Report to Ministries Council in February 2017

General Assembly
May 2017

Welcome

9th February 2017

Thank you for reading this report on the opening discussions on initial ministerial education (IME).

It has been an honour to convene this group during the last 12 months and I would like to pay tribute to each member for the contribution they have made.

Most appropriately the title of the group was "**Re-thinking** Initial Training" not just "Revising". The project undertaken and the recommendations submitted are based on this deeper process rather than a mere tinkering with what is already in place.

The Report identifies five "sources" which were used to inform our decisions on current training provided. We sought to determine the engagement of stakeholders and the opinion of end-users, to review previous reports to the General Assembly and the experiences of others (especially the Scottish Episcopal Church), and finally to consider the current operating model and any problems with this.

The findings are presented in Sections 1-5. Section 6 lists eleven principles which we suggest should characterise IME. The recommendations of the Project Group to Ministries Council are listed in Section 7, but the most important would be to set up Phase 2 of the Project to conduct further examination of strategy and explore ways in which the changes proposed can be implemented into operations.

Most importantly there is a need for vision and a strategy to implement ideas for re-thinking initial training and provide change management.

Taking a wider view, it is apparent that the findings have an impact on CMD and MDC, trainee well-being, administrative staff time and finances.

Wherever we look we can see that we are living in a time of change and now we have the opportunity to re-develop the ministerial training which is fit for purpose in a changed and changing society.

Dr John Dent
Convener, RIT Project Group

Contents

Abbreviations used in the report

CMD	Continuing Ministerial Development
FFY	First Five Years of Ministry
FTWS	Full-Time Word & Sacrament
GA	General Assembly
IME	Initial Ministerial Education
MDR / MDC	Ministerial Development Review
MoG	Ministers of the Gospel Report
OLM	Ordained Local Ministry
SEC	Scottish Episcopal Church

Executive Summary

This is the first formal report from RIT on the initial engagement with the IME programme, and it outlines the need for a formal change programme. The purpose of this report is not to give a conclusive outline of a training model, rather to demonstrate that further work is required: therefore, our scope here is the build the case for a comprehensive and planned change programme.

You will read in this report a number of critiques of the IME programme. However, it is vital to see the positive affirmation of a number of values and principles that are currently in operation. The outcome of this report is an affirmation of aspects of the current programme, and an indication that key areas require change in order to ensure the ongoing success of ministerial training.

This report establishes the need for change: the actual details of the change would need to be established in Phase 2. The RIT Group have a 'sense' that this change will be clarification of strategy and then operational developments, i.e. further integration of the component parts of training.

RIT Group Phase 1 (this report) concludes that there is a pressing need to resource a full-scale review of the current operations of training and bring recommendations to the Ministries Council of different change options to ensure ministerial training is fit for purpose. While there was much affirmation for the good work of the current training programme, there was a strong and consistent belief that significant change is required.

Beyond operational adjustments, there is a need for greater clarity over the purpose and scope of training: what does it set out to achieve. This should cascade throughout the component parts, namely the conferences, academic training, review process and MTN. However, the priority is to have greater clarity over the purpose of training. Further, the General Assembly has for a number of years articulated the need for well-resourced continuing ministerial development (CMD) and the RIT Group would affirm this need: IME only works well in partnership with a strong CMD programme.

Please see page 28 for further analysis.
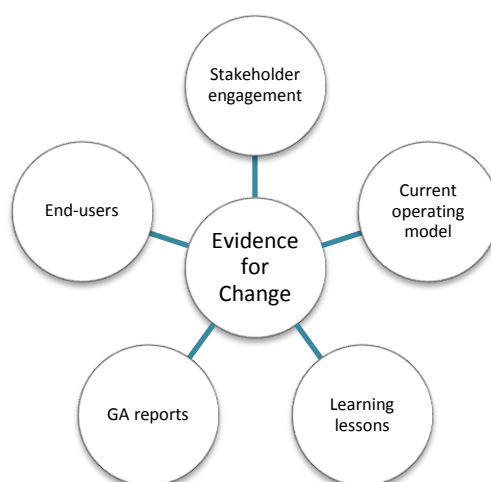
Five sources indicating a need for change.

About the Project

RIT was commissioned by Ministries Council in December 2015 to investigate if there was a need for a full-scale review of the Initial Ministerial Education programme. The trigger for this project was a presentation by Council Convener and (the then) Council Secretary of Ministries Council at the August 2015 Council Conference on a potential new model of training.

The RIT group was formed to investigate if *any* change was required before coming to the discussion of what type and scale of change.

This project reports to Ministries Council, via Education & Support Committee.

Membership of the group:

Name	Role	Spring 16	Autumn 16	Start of 17
Dr John Dent	Chair	●	●	●
Mr David Plews	Project Manager	●	●	●
Rev Dr Marjory MacLean	E&S Convener	●	●	●
Rev Canon Dr Anne Tomlinson	Scottish Episcopal Member	●	●	●
Rev Jayne Scott	Council Secretary		●	●
Rev Dr Leslie Milton	Training Task Group		●	●
Rev Fiona Smith	Group member	●		
Rev Marjory McPherson	Group member	●		

This report concludes Phase 1 of this project. The current group will close and a new group will form should the Council agree with the conclusion of this report that the current model of training requires full-scale review and change.

May 2017 Update

Ministries Council discussed this report on 22nd March 2017 and gave approval for the project to move to Phase 2.

Shape of this report

The report provides a number of "sources" that have informed the thinking of the RIT Group:

1	End-user outline	This outlines stakeholder groups that would be impacted by any change.
2	Summary of GA Reports	This gives a summary of the general trends of thinking from the General Assembly since 1999.
3	Stakeholder Engagement Report	Outlines the report given by external consultants on the discussions they have conducted with Council members, academic leads and ministers in FFY.
4	Experiences from Scottish Episcopal Church	Invaluable lessons from SEC on their experience of reviewing and transforming training.
5	Current Operating Model	This gives an initial sketch of current operations in the training section. This is not comprehensive review but top-level observed functions.
6	Short Analysis	This brings together the sources of evidence into a conclusion of the RIT Group.
7	Recommendations	Draws on the Analysis and presents recommendations for Council.

1: End-User Outline

There are four key end-user groups that are directly impacted by the change and a further number of stakeholders who would be indirectly impacted by any change.

FTWS	OLM
Readers	Deacons

RIT are aware of other groups in ministry that are not currently trained by E&S, and discussions have previously taken place, such as pioneer ministry; mission; youth ministry, etc.

The impact of 'hub ministry' must be taken into consideration.

RIT recommends that the Ministries Council further explores the role of Deacons in the future shape of ministry. Further, the end-user pathway for Deacons ought to be clearer and examine if the current MDS model is the right pathway for Deacons.

Other stakeholders:

- Ministries Council
- Presbyteries
- Academic partners
- Education & Support Committee
- Training Task Group
- Ministries Council Staff
- Supervisors of Candidates and Probationers
- Conference programme contributors
- MTN leaders

The exact nature and scope of the change for the above groups should be outlined in Phase 2.

2: Summary of GA Reports

Summary by Rev Aaron Janklow; edited by Rev Dr Marjory MacLean.

Overview

This paper reviews General Assembly Reports since 1999 of the Ministries Council and its predecessors, as they addressed the training and formation of ministers, including recruitment and discernment. The recurring themes identified in their Reports include: the shortage of ministers, with a particular concern for recruiting younger people (not a task of the present group), standards of practical and academic training, to produce ministers to serve today's communities, integrating theology and practice, developing skills for collaboration, ensuring the role of the Bible and spiritual development in training, focusing on preparation for the first five years of ministry, and acknowledging and encouraging a life-long pursuit of learning.

Universities, Preparing for Today's Communities

The Council maintains the importance of high training standards in theological education and pastoral experiences, and is focused on preparing candidates for "what is essential for the formation of the 'beginning minister,' including individual spiritual growth, the development of habits of reflective practice, and the fostering of a commitment to collaborative working and lifelong learning" (GA2005 3.4.5).

The 2003 Report addresses how the Church of Scotland works alongside universities to ensure that candidates are prepared for parish ministry, and affirms the theological education ministers receive in universities "where theological ideas and issues of faith are subject to rigorous intellectual examination and debate involving both those who share and those who do not share the particular faith commitment or denominational allegiance of our candidates for ministry" (GA2004 5.3.1).

The 2007 Report asserted that Scotland "is a vastly different society from even a generation ago," and identified challenges that will be faced by parish ministers, such as "an increasing disaffection with institutional religion running parallel to an increasing interest in spirituality," as well as "the breakdown of traditional models of community," and "the unparalleled movement of people across the world resulting in complex multi-cultural and multi-faith neighbourhoods on our doorsteps" (GA2007 1.1.3).

Integrating Theology and Practice, Collaboration, & Conferences

The Council affirms as a principle the importance of creating community and fellowship among those training for ministry (GA2002 4.12.4.1; GA2005 5.2.2.1).

Conferences are utilized as ways to foster community among those training for ministry. During the candidature stage, conferences are used to address the training of ministers as it relates to integrating theology and practice, and developing specific skills for parish ministry. In order to integrate theology and practice, and the cultivation of specific skills for parish ministry, the Candidates' Conferences, "and, where possible, the supervised field placements," should include "public worship and preaching," "principles in effective communication," "speech training," "sacramental practice in the Church of Scotland," "Church law and procedure," "team working," "leadership, support and encouragement of volunteers," "the practice of ministry," and "personal prayer life", and mission.

In addition to these conferences, candidates "undertake two part-time winter placements and one full-time summer placement". Conferences continue into the probation period, and are a major element of the formation process enabling a continuing support network to develop among the candidates.

The Bible and Spiritual Development
The Council seeks to aid candidates "to place the Bible at the heart of their spiritual as well as professional development" (GA2004 5.8.2). The 2003 Report recorded the replacement of the system of Bible Examinations by an Examination by Portfolio. This was in turn replaced by the Ministries Training Network, which includes "a series of regional meetings designed to enable candidates to gather for worship, peer support and learning" (GA2008 7.2.1.4.1). In addition, "the Board believes that, as part of their process of spiritual development, each candidate in training should undertake regular devotional reading of the Bible and vocational reflection on spiritual classics" (GA2004 5.3.2.2, re-affirmed by GA2005 3.4.3).

Focus on the First Five Years and a Lifetime of Learning
Post-ordination, the Council has focused its conference programme on those in the first five years of ministry (GA2003 4.6.1; affirmed in GA2004 6.10.1.1). The conferences "are primarily educational in nature, but also contribute to the continuing development of a peer group identity for those who have gone through their theological education and conference cycle together." (GA2004 6.10.2.1). The 2012 Report maintains that "that those engaged in Parish ministry must be people who are constantly *in training*: that is, equipping themselves in order in turn to "equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph 4:12)" (GA2012 1.4.1.1).

Conclusion
The *Ministers of the Gospel* and *Church Without Walls* Reports influenced the decisions and direction of the Board and Council. These Reports show the importance of training ministers to work in collaboration, not just with other ministers, but their congregations. For a thorough theological examination of ordination see the 2000 Panel of Doctrine Report, which addresses shared concerns of the Board Reports, such as how "rapid social change and a half century of numerical decline are posing serious questions to the Church of Scotland about its nature and task" (Panel on Doctrine 2000 1.4).

Full summary paper can be found in Appendix 1.

3: Stakeholder Engagement

Undertaken by Alison Denton and Jo Thomas (Edinburgh Coaching Academy) in Nov & Dec 2016

The quotations shown are opinions of individuals and should not be read as conclusive summaries of IME. Opinions raised in the consultation gave rise to much discussion and examination by the RIT Group.

Appendix 2 gives the full report outlining consultation on different aspects of training.

Consultation Methodology

The purpose of the consultation was to seek feedback from individuals on the Initial Ministerial Education programme, in order to understand:

- What works and what doesn't within the current format?
- Their ideas on improvements that they would like to see implemented?
- Their views on the proposed changes to IME.

Through the process of consultation we spoke to a number of individuals in a variety of roles:

- Ten council members;
- The Principals of the five academic partners (including the Assistant Principal of New College, Edinburgh);
- The Convener – Ministries Council;
- Three ministers in their first five years.

The subsequent one to one conversations covered some or all of the areas outlined below:

- The current IME format.
- What works and what could be improved?
- Reaction to and / or thoughts on any proposed changes.
- What challenges do ministers face in today's world?
- How does the initial training equip ministers to meet those challenges?
- What a "good" minister looks like? What skills and qualities do they embody?
- How does the initial training support the development of "good" ministers?
- What is the risk if the IME programme remains in its current format?
- With a blank sheet of paper – what would you do?

The feedback has been structured to report on each part of the programme with additional comments captured at the end.

Consultation Executive Summary

We believe that people spoke to us with candour and positive intent. The overwhelming perspective was a personal one and largely based on their own experience of training.

The majority of people that we spoke to articulated the need for some change to the IME programme but the degree of change that people feel is necessary varied significantly.

At one end of the spectrum there are many that acknowledge that some change is required, but see it as being in the form of "tweaks" to the existing programme, rather than anything more considerable or on a larger scale. They expressed confidence in the current format and believe that the challenges that the church faces in terms of the steep decline in the numbers of candidates and ordained ministers cannot be "fixed" by wholesale changes to the initial training programme.

Some individuals have little belief that anything much new is needed and were openly resistant to change. They believe that the church offers a blended approach to learning and has developed a

rigorous format that enables candidates to integrate theory into practice and offers sufficient flexibility to meet the needs of individuals.

At the other end of the spectrum people expressed the need for large scale change with a sense of urgency, acknowledging that the world within which ministers are operating has changed and is continuing to change and the initial training needs to reflect that. Some believe that The Church of Scotland is facing a real crisis and their fear is that it will revert to methods (structures and processes) adopted from the past, to take it forward.

"It is a cumbersome programme which is based on a traditional model of ministry which is no longer relevant."

"None of the different components are interlinked."

In our experience, establishing the **"need"** for change is crucial to gaining buy in regardless of the size or scale of the change required. If maintaining the status quo is no longer a viable option, it is perhaps worth thinking about pushing up the urgency level and helping people to really understand the need for change in order to create "buy in". Without sufficient buy in, people can become defensive and resistant to initiatives they see as being "launched from the top".

Most people that we spoke to offered strong opinions on the academic element and the conference programme and provided feedback to a lesser degree on the other parts of the initial training programme.

People told us that there are many aspects of the current format that they like and were of huge benefit to them in their formation. The single, most consistent theme that emerged from the consultation process was the lack of integration, that the different learning streams within the current IME format are not interlinked.

Additional Points from Consultation
Further high-level observations were made in the consultation:

Vision and Strategy
During the consultation process we found that in the main people offered up opinions and / or suggestions that were based on their own personal experience of initial training. However a small number of those that we spoke to raised questions about and / or expressed opinions on the "big picture". These are summarised in the following statements:

- We need a **vision** for the Church of Scotland that people can get behind and buy into.
- This will help clarify the direction of change.
- Only then can a **strategy** be developed that will take the church forward.
- As part of that strategy we need to understand:

  I. What is parish ministry / recognised ministries?
  II. What does the next generation of ministers look like?
  III. What do our parishes, communities and congregations want from their ministers?

- Only then can / should we redesign IME – "when we know the direction of travel".

People explained that there is difficulty in working out what the provision should be as there are complex relationships between the different stakeholders and as a result some people have become defensive about change.

In our experience, clarifying the direction of change is important as often people can disagree on direction or are confused and then question whether change is really necessary. An effective vision and strategy help resolve issues and provide compelling reasons why changes need to be made. It helps people to take action that is not necessarily in their own short term self-interests.

What does 'good' look like?

Many people reiterated the opinion that one size does not fit all in ministry. People come to ministry with a variety of skills and life experiences and that the IME programme needs to retain "personal pathways" whereby individuals can, to a degree, shape their own training.

"Good ministry happens - it comes in all kinds of packages, it is difficult to say, on the surface what qualities these ministers share".

"It is a bit like the leadership question - are good ministers born or made. I would suggest the answer is both!"

People's comments on the "What does 'good' look like" question are encompassed the in the following statements.

- o Good is the whole person divided into three key areas: their theology, the personal qualities they demonstrate and their practical skills and knowledge.   One individual commented that IME covers "theology" and "practical", but not the "skills and qualities".
- o "Good is finding the balance between good preaching, good pastoring and being in the community."
- o "Good ministry reaches into the community and builds relationships at all levels".
- o "What good ministers have in common is their ability to relate to people".
- o Other important qualities include "self-awareness", "self-reflection" and the ability to stay "curious".
- o A good minister can lead but also work comfortably as work as part of a team. They "draw on the talents and gift of others."
- o A good minister is "healthy" both mentally and physically, someone who takes time to "refuel" and has a good awareness about "self-care."

The "good" question prompted lots of discussion and we believe that even within the context of the MIT discussion, many enjoyed thinking about and even exploring the concept of "good"

An integrated approach

It has already been highlighted many people believe that there is a need for an integrated approach to initial training.

A small number of individuals took the discussion a step further and *really* challenged the existing system. In their view the church runs an initial training programme that they believe is shaped to a greater or lesser extent by the academic partners. The church then builds in the additional pieces that are required and as a result there are no links between any of the different stages of learning.

The questions these individuals raised during consultation were:

- o Why does the church not define what candidates need in terms of learning, practical experience, personal attributes and assessment and engage with partners / providers that can deliver an integrated approach to a high standard and

- o If all the academic partners cannot commit to working in this way because of the small number of candidates, should we not move to one or two academic partners with a distance learning option?

Some advocates of change suggested a programme whereby The Church of Scotland works closely with the partners / providers in partnership providing a joined up approach whereby each area of the candidates training is linked and validated. For example, one suggestion was that each candidate should have an academic supervisor and a placement supervisor.

Make a clear link between IME and CMD

Run the conference programme as a series of "taster sessions" to raise awareness of the practical parts of ministry and support each subject area with a training programme so that individuals can "take the course as and when they need to".

Make the courses programme available to all ministers and lay ministers (where appropriate) so people can take different courses to build or in some cases refresh their knowledge.

Subject areas that people said that they would benefit from (beyond theological education, which was universally affirmed) included:

Project management	Dealing with conflict
People management /managerial skills	Finance
Building relationships - interpersonal skills, rapport, how to relate to people	More on Church Law
Change management	Working with and managing volunteers
Chairing and running meetings	Fundraising
More on running a charity (including governance and the role of the trustees)	More on chaplaincy: school, NHS and workplace

Learning from others

People suggested that there are lessons that could be learned from those in other areas in which vocational initial training is provided. For example: teaching, medicine, social work. They also suggested graduate training programmes whereby people come with a degree to the organisation and require vocational training to enable them to perform a professional function.

 A number of people also highlighted the NHS chaplaincy training model as one that they would recommend in terms of "good practice".

Full report can be found at Appendix 2.

4: Learning from SEC

"A journey of re-visioning and revision" – Anne Tomlinson

'As a church we are reshaping our life in response to the challenge of mission in Scotland today'[1]. Those words of the Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church encapsulate the primary driver behind the emergence in 2016 of a new training programme. Put at its most simple, the ministries that the Scottish Episcopal Institute endeavours to form need to match the kind of church that God is calling into being, one which is shaped by the context, state and needs of Scotland today.

Two years prior to that statement the church's Mission and Ministry Board published a framework for coherent policy-making and wise stewardship of resources. This document stated that

> **Our primary task as a church is the work of mission. We believe that the mission is God's mission. Our task is to be part of that redemptive and engaging work. We are called to share with people the good news of Jesus Christ and of God's love for them. We are called to go and make disciples, to baptise and to teach.**
>
> **If our primary task is mission, we recognise that everything else which we undertake must serve that mission. While our work is and will continue to be diverse, the challenge to measure its significance and value against the call to mission provides a valuable way of assessing priorities and of guiding our decisions in the use of the resources available to us.[2]**

That document set the backdrop for thinking about patterns of ministry training; it re-visioned congregations not as chaplaincies for the like-minded but as world-facing communities, populated by active disciples able to make connections with all who seek hospitality, community and a spiritual home. Moreover it envisaged that those who lead such communities needed to be equipped to become managers of transformation and catalysts for change[3]; people of resilient and disciplined character, robustly grounded in Christ, able to withstand the grinding disappointments of apathy and atheism but also attuned to signals of interest from spiritual seekers.

'A sense of urgency'[4] for this task of revisioning ministerial education was further created by an external review of the training agency in 2013. Inspectors from Ministry Division of the Church of England, while commending much existing educational practice, recommended an overhaul in the governance structures of the training body and a new focus on formation for ministry.

What the Inspectors were urging in that latter recommendation was the provision of an integrated curriculum which would form ministers as reflective practitioners of the Gospel, people who could respond flexibly to contingent circumstance by means of wise theological judgement, honed by experience and mediated through godly character. A curriculum that meshed development of character, nurturing of virtues and growth in spirituality with the acquisition of knowledge/understanding and the development of cognitive and practical skills.[5]

It was clear to the Scottish Episcopal Church that the partnership between Durham University and the Archbishops' Council, which had resulted in the creation of a suite of higher education awards for ordinands and lay ministry students known as 'Common Awards', offered just such a curriculum, and so the decision to enter this family of Theological Educational Institutions was taken by the church in 2015, with validation being achieved in 2016.

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[1] 'A note on the revalidation and inspection of TISEC's IME programme' David Chillingworth, SEC website April 2013.

[2] The Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy Mission and Ministry Board of the Scottish Episcopal Church Accepted by the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church in June 2011.
http://www.scotland.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Whole-Church-Mission-and-Ministry-Policy-GS-2011.pdf

[3] Strengthening of the formational processes was deemed imperative as the church had been experiencing levels of pastoral breakdown on the part of clergy who were feeling torn between meeting congregational expectations of 'chaplaincy' oversight and the need to exercise missional leadership for which they did not feel fully equipped.

[4] Kotter, P. 'Leading Change. Why Transformation Efforts Fail' *Harvard Business Review* January 2007, reprints R0701J, 1.

[5] The Mission and Ministry Board, with the support of the College of Bishops, of the SEC responded to the Inspectors' Report by creating a Working Party which in itself embodied the basic recommendations of the Report. The group was skills-based, collaborative and transparent in its working practices.

Many benefits of this curriculum are already apparent:

- Common Awards is predicated upon the belief that the development of a theological *habitus* for participation in God's mission in the world is central to theological studies, and is shaped by engagement with God's world. The curriculum thus places considerable emphasis upon **context-based learning**, making field placements - where candidates make connections between knowledge, understanding, skills and professional practice - both more extensive and more intensive.
- The curriculum allows the **assessment of students in a wide variety of ways,** paying attention to affective as well as cognitive learning
- The curriculum enables students to **work collaboratively on assignments**, combating the individualistic and instrumentalist tendencies prevalent in much modern pedagogy.
- The curriculum enables space to be created at residential weekends for **the study of aspects of church life**: leadership, interfaith, conflict management, stewardship, safeguarding, property curation.
- Those residential events have become the loci for **intensive community building** through the mechanism of corporate worship, liturgical practice, cell-group fellowship and small group working. By such means are the seeds of collegiality in the candidates' future ministry sown.

Another advantage of the curriculum is that it spans the years from the outset of initial ministerial training to first incumbency, a six-year continuum of training (IME 1-6). This avoids the front-loading of the curriculum with skills that are properly left to the first three years of public ministry and enables a better spread of material over the period. Furthermore it allows those without theology degrees to attain the same during their curacy. Others who wish to train part-time while engaged on internships are also able to follow such a pathway under CA.

The greatest advantage of the curriculum is that it equips candidates for a missional church, not only by means of the extensive range of options on such topics as 'Missional ecclesiology', 'Mission entrepreneurship', 'Mission and apologetics in contemporary culture' but also by its emphasis upon reflective practice. That in turn rests upon the unique feature of the CA epistemology, its emphasis upon the cultivation of *character*. As the *Preface to the Common Awards* stated, the curriculum seeks the kind of knowledge that 'shapes the emotions, hones virtue and fuels passion after the pattern of Christ'.[6]

Such a pedagogy equips candidates with 'negative capability', the capacity to navigate an ever-changing world in which pastoral decisions must be made without complete information; a way of 'acting with courage'[7] in the messy contingency of the everyday. CA gives students the tools to practise acting wisely yet boldly in the midst of the ministerial scenarios that confront them, and so builds the capacity to minister authentically and faithfully.

It is early days, but by keeping sights set firmly on the primary driver – mission – and crafting curricular choices accordingly, we are set fair to produce a generation of leaders who will be ready for the new things God is doing in the world.

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[6] *Preface to the Common Awards in Theology, Ministry and Mission* 2012
https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1578047/preface%20to%20the%20common%20awards.pdf
[7] Nathan Kirkpatrick 'Instincts, not ideas' https://www.faithandleadership.com/nathan-kirkpatrick-instincts-not-ideas

5: Current Operating Model

Outlining the current operating model allows examination of what the Council *thinks* it is doing and how the Council in reality operates.

This will allow the Council to acknowledge the volume and scope of work being delivered, and provides a base line for establishing improvements and change within a systematic and controlled process, and providing the foundations for a return on investment plan.

Any large and established organisation (such as the Church of Scotland) requires reviews to ensure that the actual operations remain consistent with the stated aims, and to ensure that the organisation remains at the forefront of their industry. While we might resist a notion of being at the *forefront of our industry*, very few would shy away from the aim of providing a world-class ministerial training and formation programme to ensure that those responding to the call of God into one of the ministries of the Church are prepared for service.

In this section we have three main components:
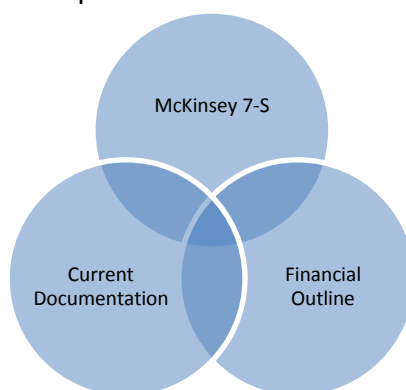
McKinsey 7-S
This outlines seven aspects of any organisation that must be in alignment in order to effectively deliver benefits. There is a *very brief* M7 analysis here – this should be taken up in Phase 2.

Financial Outline
This gives an overview of how training deployed finances in 2016.

Current Documentation
Quotes from the Candidates' Handbook. It is critical that what is stated and what is actually done are aligned. Examining documentation first is important; then an analysis of how this connects with reality.

McKinsey 7-S Outline

The McKinsey 7-S model, 'developed by Tom Peters and Robert Waterman (1982), identified seven internal aspects of an organization that need to be aligned and mutually re-enforcing if it is to be successful'.[8]

The model demonstrates a number of critical issues facing IME. There is a disparity between stated objectives of training (although this itself is complex) and the procedures and processes that are currently operating. Further, ministerial training has an incredibly complex (and complicated) management / leadership structure which makes change and development near impossible; and quality control cannot be effectively managead with the current staffing resource.

Much of the documentation outlines the demands of the organisation (structure, assessment, etc.) but does not outline the **benefits** to the individual or the organisation, i.e. by participating in theological education you will be able to do *xxxx*, therefore your future parish will gain *xxxx*. Clear documentation and articulation of benefits is lacking.

Justification for activities is not always clear. Placements are outlined but no understanding of the current placement programme, i.e. why three placements and probationary period? Why are the placements the lengths that they are?

The strategy of the Church is unclear which makes the role profile of a minister difficult to define. However, this provides a form of definition in terms of the type of skills and characteristics that might be well suited to ministry, e.g. high resilience, self-starter, theologically able, etc.
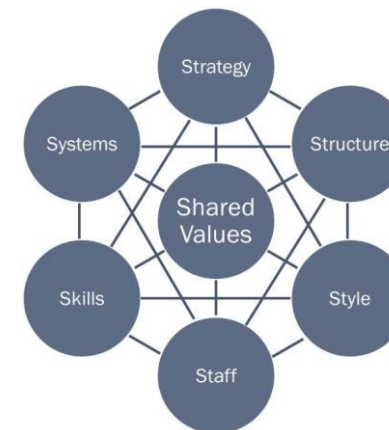
The current model makes management of training very cumbersome and labour intensive, therefore the current staffing deployment cannot guarantee quality in every component.

Objectives for training are unclear: for example the role of the Portfolio in conjunction with MTN and academic training. *Page 20 outlines the different components.*

The development of training programme has been an 'evolution' which has meant development of components as 'add-ons' to the main theological studies. This has brought much needed additions to the training programme, but now can make the programme as a whole difficult to navigate and manage.

The process of training lacks integration. For the end-user this runs the risk of a programme that simply requires they fulfil a number of components rather than an integrated programme of **formation for ministry**. The impact of this is that initial training for candidates and probationers cannot be effectively managed.

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[8] Richard Smith, David King, Ranjit Sidhu, Dan Skelsey (ed), *The Change Manager's Handbook: Essential guidance to the change management body of knowledge*, (London: Kogan Page, 2015), p 262

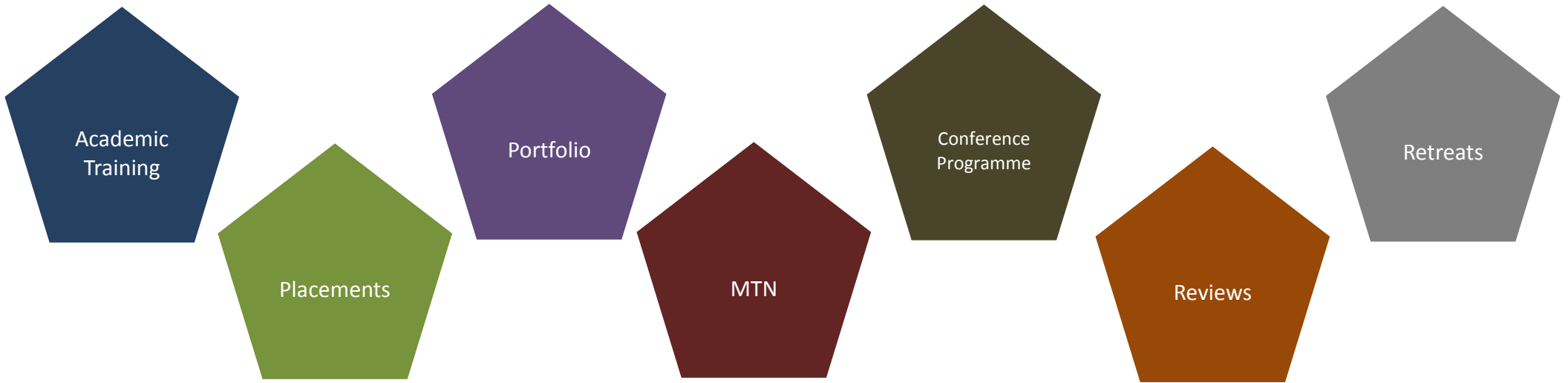|	7-S	Current State	Issues	Evidence
1	Strategy	The strategy for IME appears complex, if not confused. The Handbook outlines a number of different purposes, principles, competencies, reviews and assessments. This makes the overall strategy confused and difficult to follow. The strategy attempts to relate to overall Church strategy; however, since the production of MoG Report there has been no single mission statement for the Church in the current phase of Church life. Notably there are a list of competencies for ministry training but these do not appear in the Handbook or the review paperwork, or set out as learning objectives in the conference programme.	- Lack of clear strategy - Duplication of documentation - Policy not cascaded into process - Strategy very lengthy therefore difficult to remember / apply - Competencies do not directly relate to principles - Lack of correlation to Church strategy - Lack of clear role profiles and related training needs	Candidates' Handbook Ministers of the Gospel Report Candidate Review Template
2	Structure	Structure of the training course takes the form of a number of components. It is debatable the exact correlation between the independent components. The management structure is complex too; the lines of authority and scope of authority are not always clear, i.e. role of staff, TTG, Presbytery.	- Need to increase integrated learning programme - Extensive management required for different components - Possible confused experience for end-user - Hard to manage change	Candidates' Handbook Management experience of programme
3	Style	The style of leadership is complicated. For the end-user there are a number of 'authorities' or leaders. This makes change and development complicated. Authorities involved in the training include: - Ministries Council - Presbytery - Education & Support Committee - Training Task Group - Academic Staff - Supervisors - Ministries Council Staff - MTN Leaders - Review Groups	- Complicated management structure - Confusing leadership - Can make the programme difficult to navigate	Management experience of programme Candidates' Handbook
4	Staff	Staffing for training is predominantly understood at the staff working for the Ministries Council within the (recently formed) Education & Training Team. However, there are a number of 'staff' required to enable the training programme to function.	- Training programme is very labour intensive - Coordination of all staff requires great deal of labour - Can create confusing end-user experience	See page 20
5	Skills	This relates to skills for employees who manage the programme. This would be explored in Phase 2. To note here, the training programme has changed over the years, therefore updated job descriptions are required to allow to staff to be deployed effectively.	To be completed in Phase 2. Any change within IME will have a direct impact on employed staff of Ministries Council. Extensive work required here.	
6	Systems	Systems are both online (external and internal) and offline (external and internal) processes that are required to make the programme run. Currently there is no online learning or blended learning. This places a great deal of pressure on the conference programme to cover essential information.	- Number of issues outlined on page 19.	Candidates' Handbook Operational workflow
7	Shared Values	With a confused mission and strategy for training it is difficult to have coherent shared values in the training team. However, the team currently remains committed to the training processes. Future state should empower and enable staff to be increasingly focused on the end-user and their training needs.	Shared Values are 'called superordinate goals' when the model was first developed, these are the core values of the organization that are evidenced in the corporate culture and the general work ethic.'[9] To be completed in Phase 2.	

[9] Richard Smith, David King, Ranjit Sidhu, Dan Skelsey (ed), *The Change Manager's Handbook: Essential guidance to the change management body of knowledge*, (London: Kogan Page, 2015), p 262
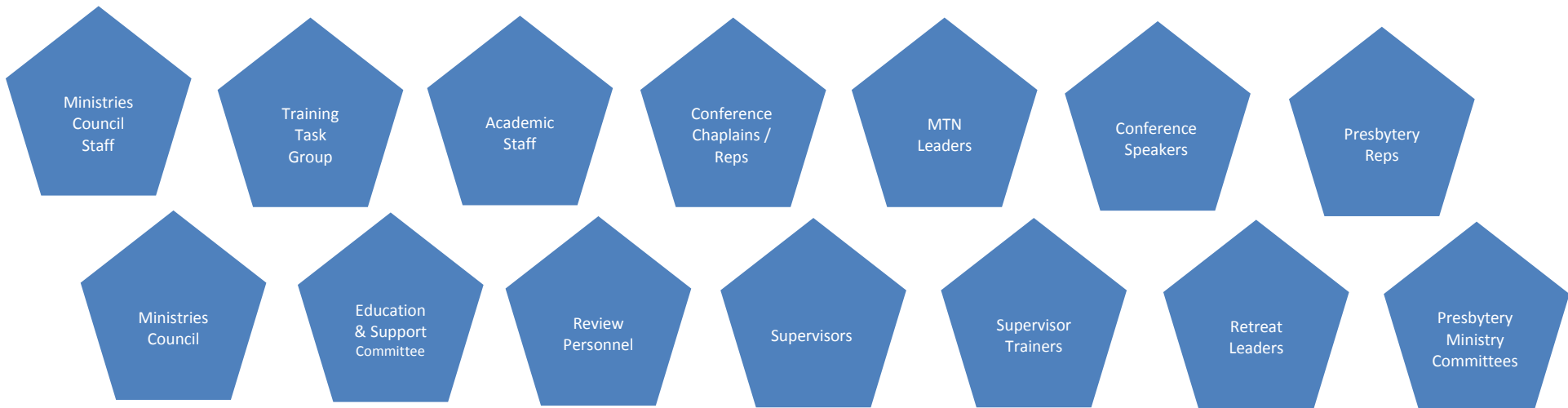
Systems – relates to McKinsey 7-S Table item 6

System	Online / Offline	Deployed	Comments	Information
Online Learning	✘	✘	NA	Online services being developed for CMD work.
Student Database	Online & Offline	✓	Complicated. Records not consistent. Confused scope for paper database and online database. No end-user access. Highly labour intensive. Database lacks essential information (i.e. PVG) and does not help effectively manage the programme. Confusion and inconsistency in what records are maintained.	Possible connection in the future was HR Payroll.
Reviews	Offline	✓	To arrange reviews requires huge amount of admin time coordinating between the different parties and venues. The review material has little to no correlation to principles, conferences, or strategy. Reviews are developed over time, i.e. adapted as issues become identified. The headings in the assessment are consistent with previous paperwork, but not with vision or values noted in item 1 of 7S. Provides a link with Presbytery.	Possible connection with MDR booking system.
TTG	Offline	✓	TTG provides the 'action group' to put into place the policy level decisions of E&S. Often meetings are incredibly heavy with a great deal of work but insufficient time to deal with individual aspects of training.	Sits within E&S under the Ministries Structure.
E&S	Offline	✓	Deals with matters relating to Education and Support. Makes policy-level decisions for training. Leader of TTG sits on E&S.	
Ministries	Offline	✓	Has overall responsibility for education and training.	Convener of E&S and leader of TTG both on Ministries Council.
Academic Training	Online & Offline	✓	The institutions offer various learning platforms. The working operations between IME and the academic institutions is unclear; primarily TTG, which notably does not deal with policy-level matters.	
MTN	Offline	✓	MTN was a system / training component put in place to increase theological reflection. The programme is varied. Attendance is mandatory. Some express concerns of additional demands on students. There is significant financial burden for this programme related to travel.	
Disciplinary	Offline	NA	The disciplinary process under Act X is insufficient for complaints.	Disciplinary is current under review.
Placements	Offline	✓	Placements are arranged by Ministries Council staff and approved by TTG. The core competencies for placements are documented but not consistently referred to in reviews.	

Components of Training within IME

A full analysis of the inter-relatedness of these components would be required in Phase 2. However, it is the opinion of the RIT Group that the current model of training runs the risk of being confusing for the end-user with a number of different components managed by different sources. This in conjunction with blurred strategy and lack of clear vision runs the risk of incoherent training pathway or inconsistent delivery of training.

Academic Training

Placements

Portfolio

MTN

Conference Programme

Reviews

Retreats

"Staffing" components within IME

Ministries Council Staff

Training Task Group

Academic Staff

Conference Chaplains / Reps

MTN Leaders

Conference Speakers

Presbytery Reps

Ministries Council

Education & Support Committee

Review Personnel

Supervisors

Supervisor Trainers

Retreat Leaders

Presbytery Ministry Committees

Financial Information – 2016 Figures

A full analysis of finances are required in Phase 2. The *headline* figures below outline the level of financial commitment required from the Council for the current operating model. It should be noted that there is a level risk regarding tuition fees given the increasing number of non-eligible SAAS funded students and the increasing costs of postgraduate studies.

IME budget is a significant budget within the Ministries Council. An evaluation is required to examine if benefits are being adequately actualised, e.g. the length of probationer placement.

Candidates

Full Time inc. placement grants	
Candidates Conference	
Ordained Local Ministry	
Readers in Training	£ 411,726

Probationers

Conferences	
Reviews	
Readers / OLMs in Service	
Support Training for Supervisors	
Probationers Stipend	£ 899,048

IME Grand Total	£ 1,491,310

Post-Ordination

First Five Years Conferences	
Study Leave	
Continual Ministerial Development Start Up	
Publications / Communications	£ 149,112

Committee Expenses

Education & Support Committee	
Training Task Group	
RIT Group	£ 10,219

Grants & Bursaries

Grants to Colleges - unrestricted	
Bursaries - Trusts -- restricted trust	
Hardship Grants	£ 82,067

Non-IME	£ 241,398

What do we say we are doing?

Below are extracts from Candidates' Handbook – the full handbook can be found at Appendix 5. This outlines the expectation communicated to those entering the training programme. Highlights are added for emphasis and ease of reading.

A: Taken from 'Introduction' section:

The Ministries Council welcomes you as a candidate in training for the full-time ministry, nominated by your Presbytery. Assessment Conference Assessors have concurred with you in your sense of God's call to serve the Church in this way and have recognised gifts and skills in you, which lead them to believe you would be suitable to undertake this process of formation.

The Ministries Council offers education and training based on the "Ministers of the Gospel" policy statement contained in the Board of Ministry Report 2000 and accepted by the General Assembly of that year. A section of this booklet provides an abridged version of that statement, full details of which can be found in that Board of Ministry report. The process of formation provided will contain a combination of academic studies together with practical placements, both of which should inform the other. In addition, a comprehensive conference programme and peer group learning will complement this learning process.

We live in challenging times for the Church in Scotland, especially for ministers as they seek to enable and share in the ministry of all God's people. The educational and training requirements, which the Church now lays upon you, are not designed to be obstacles placed in your path, but necessary stepping stones to equip you for the demands of the full-time ministry. We would be doing you and the Church as a whole a disservice if we did not seek to provide you with the best possible opportunities for formation for your future ministry.

The Ministries Council will seek to offer you support in this process and indeed throughout your ministry thereafter. We hope and pray that you will find great joy and blessing in the years of service that lie ahead.

B: Taken from 'The Ministries Council' section:

The new Ministries Council came into being on 1 June 2005. It is comprised of the former Board of Ministry, with elements of the former Board of National Mission and the former Board of Parish Education. An outline of the new structure can be found on the next page.

The Training Task Group will be the one directly involved in your training.   Overall policy decisions are discussed by this Task Group and submitted to the Education and Support Committee for approval, which in turn operates under the broad strategic directions endorsed by the Ministries Council. The implementation of all policy will be undertaken by the Training Task Group in conjunction with staff members.

The principles, which form the structure of the present process of formation, are as follows:

- The importance of the integration of theology and practice
- The essential nature of good supervisory practice for the ongoing development of candidates
- The development of recognised teaching placements
- The development of a substantial conference programme, beginning in candidate life, continuing throughout all practical placements prior to ordination
- Encouraging a sense of belonging to the church from the point of selection
- Developing and extending peer group formation
- The desire to have a consistent and coherent system of practical experience leading to ministerial formation
- Financial assistance for ministerial candidates

Future training is not "set in stone" but open to change as we seek best practice. In that regard the Ministries Council certainly takes cognisance of views and suggestions from candidates. The Ministries Council, through its Committees, will continue to consult with Candidates' Associations' representatives at each of the University Divinity Faculties in order that these views and suggestions can be heard and addressed.

C: Taken from 'Ministers of the Gospel – extract' section:
Numbering added for ease of reference
1: Extract from Ministers of the Gospel Report. *(General Assembly 2000)*
In the introduction to this report the Board lays out the theological biblical and doctrinal foundation of the Church as the body of Christ, whose members all exercise a ministry as an expression of the one ministry of Jesus Christ, of which the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament is but one. The Gospel in Word and Sacrament orders the life of the Church and equips God's people for service and to this end some are called to this ministry. The purpose of the ordained ministry is to keep the Church faithful to its nature and calling as the people of God, in worship and witness, fellowship and service. The report goes on to explore the manner in which this ministry is to be exercised in today's culture.

2: Ministers of the Gospel – Serving Jesus Christ
There is only one ministry, the ministry of Jesus Christ. The report explores this ministry outlining the biblical basis for the way we understand it in both its aspects; the earthly ministry and the continuing heavenly ministry. This confession of Jesus Christ leads the Board to make three points about the ministry of the Church and the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

First, only the whole people of God can demonstrate all aspects of the one ministry of Jesus in and to the world.

Second, within that context the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament has a specific role.

3: Christ's Gift to the Church
The Church of Scotland affirms that its Presbyterian government is agreeable to the Word of God and subject to continuing reform in accordance with that Word, contemporary mission and ecumenical dialogue and believes that Christ has gifted to his Church an authorised form of ministry to pass on the Apostolic teaching, as preachers and teachers of the Gospel. In the Church of Scotland, that order of ministry has been known as the ordained ministry of the Gospel in Word and Sacrament. While this does not take the place of the ministry of the whole people of God, it has been and is a particular ministry that ensures the right ordering of the Church's life and service around the apostolic Gospel, through hearing Christ in Scripture and receiving Christ in the Sacraments.

4: The Integration of Person and Practice in Ordained Ministry
The third point therefore, is this: if ministers of the Gospel are to serve in this way, not only must their particular service be put in the proper context of the one ministry of Jesus Christ and the wider ministry of the whole people of God, they must also be people who seek to integrate who they are as persons in Christ with the particular functions they fulfil in the service of Jesus Christ.

5: A Three-fold Affirmation of Ministry Today
First, we affirm that only the ministry of the whole church can reflect the height and depth and length and breadth of the one earthly and continuing ministry of Jesus Christ in the world. The Church is a community of service. All Church members are called and commissioned in baptism to this life of service in Jesus Christ.

Secondly, as an essential part of the health and growth of the Church's ministry, we also affirm that the Ascended Christ gives to his Body the Church the gift of a ministry of the Gospel, in Word and Sacraments, the purpose of which is to keep the Church faithful to its nature and calling as the Body of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, we affirm that person and practice joined together in the one ministry of Jesus Christ should never be separated in the Church's discernment and development of those women and men called to serve Jesus Christ as ministers of his Gospel.

6: Ministers of the Gospel – Serving in a Changing Society
The Church of Scotland has a clear mission as a national Church, as set out in Article Three of its Articles Declaratory to share the Gospel throughout Scotland. The report outlines the kind of service needed from ministers of the Gospel by the Church of Scotland under several headings.

- A Changing Scotland; including social, economic and cultural change.

- The Nostalgia Trap; the myth of a "golden age" when churches were full.
- No Single Solution
- A Pluralist Context
- A Secular Society; but not necessarily less moral or spiritual.
- Religious Affiliation – what does it mean today?
- An Ageing Population
- A Mobile Society

This analysis leads to three questions for ministry.
- To what extent does it simply go along with ministering to a changing Scotland, seeming to condone the changes; and to what extent does it provide alternative moral frameworks?
- In such a changing society, how valid is the traditional model of the full-time ordained and parish ministry, premised on its 'professional' status?
- To what extent is the Kirk still implicitly thirled to a traditional world in which the 'parish' is viewed as fairly static and immobile, in which 'place' is known socially and geographically?

Social trends have profound implications for what we consider to be appropriate forms of church life and mission, and also appropriate models of ordained ministry for a variety of changing local situations. The one ministry of Jesus Christ must be made incarnate time and again within contemporary Scotland, in all its social and cultural diversity and particularity. This, then, will require ministers who are:
- faithful to the unchanging Gospel and can minister appropriately to a changing Scotland
- people who can cope creatively with the impact of a changing Scotland on their own lives and ministry. We must not separate the impact of social change on the person in ministry from its impact on his or her functions and roles in ministry.

7: Ministers of the Gospel – Serving the Church
In a wide-ranging consultation, the Board invited members of both church and community to consider what might be an appropriate model of ordained ministry for the 21st century. This resulted in the following responses:
- **Team Ministry;** allowing other ministries to flourish alongside that of Word and Sacrament
- **Group Practice;** an answer to the problem of the expectation of "multi-competency"
- **People of Passion;** an holistic passion for the Gospel; for the pastoral needs of the local congregation; and for building two-way links between the Church and the wider community.
- **Good Interpersonal Skills;** to be genuine team- and bridge-builders
- **Working with other Churches**
- **Committed to Life-long Learning;** perhaps the best learning grows out of open-minded self-awareness, and demands a willingness in ministers to allow themselves a degree of appropriate vulnerability.
- **The Church as a Partner;** not only with other denominations, but also with society at large.
- **Meaningful Participation;** this issue links closely with that of the formation of teams in ministry and it reflects the measure to which church members have often felt excluded from the possibility of exercising their role within the ministry of the whole people of God.

As a result of this consultation it became clear that the Church is looking for ordained ministers who can integrate who they are as persons in Christ with their distinctive calling in the ministry of Word and Sacrament; in collaborative and reflective patterns of working and leadership and in ways that enable and empower the people of God for their ministry in Christ. The Church looks for the fruit of this integration of person and practice, in ministers who sustain a spiritual passion for their calling, a healthy self-awareness and good humour, and an openness to continuing development and supportive appraisal.

8: Profile of Ministers of the Gospel
This, being neither definitive nor exhaustive, is constantly open to review and revision and has a clarity and consensus about the theology and practice of ordained ministry to agree a profile that the Church can own and affirm.

9: Ministers of the Gospel - Called and Ordained

One essential way of keeping the Church faithful to the Gospel and its ministry is through the service of the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament – Ministers of the Gospel. Christ calls from his Body mature Christian women and men gifted and ready to give this particular service. The Church affirms their call, prepares those selected for service and then authorises and enables them to exercise this particular form of ministry in a variety of settings, dependent always on the enabling power of the Spirit of Christ.

An underlying assumption of all the Board's reflections on ordained ministry has been that ministers of the Gospel will increasingly work in a range of settings, requiring flexibility and a variety of different skills, not least within changing and diverse types of parish ministry itself. However, within this range of settings, the Board believes that there is still a distinctive and common ministry of the Gospel that must always be exercised which is distinct from but complementary to other forms of service.

The call to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament must normally begin in the local context of the congregation as members participate fully in the worship and witness of the Church and as others recognise their gifts and potential for this particular ministry. A call commonly includes three elements. These are:

- A personal call from God to an office of service within the ordered ministry of the Church; marked by a clear and shared sense that God has called someone because of that person's specific gifts and character traits;
- The testing and validating of one's fitness for that particular service – functionally, personally and theologically – by a governing body of the Church, through a recognised process of ministerial formation;
- Confirmation of this personal call by means of a public call from a community of God's people, ordinarily a local congregation.

The word ordination is derived from the word "order". In ordination, the Church orders itself for ministry, identifying and authorising women and men with particular gifts to equip and lead it in serving God's reign in the world, through holding it to the Gospel in Word and Sacrament. The Board identified the following qualities which should be evident in those called to this form of ministry.

- *Maturity of Faith*
- *Sound Judgement*
- *Healthy Self-Awareness*
- *Sensitivity Toward the Needs of Others*
- *Manner of Life That Is a Manifest Demonstration of the Christian Gospel*
- *Personal Integrity in All Aspects of Life*
- *Lives Marked by the Fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control (Gal. 5:22-23)*
- *Lives Lived in Communion with God*
- *Truthfulness*

Along with these personal attributes, Ministers of the Gospel need to develop certain abilities to be able to fulfil their calling as those gifted by God for this service. Three at least are essential:

- *The ability to discern and communicate the Gospel*
- *The ability to exercise a personal presence in ministry*
- *The ability to sustain a disciplined passion in the following of Jesus Christ.*

Ministers of the Gospel are called by God and ordained by the Church to show these attributes and abilities as they fulfil their vocation in:

- *Proclaiming the Word with Authority*
- *Celebrating the Sacraments*
- *Forming Christian Community*
- *Building up the Body of Christ*
- *Leading the Church through its structures*
- *Witnessing prophetically in all aspects of life*

Given such a practical theological profile of the attributes and abilities of the ordained ministry, how is such a ministry of the Gospel to be exercised in practice in the context of the three perspectives on ministry set out at the start: the ministry of Christ; mission in a changing society; and the concerns of the Church? In the future, it should be axiomatic that ministers of the Gospel will exercise their particular calling in the following three styles:

- **COLLABORATIVE APPROACH**: this requires commitment, a range of skills and a level of maturity from all involved in the process.

Here are some pointers to what a truly collaborative ministry involves, taken from another recent Roman Catholic report from England and Wales:
  - Involvement in collaborative ministry demands conscious commitment to certain values and convictions;
  - Collaborative ministry begins from a fundamental desire to work together because we are all called by the Lord to be a company of disciples, not isolated individuals;
  - Collaborative ministry is committed to mission. It is not simply concerned with the internal life of the Church. Rather it shows the world the possibility of transformation, of community and of unity within diversity;
  - Collaborative ministry does not happen just because people work together or co-operate in some way. It is a gradual and mutual evolution of new patterns;
  - Collaborative ministry is built upon good personal relations;
  - Collaborative teams, where personal relationships are important, highlight the importance of emotional maturity;
  - Collaborative parishes and teams generally place a high priority on developing a shared vision, often expressed in a mission statement, or in regularly reviewed aims and objectives;
  - The courage to face and work through conflict, negotiating until a compromise is found, and even seeking help in order to resolve it, are not weaknesses but signs of maturity and commitment;
  - The desire for shared decision-making is the natural outcome of working collaboratively;
  - Teams need to work very hard at how they communicate, and enable different members to take responsibility for what they think and feel.

- **REFLECTIVE PRACTICE:** Mission prompts questions about social change. Seen from this sociological perspective, tomorrow's ministers will have to be capable of working in a climate of uncertainty and change, as our social analysis indicated. Fresh insights from the Gospel, new ways of being church and more appropriate ways of serving others will have to be found, time and again, in many different situations. Ministers will need training in leading congregations through change, which is often experienced as a grief process of loss, before renewal. The Church will require ministers who are able to help it think creatively, reflect critically and act wisely, in collaboration with others - in the light of the Gospel and in response to a changing Scotland. At the same time, authentic pastoral ministry alongside people in suffering and loss will always call for constancy in prayer and love.

  I mean by it the capacity, in the midst of the practice of ministry, to lead the church to act in ways that are faithful to the Gospel and appropriate within the situation. To [minister and] lead reflectively involves a kind of hermeneutic [interpretation] of practice. It entails the capacity to 'read' situations, and, in the midst of them, draw on resources of knowledge, experience, and skills - often by inventing new ones - to construct faithful and appropriate responses. It means also having an identity and personal style that inspire trust and confidence among those with whom one shares ministry. [Ministers] who function as reflective [practitioners and] leaders function with authority - not in a top-down, asymmetrical fashion but in partnership with laity.
    (Jackson Carroll, As One With Authority, p.122)

- **COMMITMENT TO FORMATION:** those called to be ministers of the Gospel must be open to continuing formation in the attributes and abilities that their office and service require. They must be formative, in the dictionary definition of that word, being people who are capable of development and growth. They must also be open to mutually supportive and accountable appraisal in the educational development and exercising of their own ministry.

10: Ministers of the Gospel

As those called and ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, ministers of the Gospel in the 21st century must be reflective practitioners, collaborative leaders and formative learners. That is not to restrict ministers to a certain mould. The Board affirms and welcomes the range of personalities and approaches to ministry among those whom Christ calls into this particular service. However, the theology and practice of ordained ministry affirmed here by the Board and the wider Church requires a clear capacity and commitment

among all ministers of the Gospel to deep reflection, genuine collaboration and continuing formation as persons in Christ and practitioners in ordained ministry.

D: Taken From 'A Candidate's Guide To The Indicators For Assessment' Section:

Introduction
The Assessment Criteria outlined in this document are those which are used throughout the processes of assessment and training of all candidates for Church of Scotland ministry.

The qualities and skills named here are not all of equal importance, nor is the list comprehensive, but it does offer you a picture of the kind of considerations the Annual Review will take into account in making a decision about your suitability to continue as a candidate.

Integration of Life and Faith
How and in what ways does the Candidate bring together the different parts of life under the heading of spirituality? In what ways has their background and life experience influenced them and brought them to this point?

Interpersonal, Leadership and Teamwork Skills
How does the Candidate relate to and deal with people? What leadership potential is evident? How does the Candidate work as part of a team? How does the Candidate deal with conflict?

Openness to Learning
How does the Candidate learn and how open are they to ongoing learning (continuous ministerial development)? How does the Candidate handle criticism, both just and unjust?

Preparation and Reflective Skills
How is the Candidate preparing? How does the Candidate organise and manage their life and work? How does the Candidate assimilate, analyse and integrate their experience?

Handling and Facilitating Change
How does the Candidate initiate and respond to change and how does the Candidate help others to deal with it?

Discernment and Affirmation of Call
How does the Candidate view their calling? In what ways has their call been affirmed? What is their understanding of the distinct role of the Ministry for which they are applying in the life of the Church of Scotland

6: Short Analysis

Taking together all the sources and materials, conversations and consultations of the Review Group, eleven principles and four recommendations are offered to the Council.

The 11 principles below are presented in alphabetical order, to avoid appearing to rank them in importance; and they are expressed as descriptors of the model of Initial Ministerial Education the current group hopes its successors will design.

IME should be:

- **Attractive** – In a Church that struggles to recruit candidates for its professional ministries, it will be increasingly important that the proposition offered to applicants is one that intrigues and entices them to explore their calling and offer their time and energy to the process of ministerial formation. We believe that the remaining ten principles of IME will help to ensure that good quality applicants are attracted towards the journey of formation that is offered.
- **Collaborative** – There needs to be a qualitative change in the management of the relationships among the many stakeholders involved in the process of IME, so that the formation process is articulated and consistent. As the communications centre for many partners in delivering training, the Council should take advantage of innovations in technology to make sure that candidates each see the logic within the single process of preparation for ministry.
- **Cost-efficient** – Current patterns of IME are proving expensive because some processes are administratively very draining (for example, the weight of paperwork required at certain points in the cycle) and some elements of formation are costly (for example, the scale of candidates' travel expenses during training). Hard judgements will have to be made to reduce elements that produce extra costs, including numbers of external providers of training.
- **Denominational** – the Review Group has been struck by the absence of calls to remove any major elements of our current IME, which is recognised to stand in a very long and distinctive tradition of Scottish Presbyterian ministerial formation. The Church must not lose the best of its traditions, including the standards of university education we require and the depth of mentoring we offer in the system of attachments.
- **Flexible** – This major principle has two main applications. 1. Our candidates come from hugely varied backgrounds, have differing visions of their own eventual ministries, and live in all sorts of circumstances of family life, finance, work and geographical restriction. It is important that this variety, much greater than in previous generations, is recognised in the courses we can offer them, including perhaps through distance learning or part-time study where appropriate. 2. That ever-changing nature of the Church and the society it serves will change our IME needs in years to come, in ways we cannot entirely predict. It is therefore also important that the general requirements remain flexible and under scrutiny, and that our model permits the future integration of new elements of academic or practical preparation.
- **Formative** – The Review Group adheres absolutely to the view that IME must be a deep education and formation, and not a mere training in skills for a job. Only the former produces a candidate for ordination who will be able to sustain ministry over a lengthy career. In our view, candidates should always be students for the ministry, and not apprentices.
- **Habit-forming and sustainable** – As the recent experience of the Scottish Episcopal Church testifies, IME should have the effect of producing ministers who are in the habit of continuing to attend to their formation intellectually and spiritually, after ordination. In particular the two habits of reflection and collaboration - highlighted in so many recent Ministries Council Reports to the General Assembly - should be encouraged as life-long

habits, though the Review Group does have a concern that there may be a deficit in the quality of preparation for the traditional solo parish ministry that is still very common. In general, though, the Group hopes that IME and the development of those in the first five years of their ministry should be a single continuous process that continues to serve the individual long afterwards.

- **Integrated and Clear** – This principle is likely to require the greatest changes to current processes, because some candidates find their experience of the various elements of training to be disconnected. IME must be integrated, both (1) in the relationship between the academic requirements and the many church-based elements of the training, and (2) in the relationship between the requirements made of the candidates at the outset and the criteria for reviewing their performance year by year during training. Very clear mapping of the whole curriculum, to assist candidates' understanding of their training as an entirety, is one example of the use of good communication to guarantee the engagement and enthusiasm of students and probationers. Future changes to IME must drive integration between component parts to form a coherent training programme. IME must ensure this integration is cascaded into clear operational changes that enable all staffing components of IME to be clear on the purpose and strategy of IME.

- **Mission-orientated and contextual** – The Education and Training section of the Ministries Council is the servant of the Church's needs, and expects to be advised of the training implications of a changing context and a changing ministry. The relationship between the wider Church and its educators must be one of 'pull' not 'push', so that it is the Church's mission that defines the educational task and never the other way round.

- **Multi-dimensional** – The Review Group applauds the principle of training and development of practical demands of ministry and denominational-specific needs which is currently addressed in varying degrees in the Conference Programme. There is a need for further integration between academic education, skills training and Church of Scotland specific development in any changes. The Conference Programme model should be explored but not in isolation to other component parts. Further work on digital learning should be undertaken. Our consultations reveal a number of areas, mentioned in this report, in which the conference programme could fill more of that gap, or improve its existing offering, to serve the complex needs of our trainees.

- **Supported** – The personal and pastoral support of those who take the courageous step of offering themselves for training is the least we owe them in the Church they aim to serve. The most concrete element of that support is financial, and pressing in an age of restrictions and uncertainty in student finance. The Church needs to be bold in the investment it is willing to make in individuals, albeit with a requirement of 'return of service' against such assistance.

The current Review Group, as it reaches the end of its task, commends these principles to the Council, hoping that they will be adopted and incorporated in the mandate given to the group charged with completing this piece of work in the coming twelve months.

7: Recommendations

The group recommend the following actions:

1	Trigger Phase 2.
2	Appoint Phase 2 group.
3	Adequately fund Phase 2. Phase 2 to provide Council with outline of costs.
4	Further examination (by a different group) of strategy and vision for the shape of ministry today. Beyond the scope of RIT. See page 7.
5	Further examination of role profiles for Hub Ministry, e.g. deployment of Deacons. Beyond the scope of RIT.
6	Clear connection with CMD to be developed throughout IME. CMD required to make IME successful.
7	Ensure academic partners are included in development discussions.

What is Phase 2?

Phase 2 will look at a full-scale review and analysis of IME and make recommendations and actions for a significant change programme. Phase 2 will report to Ministries Council with full plans by January 2018 in order that the Council can report to GA 2018.

Phase 2 would begin the substantial review work: examining purpose of training; interrogating operating systems; testing funding patterns; analysing management and leadership. This requires external consultancy support.

Appendix 1
Full Summary Paper of General Assembly Reports

Rev. Aaron Janklow

Review Paper for the Ministries Council
Overview
This review paper identifies and summarizes important themes, principles, and outcomes of General Assembly Reports since 1999 of the Ministries Council, formerly named the Board of Ministries, with attention to the training and formation of ministers, including recruitment and discernment. The principles and themes identified in this report include: the shortage of ministers and the necessity to recruit more people for ministry, with a particular concern for also recruiting younger people, high standards of practical and academic training, which include universities and Church organized conferences that help prepare future ministers to serve today's communities, integrating theology and practice, developing skills for collaboration, ensuring the role of the Bible and spiritual development in training, and focusing on preparation for the first five years of ministry, and acknowledging and encouraging a life-long pursuit of learning.

Shortage of Ministers: Recruitment, Young Clergy
The Board of Ministry, and later, Ministries Council, repeatedly express concern about the increasing shortage of ministers and the necessity of attracting more people to the ministry. Recognizing that "these figures…are indicative of a serious trend over the next five years" (GA2002 3.2.1), the Board stated, "The challenge to the Church is quite clear; a range of imaginative measures must be taken to deploy and support existing ministers in different ways and to find ways of building up the ministry of the whole people of God" (GA2002 3.2.2). The impact of a shortage of ministers is felt across "the whole ministry pool," as "more and more ministers are having to serve as Interim Moderators for prolonged periods of time," and the "demands of Presbyteries and of the boards and committees of the General Assembly are being shared by fewer and fewer ministers" (GA2002 3.2.3). Reported in 2002, "The General Assembly of 2001 instructed the Board to prepare a report which addressed the projected shortage of ministers in a realistic and pastoral way" (GA2002 3.1). This is a task that continues today, and the 2014 Council reported, "far from improving, the picture is going to become worse" (GA2014 1.1.4).

An integral issue identified in addressing the increasing shortage of ministers is the necessity of recruiting younger people for ministry. The 2014 Council Report cited "the number of people entering Parish Ministry is currently at its lowest point for a generation and more than 80% of those serving in ministry are over the age of 50" and that "there are only two Parish Ministers under the age of 30" (GA2014 1.2.1). The Board echoes these concerns in subsequent years, and the 2016 Council, reports, "An almost complete lack of candidates under the age of 30, and very few even under 40 began to point to an approaching crisis. By 2010, well over 80% of Church of Scotland Parish ministers were over the age of 50, with more than 600 due to retire by 2025" (GA2016 1.2.2.2). Even before these alarming projections, the Council identified that "there is a need for the Church to take a more pro-active role in seeking out people who will respond to a call to ministry" (GA2012 1.2.10.4). The Council suggested the "reintroduction of an annual Vocation Sunday" (GA2012 1.2.10.4). Significantly, the Council argues against the "perception that prior to becoming a Parish Minister, it is best to acquire some experience in the 'real world'" (GA2013 2.2.3.3.1), and affirms theological principles that support young adults entering the ministry. They assert, "For God, youth is not a barrier to ministry" (GA2013 2.2.1.2), and point to Martin Luther, John Knox, George MacLeod, Martin Luther King Jr., Jackie Pullinger, and Jesus Christ himself (GA2013 2.2.2.3). Interestingly each of these people accomplished amazing things when they were younger than the Church of Scotland's average age for beginning ordained ministry, which is 48 (GA2013 2.2.2.1).

In addition to the shortage of ministers, and its intensification as current ministers retire and there are fewer people entering parish ministry, the Council identifies that decreasing church involvement and membership among younger generations is a part of the problem, and possibly also a result. The Council identifies a circular problem in that

> The declining numbers of Church members below the age of 45 must also be a significant factor for decline in ministers from younger generations. Furthermore, there may be a circular process at work here. As the number of ministers below the age of 45 decreases, so the Church will find it harder to attract those under the age of 45 to its membership. As the number of members below the age of 45 declines, so also does the pool of people of those generations who may be encouraged to explore a call to Ministry (GA2013 2.2.3.5.1).

To address the shortage of ministers, the Council appointed a Vocations Promotion Officer, and later Vocation Champions. The General Assembly of 2014 stated,

> The critical shortage of those applying for and being accepted to train for the recognised ministries highlighted the need for a role dedicated to recruitment. The Council has created and recruited to the post of National Vocations Promotion Officer who will among other things, take a lead in creating promotional materials, running Vocations Conferences, implementing the findings of the Under 45s group, collating material for Vocations Sunday, supporting the Volunteering Vocations Programme and recruiting and supporting Vocations Champions. The Council has also created the post of National Vocations Co-ordinator to run the Assessment process and implement the changes created by the Enquiry and Assessment Review (GA2014 4.4).

The 2016 Report provided an update on this effort towards recruitment, and stated, "There are now 9 Vocations Champions working across various Presbyteries from England to Inverness" (GA2016 4.1).

Training: Universities, Preparing for Today's Communities

The Council maintains the importance of high training standards, which includes theological education and pastoral experiences, and is focused on preparing candidates for "what is essential for the formation of the 'beginning minister,' including individual spiritual growth, the development of habits of reflective practice, and the fostering of a commitment to collaborative working and lifelong learning" (GA2005 3.4.5). The 2003 Report addresses how the Church of Scotland works alongside universities to ensure that candidates are prepared for parish ministry, stating,

> The Committee believes that Candidates should undertake a broad theological education in an academic environment where theological ideas and issues of faith are subjected to rigorous intellectual examination and discussion amongst those who both share and do not share the particular faith stance or denominational allegiance of our Candidates for Ministry. It is recognised, however, that there are likely to be some courses of instruction, essential for the preparation of Candidates for Ministry, that cannot be provided as part of the normal undergraduate programme offered by an academic institution. Similarly, there will be a range of skills essential for ministry that cannot be developed in the classroom or the study. These gaps will be addressed in the supervised field placements and the Candidates' conference programme. The field placements and the conference programme also have an important role to play in the cultural assimilation of Candidates from other churches, in the creation of a culture of collegiality which encourages peer-support and team working, and in the spiritual as well as professional development of the 'beginning minister'." (GA2003 5.5.4.2).[10]

The Council affirms the theological education ministers receive in universities "where theological ideas and issues of faith are subject to rigorous intellectual examination and debate involving both those who share and those who do not share the particular faith commitment or denominational

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[10] The 2003 Report provides a thorough overview of principles and course requirements – see GA2003 5.5.4.1 through 5.5.5.1.

allegiance of our candidates for ministry" (GA2004 5.3.1). Alongside affirming the ability of universities to provide "theological training of a high academic standard" (GA1999 8.1.2), the Council values the interactions with people of other faiths and none that occur in universities (GA2008 6.1.1.1). Within this principle, the Council seeks to prepare parish ministers for living and ministering in communities that have people of diverse faiths and none. The 2007 Report asserted that Scotland "is a vastly different society from even a generation ago," and identified challenges that will be faced by parish ministers, such as "an increasing disaffection with institutional religion running parallel to an increasing interest in spirituality," as well as "the breakdown of traditional models of community," and "the unparalleled movement of people across the world resulting in complex multi-cultural and multi-faith neighbourhoods on our doorsteps" (GA2007 1.1.3).

Training: Integrating Theology and Practice, Collaboration, & Conferences
In addition to seeking to equip future ministers for working alongside and with others in the wider community, the Council also affirms as a principle the importance of creating community and fellowship among those training for ministry (GA2002 4.12.4.1; GA2005 5.2.2.1). As part of this, the Council seeks to achieve a high level collaboration among parish ministers, which they believe will be necessary with changes within society and the Church. Referencing the *Ministers of the Gospel* and *Deacons of the Gospel* Reports, the 2002 Council Report identified collaboration as "an important part of ministry in the future" (GA2002 4.12.4.1). Conferences are increasingly being utilized as ways to foster community among those training for ministry, which is important as those training for ministry may be studying at different universities. Additionally, conferences are ensuring, or strengthening, the integration of theology and practice, and addressing specific skills needed for parish ministry. The 1999 Report, listed among other principles, "the importance of integration of theology and practice," "encouraging a sense of belonging to the Church from the point of selection," and "developing and extending peer group formation" (GA1999 8.5.1). Conferences are utilized to help achieve these learning goals and make up an important part of training for ministry.

The Enquirers' Conference is repeatedly recognized as a positive step in the recruitment and training of ministers (GA2001 6.2.2.1; GA2000 6.2.2.1, 6.3.1.2, GA2001 4.1, 6.2.2.1, 6.3.1.2; GA2002 4.1; GA2003 5.2.1; GA2004 3.2.1; GA2006 2.1.1). This conference addresses ministry within the Church of Scotland, and is an initial step towards determining a calling (GA1999 7.2.4; GA2011 3.1). This conference helps create community among those exploring a call, and also helps create or solidify relationships with those already in the Church of Scotland from the earliest stages. Following time as an enquirer, the candidate stage consists of conferences and placements. During this stage, conferences are increasingly used to address the training of ministers as it relates to integrating theology and practice, and developing specific skills for parish ministry. The initial conference for candidates was held in 2000, and "covered a number of topics which are vital in formation for ministry and many other topics will be raised as appropriate in future training conferences," and is also described as having "served well in encouraging a sense of belonging to the Church and developing peer group formation" (GA2001 7.2.4). According to Reports, in order to integrate theology and practice, and the cultivation of specific skills for parish ministry, the Candidates' Conferences, "and, where possible, the supervised field placements," should include "public worship and preaching," "principles in effective communication," "speech training," "sacramental practice in the Church of Scotland," "Church law and procedure," "team working," "leadership, support and encouragement of volunteers," "the practice of ministry," and "personal prayer life" (GA2003 5.5.5.2), and mission (GA2007 2.2.3.3). In addition to these conferences, candidates "undertake two part-time winter placements and one full-time summer placement" (GA2006 2.9.6). The 2006 Report states, "At present, the aim of placements is to give candidates a broad-based set of skills that are (or should be) transferable to any situation in which they find themselves in ministry" (GA2006 2.12.2.3). Conferences continue into the probation period, and as the 2006 Report stated, "Four short conferences for Probationers took place," and "the conference programme is a major element of the formation process enabling a support network to develop among the candidates which will continue into the future" (GA2006 2.9.4).

Training: The Bible and Spiritual Development

A further component of integrating theology and practice in preparation for the parish setting is familiarity with the Bible. The Council seeks to aid candidates "to place the Bible at the heart of their spiritual as well as professional development" (GA2004 5.8.2). The 2003 Report recorded the replacement of "the current system of three Bible Examinations by an Examination by Portfolio" (GA2003 5.5.7.2). In this Portfolio, "each Candidate would be expected to produce various pieces of work in each year of training which relate biblical knowledge and the practice of ministry, throughout his or her training and educational process," and seeks to "encourage Candidates to integrate their academic knowledge and understanding of the Bible with reflections on their experiences in supervised field placements and on the conference programme" (GA2003 5.5.7.2). The 2004 Report affirmed "that this element should be more closely integrated with the other parts of the formation process: in particular, reflection on the practice of ministry" (GA2004 5.8.1). The Bible Portfolio was replaced by the Ministries Training Network, which includes "a series of regional meetings designed to enable candidates to gather for worship, peer support and learning" (GA2008 7.2.1.4.1). In addition to the program conferences and placements for candidates, "the Board believes that, as part of their process of spiritual development, each candidate in training should undertake regular devotional reading of the Bible and vocational reflection on spiritual classics under the guidance of a trained Spiritual Advisor" (GA2004 5.3.2.2, re-affirmed by GA2005 3.4.3). In order to lend further pastoral support to candidates, "a named representative of the Council (either Committee member or staff member) would attend each ordination and formally convey the congratulations and good wishes of the Council" (GA2006 2.9.9).

Training: Focus on the First Five Years and a Lifetime of Learning

The 2003 Reports stated, "The Board continues to review its provision of courses and conferences trying as best it can to balance the needs of Ministers against the financial resources available," and "after careful consideration…it was decided to concentrate the resources on the provision of conferences for those in the first five years" (GA2003 4.6.1; affirmed in GA2004 6.10.1.1). The Board states that these conferences "are primarily educational in nature, but also contribute to the continuing development of a peer group identity for those who have gone through their theological education and conference cycle together. In the intervening years (two and four) the Board is offering one day conferences for the same group of participants" (GA2004 6.10.2.1). The 2012 Report maintains that "although the focus of this report is pre-ordination training, it must be seen as intimately connected to life-long learning and development **in** Parish ministry," and "that those engaged in Parish ministry must be people who are constantly *in training*: that is, equipping themselves in order in turn to "equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph 4:12)" (GA2012 1.4.1.1). This theme of equipping others for ministry is also asserted with reference to Ephesians 4 in the 2000 Panel on Doctrine Report (3.4).

Conclusion: Executive Summary

This review paper identified recurring themes and principles in General Assembly Reports of the Board of Ministry, and later Ministries Council, dating from 1999 onward. The shortage of ministers, and the related concern about the lack of younger ministers, is repeatedly identified as necessitating an examination of recruitment strategies, which have included Vocations Promotions Officers, and encouraging ministers and parishes to identify potential individuals and promote the ministry through a Vocations Sunday. The training of ministers is thoroughly addressed, and the integration of theology and practice and skills for collaboration are key themes. The *Ministers of the Gospel Report* exerted tremendous impact on the decisions and direction of the Board (examples include, but are not limited to: GA1999 3.4; GA2002 4.12.4.1, 5.13.1; GA2003 1.1; GA2007 1.2.1; GA2012 1.2.2.1, 1.4.2.1). The 2002 Report cites the "Church Without Walls" Report which "further calls on the Church to find imaginative new ways to use the gifts of the whole people of God" (GA2002 3.5.3). These Reports show the importance of training ministers to work in collaboration, not just with other ministers, but their congregations. For a thorough theological examination of ordination see the 2000 Panel of Doctrine Report. This report also addresses shared concerns of the Board

Reports, such as how "rapid social change and a half century of numerical decline are posing serious questions to the Church of Scotland about its nature and task" (Panel on Doctrine 2000 1.4).

Preparing for their first five years of ministry reflects the vast array of skills that are needed in the parish, and encouraging the lifetime pursuit of learning recognizes that new skills will constantly be developing. Conferences are an integral part of ministerial training and aim to work alongside theological education in the university settings. Pointing to the constant reevaluation of recruitment and training, the 2016 Report stated, "The characteristics and gifts required of the leader of such an extended group of Parishes will be significantly different from those of the settled pastor-teacher to which we have become accustomed. Our contemporary context points, therefore, to a need not only to rethink *initial* training, but to develop patterns of ongoing development and *retraining* for those already in ministry" (GA2016 1.2.2.4).

In addition to the themes and principals addressed in this paper, other themes that are important to note include the difficulty of rural parishes (GA2001 9.2.2.3; GA2009 1.9.1, 9.2.2.4), the use of the internet (GA2006 2.9.5; GA2014 4.6.4), the training of those who work with enquirers, candidates, and probationers (GA2012 1.4.2.4.8), exploration of a "flexible learning option" (GA2003 5.5.8, GA2004 5.4.3, GA2005 3.6.1), and new ideas and focuses for ministry that are emerging, such as emerging church (GA2008 2.2.5.3.1) and pioneering skills (GA2015 2.5.14).

Appendix 2
Full Stakeholders Consultation Report

Initial Training Consultation Feedback
Undertaken by Alison Denton and Joanne Thomas
November - December 2016

Consultation Methodology

The purpose of the consultation was to seek feedback from individuals on the **Initial Ministerial Education (IME)** programme, in order to understand:

- What works and what doesn't within the current format?
- Their ideas on improvements that they would like to see implemented?
- Their views on the proposed changes to IME.

Through the process of consultation we spoke to a number of individuals in a variety of roles:

- Ten council members ;
- The Principals of the five academic partners (including the Assistant Principal of New College, Edinburgh);
- The Convener – Ministries Council.
- Three ministers in their first five years.

The subsequent one to one conversations covered some or all of the areas outlined below:

- The current IME format.
- What works and what could be improved?
- Reaction to and / or thoughts on any proposed changes.
- What challenges do ministers face in today's world?
- How does the initial training equip ministers to meet those challenges?
- What a "good" minister looks like? What skills and qualities do they embody?
- How does the initial training support the development of "good" ministers?
- What is the risk if the IME programme remains in its current format?
- With a blank sheet of paper – what would you do?

The feedback has been structured to report on each part of the programme with additional comments captured at the end.

Consultation Executive Summary

We believe that people spoke to us with candour and positive intent. The overwhelming perspective was a personal one and largely based on their own experience of training.

The majority of people that we spoke to articulated the need for some change to the IME programme but the degree of change that people feel is necessary varied significantly.

At one end of the spectrum there are many that acknowledge that some change is required, but see it as being in the form of "tweaks" to the existing programme, rather than anything more considerable or on a larger scale. They expressed confidence in the current format and believe that the challenges that the church faces in terms of the steep decline in the numbers of candidates and ordained ministers cannot be "fixed" by wholesale changes to the initial training programme.

Some individuals have little belief that anything much new is needed and were openly resistant to change. They believe that the church offers a blended approach to learning and has developed a rigorous format that enables candidates to integrate theory into practice and offers sufficient flexibility to meet the needs of individuals.

At the other end of the spectrum people expressed the need for large scale change with a sense of urgency, acknowledging that the world within which ministers are operating has changed and is continuing to change and the initial training needs to reflect that. Some believe that The Church of Scotland is facing a real crisis and their fear is that it will revert to methods (structures and processes) adopted from the past, to take it forward.

 "It is a cumbersome programme which is based on a traditional model of ministry which is no longer relevant"
"None of the different components are interlinked"

In our experience, establishing the **"need"** for change is crucial to gaining buy in regardless of the size or scale of the change required. If maintaining the status quo is no longer a viable option, it is perhaps worth thinking about pushing up the urgency level and helping people to really understand the need for change in order to create "buy in". Without sufficient buy in, people can become defensive and resistant to initiatives they see as being "launched from the top".
Most people that we spoke to offered strong opinions on the academic element and the conference programme and provided feedback to a lesser degree on the other parts of the initial training programme.
People told us that there are many aspects of the current format that they like and were of huge benefit to them in their formation. The single, most consistent theme that emerged from the consultation process was the lack of integration, that the different learning streams within the current IME format are not interlinked.

Enquiry, Application and Discernment Process

Those that we spoke to described a positive personal experience when exploring their sense of calling to ministry.
They outlined a rigorous process of self-reflection, vocational conference, discernment, placement, culminating in assessment and people believed it to be a very worthwhile investment of time and effort. Many described the value they placed on the relationship with their mentor and the insight that the placement provided.

People explained that it was on acceptance as a prospective candidate that they embarked on the IME programme.

There was a suggestion that the period of discernment should be seen as the foundational stage of training for ministry and therefore included as part of the initial training programme - "Stage 1. A Foundation in Ministry". One benefit of this approach was that should an individual decide that full time ministry is not the route they wish to pursue, they could still use their experience to fulfil a useful role within the parish.

Others recognise that each form of ministry has a comprehensive training programme but raised the question as to whether there could me more integration / collaboration across the different training programmes (especially in the early stages).

They articulated that the benefits of this could be to:

- o   Provide people with a better understanding of the different roles within ministry;
- o   Potentially encourage people to consider other forms of ministry
- o   Facilitate a larger network for individuals "in training" and
- o   Use resources more effectively.

Academic Training

What works?

Whilst people in the main acknowledge some reform of the initial training programme is necessary, the majority of those that we spoke advocated that some form of academic training be retained and provided by some / all of the current university partners.

Many expressed strong opinions on the subject of academic training and the **three** main reasons that people cited for retaining the academic piece are as follows:
- **The university experience:**
- **The quality of the teaching and tutoring:**
- **Tradition**

The university experience:

Many expressed what they felt the benefits were to being part of the university community. These included being provided with a safe environment to challenge and be challenged. People described the experience using words such as "demanding", "stimulating" "stretching". Many explained that the diversity of the student environment and interfaith dialogue helped individuals to "think hard about what I believe and why" and that "undoing and reforming is big part of the university experience."

People told us that others can and will challenge your theology:

"It is better to have looked at it from every angle in a safe environment. It means you are stronger if, for example, your congregation challenges you"
"For me – it helped me understand who I am and how I fit into all this"

Many that we spoke to talked of the ongoing relationships formed within the academic community and how important these relationships out with the church are. People described how they are still a valued source of support for many individuals.

The quality of the teaching and tutoring:

Many stated that the standard and breadth of lecturing, teaching and tutoring available could not be replicated or resourced elsewhere.

People told us that the teachers and tutors are "qualified, experts in their field", many of whom are "specialists who are actively engaged in both teaching and research" .

Tradition

Some expressed the view that The Church of Scotland is a church steeped in tradition and that part of the tradition is that ministers are degree educated at the ancient academic institutions. Whilst many acknowledge that the church needs to move forward people told us that they "feel strongly" and "passionately believe" that this part of the church's heritage should be retained.

"I feel proud that our training is firmly rooted in theological colleges of the ancient universities of Scotland"

What doesn't work?

The **five** main themes that emerged from consultation were:

- "The academic training is too "academic"" and provides little teaching on practical or pastoral aspects that are likely to come up in the context of ministry.

o "There is no requirement to evidence any practical application". Some people told us that they had discussed with their tutors on occasion how they had implemented different aspects of their learning during their placements but that this is not formally required, again highlighting that the different parts of the initial training programme are not interlinked.

o Church of Scotland candidates are not required to take any specific electives or modules during their theology degree programme. Whist some of the universities actively encourage students to take modules and subjects that are more relevant to the role of ministry people told us that the degree to which this takes place varies and is not consistent across all of the academic partners. [Act X 2004 does outline The Course at Section 12]

o Some that we spoke to did challenge the "campus experience". They believe that for individuals coming to ministry today "it is a potentially a barrier, especially looking at the age and stage of the majority of candidates". They would support a flexible, modern approach whereby the candidate owns their "individual pathway", helping ministry to become more accessible.

"We need to update the whole understanding of distance learning – students do still work together and most students engage on a live basis – just not all in the same location"

The Academic Partners

As part of the consultation process we spoke to the principals in each of the five academic partners, all of whom expressed their continued commitment to training candidates for The Church of Scotland.

Edinburgh, Glasgow, Saint Andrews and Aberdeen strongly advocate retaining the academic training within a campus setting but outlined the challenges they face with the reduction in the number of candidates coming through in more recent years. They explained that they have worked closely with the church to shape their programmes in the past, but that the candidates are such a small percentage of the overall student population, it would be difficult to shape degree courses to *specifically* meet the needs of The Church of Scotland.

Through the course of the discussions some of the academic partners suggested that there are aspects or ideas that could merit further exploration. These might include:

o Whether academic partners could work more closely together, perhaps in geographical clusters, sharing resources where possible?
o The number of academic partners and whether the current format continues to be viable?
o Other professions (teaching, social work, medicine) that successfully combine the academic training with practical skills and work placements.
o Vocational training – what is the best way is to deliver it?
o Is the Bachelor of Divinity course delivering what the church needs?
o Should the church be more prescriptive about the modules that a candidate must take?
o Should it be a requirement that the candidate's dissertation has to have some link to ministry in a local context?
o Can we enable / actively encourage students to build in some practical skills (available elsewhere within the university) to their learning programme?

We believe that the consultation process has highlighted that the academic partners would welcome a "seat at the table" and the opportunity work more closely with the church to shape Ministerial Initial Training going forward.

A Different Format?

Many expressed a strong opinion that a "seminary style" system developed by The Church of Scotland and validated by one of the current academic partners was not a viable alternative. They raised questions and concerns about how it would be funded and how it would be resourced in terms of good quality teaching and tutoring. People told us that they feel proud that they are "well educated" ministers and many felt that a change on this scale would impact greatly the "richness" of the experience for candidates.

In summary, people told us that there are things that they would change about the current initial training programme, but the majority of those that we spoke to did not see the need for a move to a completely different format.

The Conference Programme

Those that we spoke to benefited from the conference programme to varying degrees.

What works?

Those to whom we spoke explained that the purpose of the conference programme is to bring candidates together and supplement the academic element, introducing candidates to the practical aspects of ministry.

Feedback on the conference programme was mixed with some firmly supporting the current format "it is definitely valued by candidates, providing an enormously helpful link to practice"

For many the most beneficial part of the conference programme is meeting up with other candidates. People consistently described how valuable it was to meet others, to share experience, good practice and knowledge - fostering a network of peer support.

"The main benefit of the conference programme is to learn from each other - there should be less 'lectures' and more working together"

Some described how they enjoyed a variety of sessions, concluding that a number of them were them "interesting" and "informative" and of "practical benefit".

What doesn't work?

The **four** main themes that emerged were:

- o The structure of the conference programme. People explained that that whilst they acknowledge that the conference programme has been refined over the years and that there is some coherence to its format, many stated that they still felt that the structure is still "not quite right". They explained that "it touches on some areas of church life; delves into others in more depth and some we don't cover at all". Some expressed the opinion that the "focus of the conference programme is too urban".

  "We need rethink the conference programme - what do we actually need to know and to what level?"

  Page 46 lists some areas that individuals suggested that they would like to see included (or see more of) in the programme.

o People at times expressed frustration when talking about the "quality" of the sessions, both in terms of content and delivery – they can be very "hit or miss". Some expressed the opinion that a lot of time, effort and resource is invested in the conference programme by both the church and the minister and that more needs to be done to ensure that the sessions are delivering what is needed in the right way – "quality control" . People said that on some / many occasions the subject matter may be relevant but the session is either delivered in a way that does not engage the audience or it focuses on only one particular aspect of the topic.

A number of people suggested running the conference programme as series of "taster sessions" outlining the various aspects of ministry (closely managing the format, content and delivery). The aim would be to have each taster sessions supported by a training programme on a specific subject so that individuals can "take the course as and when they need to". They suggested that this raises people "awareness" at an early stage and then forms the basis of the continuing ministerial development programme whereby individuals can sign up for different training courses that are relevant and meaningful to them and their ministry at some point in the future.

o Many that we spoke to felt that there was not enough time built into the conference format for candidates to "be together and learn from one another", to "share real life experiences".

o Some suggested that learning, in terms of new or improved skills, knowledge and attitudes, is the primary aim of a training event such as the conference programme. Another important aspect is application, how much the individual retains and applies after the event. Some individuals highlighted that there is no validation of the effect of the training "I'm not sure that we know what outcomes we want to see as a result of the training, so how do we know if it has been effective?"

Ministries Training Networks (MTN)

Again people expressed mixed views on the value of the Ministries Training Networks.

What works?
Most people reiterated the benefit of peer support and learning.

Some described the heavy workload within the first few years of initial training and said that often their first reaction was to resist taking time out to spend with their peer group, but that they invariably came away believing it to be "time well spent."

Some described how the MTN helped them to build confidence. They placed real value in:

o meeting together for worship;
o being listened to;
o working as part of a group and
o having the space to talk to others.

What doesn't?
The **three** main themes that emerged from consultation were:

o Individual's experience of MTN varied and some believe that the group dynamic and in particular the quality of the supervisor's facilitation skills influenced their learning experience.

o "There were times when the sheer volume of the workload and placements felt overwhelming". People explained that candidates are required to meet monthly for a set period of time, to produce essays and to journal. Some believe that the requirement to undertake placements and the training network in addition to their academic study meant that at times the quality of their work was compromised in their attempt to keep on top of everything.

o People expressed a lack of clarity about the link between the written output from MTN, assessment and the candidate's portfolio.

Placements and the Probationary Role

Everyone we spoke extolled the value of the placements and on completion of their studies the probationary role.

Not all spoke of having "enjoyed" every aspect and people's experiences of placement and probation varied, but everyone believed them to be a vital part of their training and formation.

In the main people described a collaborative approach to agreeing their placements whereby individuals discussed what they wanted to achieve / experience on placement and where possible this was accommodated. However this flexibility also led to some inconsistencies between the amount of practical experience people have depending on their supervisor.

The most consistent piece of feedback was regarding the quality and consistency of supervision. People explained that as candidates they undertake a series of placements throughout their training and as a probationary minister complete a fifteen month probationary period. All of which are under the guidance of a or a series of supervisors.

People mentioned contrasting styles and approaches to supervision and described the impact that the supervisor had on their placements, probationary period and in some cases their ministry. Whilst many recognised they had benefited from "great supervisors" others expressed concern over some supervisors' performance in this most crucial of roles.

"Positive supervision has a massive impact"

People spoke of the training of supervisors and some made the following points:

o More clarity is required about the role of the supervisor and the purpose of supervision.
o Being a good supervisor requires a specific skill set. People should be selected or deselected as the case may be by reference to their meeting this requirement.
o Is there follow up on the effectiveness of training in practice?

One individual suggested that probationers should be undertaking carefully selected locum roles under the support and guidance of a small number of "great" supervisors.

"This would provide the individual with really good first-hand experience and help plug gaps at the same time"

Another suggested that perhaps the first three years could be a period of "curacy" – again a chance to experience the full extent of the role but with formal support built into the model.

Reviews and Assessment

The majority of those that we spoke to outlined a review and assessment process that is onerous in terms of paperwork. Some individuals said that they used the process of review a further means of reflection. Others described voluminous paperwork and said that they felt that the purpose of the reviews and the assessment became lost as having become bogged down in paperwork. They suggested streamlining the process with more emphasis on direct and face to face discussion.

It was argued that those who do not pass the final assessment should be a given a further opportunity to meet the required standard.

Additional Points and Ideas

1. Vision and Strategy.

During the consultation process we found that in the main people offered up opinions and / or suggestions that were based on their own personal experience of initial training. However a small number of those that we spoke to raised questions about and / or expressed opinions on the "big picture". These are summarised in the following statements:

- o We need a **vision** for the Church of Scotland that people can get behind and buy into.
- o This will help clarify the direction of change.
- o Only then can a **strategy** be developed that will take the church forward.
- o As part of that strategy we need to understand:

- IV. What is parish ministry?
- V. What does the next generation of minister's looks like?
- VI. What do our parishes, communities and congregations want from their ministers?

- o Only then can / should we redesign IME – "when we know the direction of travel".

People explained that there is difficulty in working out what the provision should be as there are complex relationships between the different stakeholders and as a result some people have become defensive about change.

In our experience, clarifying the direction of change is important as often people can disagree on direction or are confused and then question whether change is really necessary. An effective vision and strategy help resolve issues and provide compelling reasons why changes need to be made. It helps people to take action that is not necessarily in their own short term self interests.

2. Leavers.

It may be useful to consider any information that has been gathered regarding people's reasons for leaving ministry as these facts may add weight to the "need" for change.

It may also be worthwhile, if one is not already in place, setting up an "exit interview" process. A confidential conversation that encourages honest feedback is a useful tool as it provides robust information on the reasons for leaving, what the individual valued and what they think could be improved. The feedback can then be used proactively to inform the need for any changes to existing practice.

3. What does 'good' look like?

Many people reiterated the opinion that one size does not fit all in ministry. People come to ministry with a variety of skills and life experiences and that the IME programme needs to retain "personal pathways" whereby individuals can, to a degree, shape their own training.

"Good ministry happens - it comes in all kinds of packages, it is difficult to say, on the surface what qualities these ministers share".

"It is a bit like the leadership question - are good ministers born or made. I would suggest the answer is both!"

People's comments on the "What does 'good' look like" question are encompassed the in the following statements.

- o Good is the whole person divided into three key areas: their theology, the personal qualities they demonstrate and their practical skills and knowledge.   One individual commented that IME covers "theology" and "practical", but not the "skills and qualities".
- o "Good is finding the balance between good preaching, good pastoring and being in the community."
- o "Good ministry reaches into the community and builds relationships at all levels".
- o "What good ministers have in common is their ability to relate to people".
- o Other important qualities include "self-awareness", "self-reflection" and the ability to stay "curious".
- o A good minister can lead but also work comfortably as work as part of a team. They "draw on the talents and gift of others."
- o A good minister is "healthy" both mentally and physically, someone who takes time to "refuel" and has a good awareness about "self-care."

The "good" question prompted lots of discussion and we believe that even within the context of the IME discussion, many enjoyed thinking about and even exploring the concept of "good"

4. An integrated approach.

It has already been highlighted many people believe that there is a need for an integrated approach to initial training.

A small number of individuals took the discussion a step further and *really* challenged the existing system. In their view the church runs an initial training programme that they believe is shaped to a greater or lesser extent by the academic partners. The church then builds in the additional pieces that are required and as a result there are no links between any of the different stages of learning.

The questions these individuals raised during consultation were:

- o Why does the church not define what candidates need in terms of learning, practical experience, personal attributes and assessment and engage with partners / providers that can deliver an integrated approach to a high standard and

- o If all the academic partners cannot commit to working in this way because of the small number of candidates, should we not move to one or two academic partners with a distance learning option?

Some advocates of change suggested a programme whereby The Church of Scotland works closely with the partners / providers in partnership providing a joined up approach whereby each area of the candidates training is linked and validated. For example, one suggestion was that each candidate should have an academic supervisor and a placement supervisor.

5. Make a clear link between IME and CMD – to encourage and enable continuous learning.

Run the conference programme as a series of "taster sessions" to raise awareness of the practical parts of ministry and support each subject area with a training programme so that individuals can "take the course as and when they need to".

Make the courses programme available to all ministers and lay ministers (where appropriate) so people can take different courses to build or in some cases refresh their knowledge.

Subject areas that people said that they would benefit from included:

Project management	Dealing with conflict.
People management /managerial skills	Finance.
Building relationships - interpersonal skills, rapport, how to relate to people.	More on church law
Change management	Working with and managing volunteers
Chairing and running meetings	Fundraising.
More on running a charity (including governance and the role of the trustees)	More on chaplaincy: school, NHS and workplace.

Learning from others.

People suggested that there are lessons that could be learned from those in other areas in which vocational initial training is provided. For example: teaching, medicine, social work. They also suggested graduate training programmes whereby people come with a degree to the organisation and require vocational training to enable them to perform a professional function.

A number of people also highlighted the NHS chaplaincy training model as one that they would recommend in terms of "good practice".