

SUPERVISORS' HANDBOOK



CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

MINISTRIES COUNCIL

Table of Contents

Introduction

Overview of Discernment Process for Ministry

Route to Ministry – Candidature to Exit Certificate

- Candidature Review Process
- Guidelines for the Operation of the Placement Scheme
- Supervisors and the Portfolio
- Ministries Training Network
- Conferences
- Summary

Supervision

- The Material for Supervision
- Meeting to Discuss Possible Placement
- Meetings in General
- Focus in Placements
- Variety of Tasks
- Other Matters to Consider
- Guidelines for Support Groups
- Benefits of being a Supervisor
- Challenges of Supervision
- Supervision of Placements 1, 2, 3
- Supervision of Probationer
- Enjoying the Role
- Supervisory Styles
- The Supervisory Covenant

Appendices

- I Games in Supervision
- II Worship Review – Notes for Guidance
- III Service Feedback
- IV Letters for Congregations
- V Guide to the Indicators for Assessment
- VI Placement Covenant Liturgy
- VII: Theory into Practice

Any general enquiries please contact the Training Team on MinistriesTraining@churchofscotland.org.uk

All handbooks and reporting forms can be downloaded from the website:

http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/subjects/ministries_resources#cps

INTRODUCTION

The handbook sets out the basic roles of the supervisor so that supervisors may know what is expected of them in order to achieve an approximately similar level of supervision.

The Council is most grateful to all those supervisors who participated in the production of this Handbook. All of them contributed insights, knowledge and experience which are reflected in the content. Their enthusiasm and energy for this vital task of supervision are impressive and a source of encouragement to the Council and the Church. It is our hope that this handbook will meet a need and be developed and improved by further discussion and reflection in the years ahead.

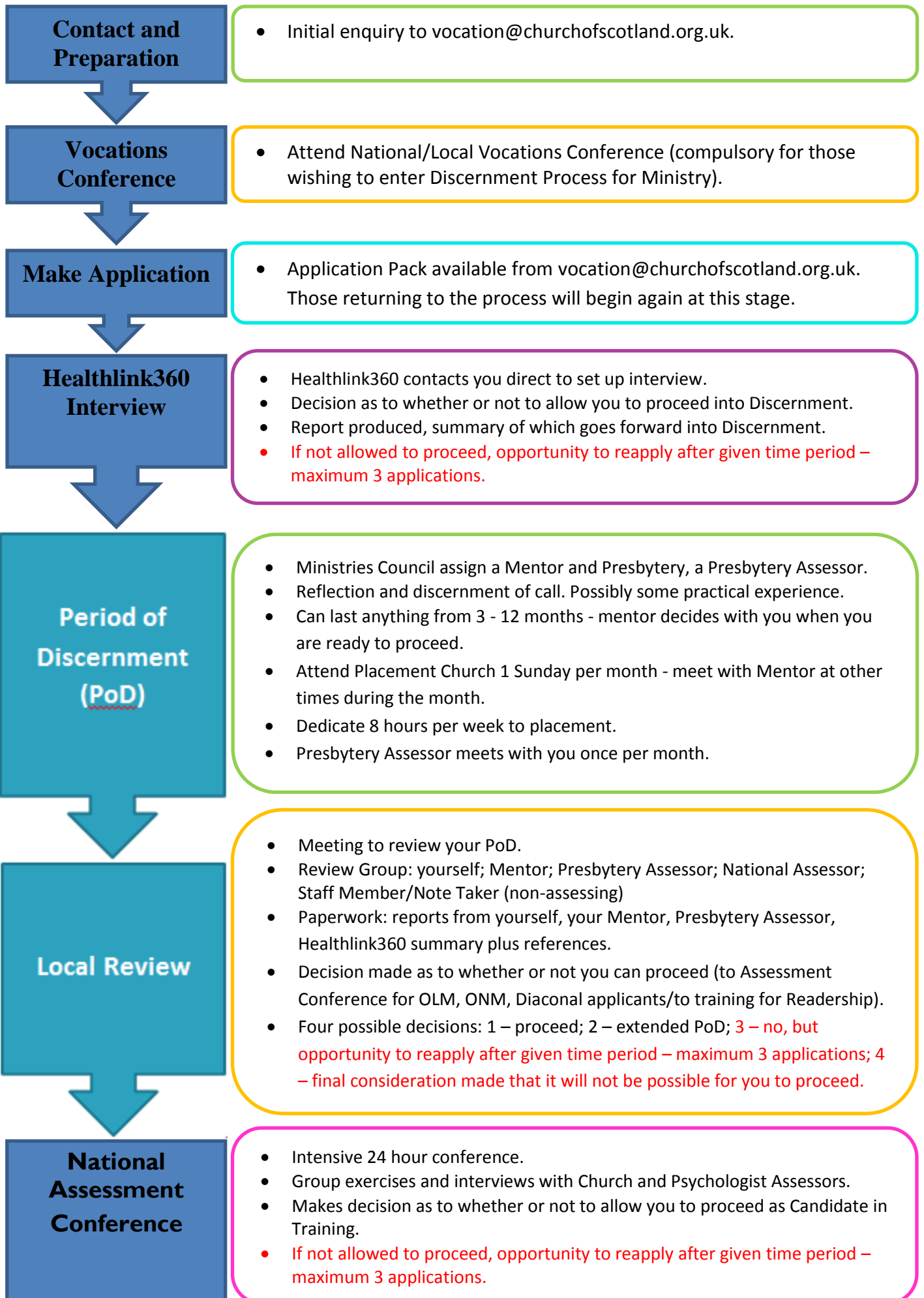
Regular training courses for supervisors are being developed. The handbook will give assistance to, and be a first point of reference for, supervisors in their work on behalf of the Council and the Church. Though no handbook can answer every question that a supervisor may have, all should know that any queries or any suggestions can always be directed to the Council at 121 George Street and will always be welcomed.

Perhaps a teacher should be like the grit that gets into the shell of an oyster, How does it feel for the oyster? An irritation? A pain? Whatever effect, the result may be a pearl, beautiful or misshapen, but a precious object nevertheless.

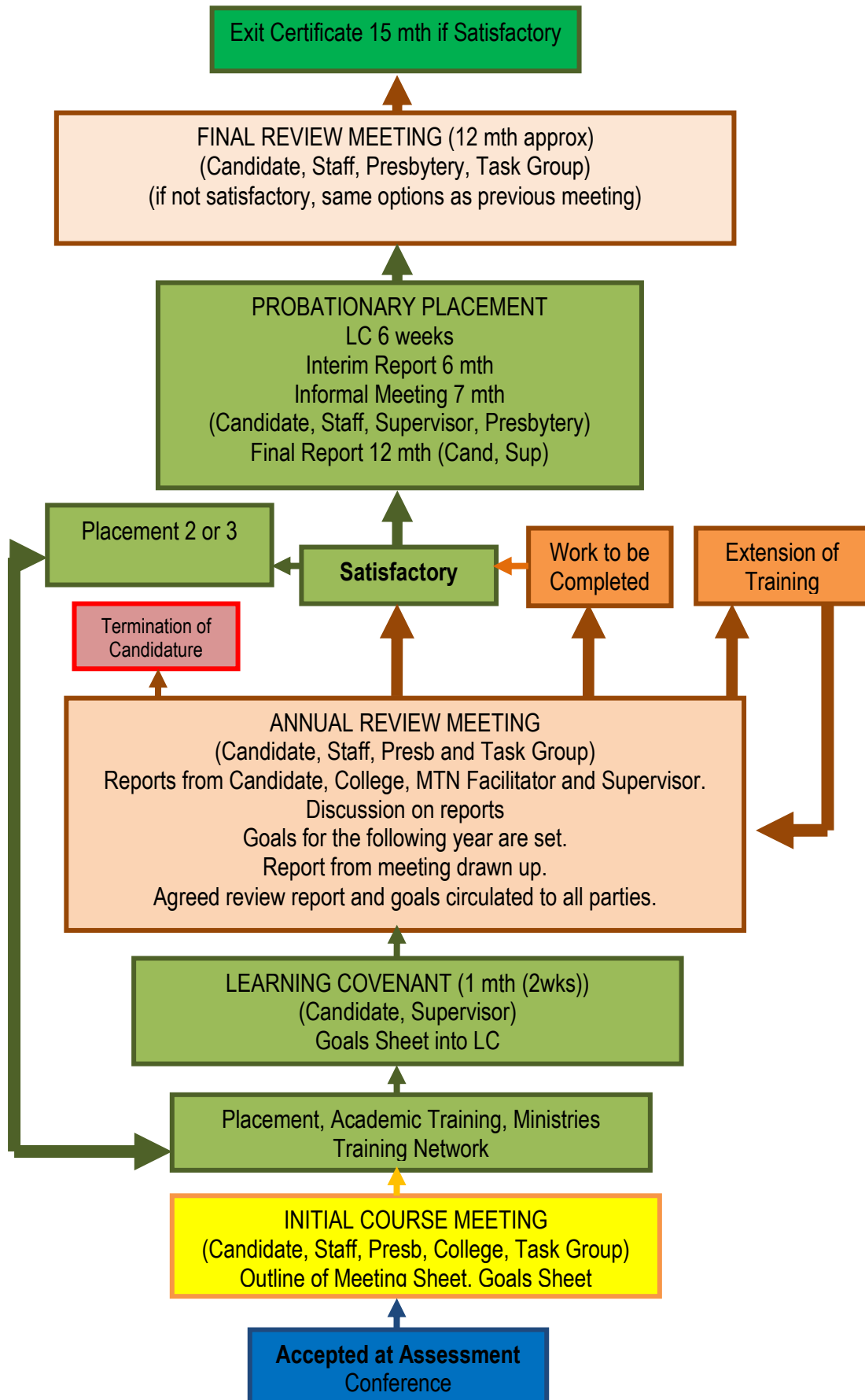
A learner has to worry at the thing. Many teachers provide the pearls ready-made. Students are asked to value them highly for what they are, to store them in their bags. But they are borrowed, put into a bank. It is the pearls the students make themselves that they really value, that matter to them, and that will have a significant effect on their thinking, behaviour and self-esteem."

David Minton in *Teaching Skills in Further and Adult Education*, 2005 (p 46)

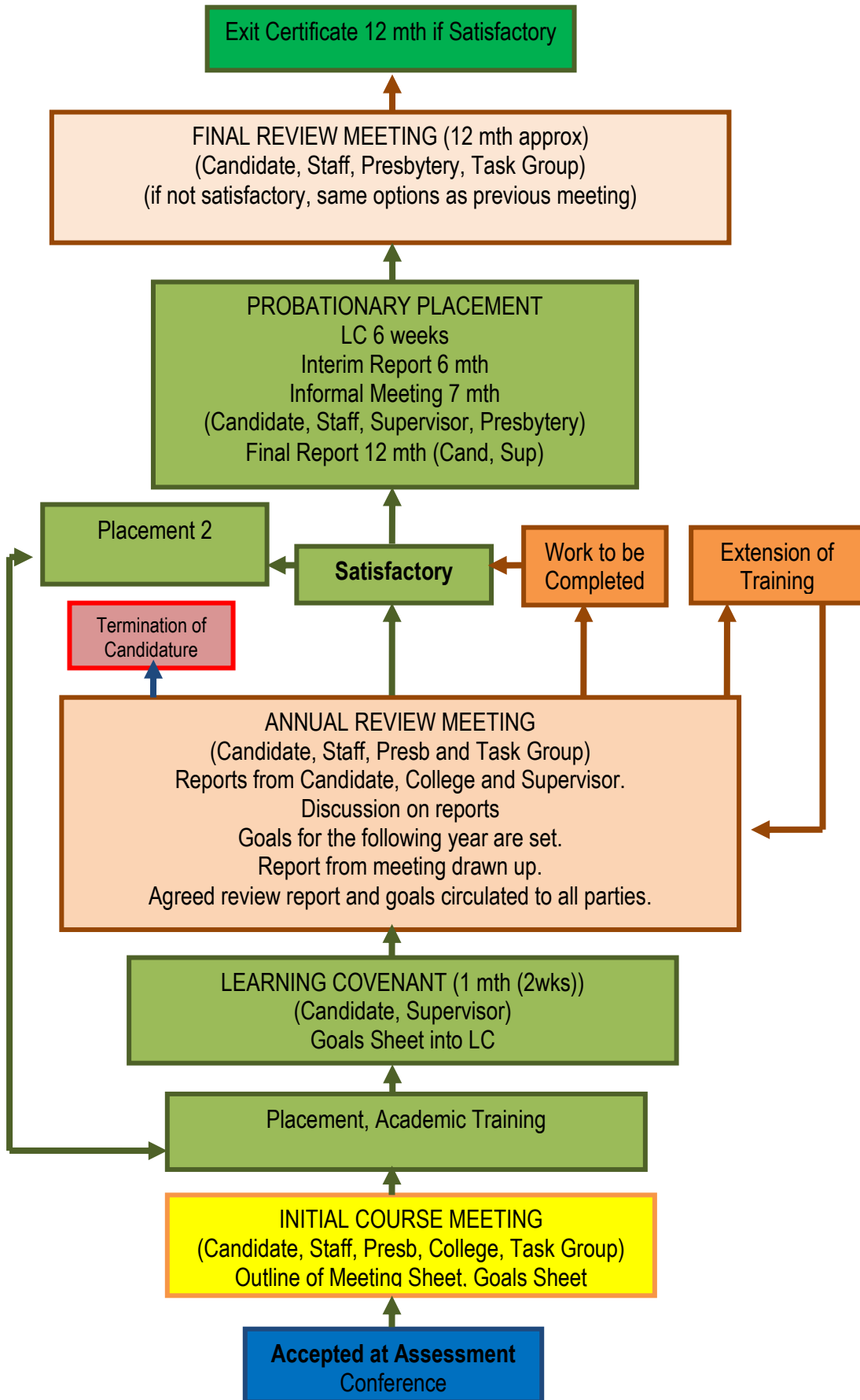
DISCERNMENT PROCESS FOR MINISTRY



THE ROUTE TO MINISTRY – CANDIDATURE TO EXIT CERTIFICATE



ORDAINED LOCAL CANDIDATE REVIEW PROCESS



CANDIDATE REVIEW PROCESS – DETAILED STRUCTURE

Initial Course Meeting

After a candidate is nominated by Presbytery, Ministries Council staff will contact the Presbytery Clerk to make arrangements for an Initial Course meeting. The aims of this meeting are to:

- welcome the candidate to the training process;
- offer the candidate feedback from the Assessment Conference;
- ensure that the candidate is given a full briefing on his / her course;
- set goals for the first year of training under the headings of the *Learning Covenant*;
- ensure all parties acknowledge and sign the standard *Expectations & Responsibilities* document.

The personnel involved in the Initial Course Meeting will be:

- a representative of Presbytery;
- a representative of the Ministries Council (this role may be undertaken by the staff member);
- a representative of the Church College (where possible)
- a staff member responsible for care of the candidate;
- the candidate.

Where possible, the representative of Presbytery and of the Ministries Council (where applicable) should be those who it is anticipated will participate in the Annual Review meeting at the end of the academic year.

Goal Setting

It is important that any goals set for a particular year of education and training are ones that are able to be achieved by the candidate without undue stress or anxiety. That is not to say that the goals should not be challenging, but the following guidelines are indicative of considerations that need to be taken into account in setting goals. Goals should be:

- as specific as possible rather than broad and vague;
- measurable in some way, where possible;
- achievable within the context of the placement or the university course;
- reasonable in the light of the candidate's current skills;
- manageable within reasonable time constraints.

All goals should be directed towards enabling the candidate to develop skills, whether in academic, practical or spiritual matters. Where a candidate is being asked to undertake something which has resource implications, the Ministries Council will be responsible for ensuring that resources are made available. In the event that resources are not available, the candidate will be informed of this by the Ministries Council and the goals appropriately adjusted.

The goals drawn up in the Annual Review meeting will be used by the candidate and supervisor in drawing up a *Learning Covenant* for the subsequent year of study and placement.

Annual Review: Format and Outcome

Annual Reviews will be held towards the end of every year of training, regardless of whether a candidate is in academic study, or is engaging in placement work. If a candidate is not involved in a placement, the review will proceed as outlined below without any report from a supervisor.

Annual Review — Initial Training

During those years of initial training prior to the commencement of the Probationary Placement, the Annual Review will normally take place after the close of each academic year and before the beginning of the next phase of training (academic year or placement). The following conditions apply to the review:

- it will normally take place either in the candidate's home Presbytery, or in the Presbytery in which the candidate's university studies are being undertaken. In the interests of good stewardship, however, another venue, mutually agreeable to all parties, may be chosen on a regional basis;
- it will normally be convened by a representative of the Presbytery (Presbytery Assessor), as the nominating body, and always set in the context of prayer and support for the candidate;
- the membership of the Review Group shall comprise up to two Presbytery Assessors and up to two Ministries Council Assessors, with a Ministries Council staff member present in an advisory and administrative capacity;
- the Review meeting will last up to one hour with the candidate present;
- the Review Group will set aside fifteen minutes before and after meeting the candidate to consider the content and outcome of the Review meeting;
- in advance of the Review meeting, all parties will have received reports from:
 - the candidate (including a record of any University results);
 - the supervisor;
 - the College (where applicable);
 - the Ministries Council (through an appropriate staff member);
- the Review meeting will take the form of an extended conversation between the parties, focussing on
 - what has gone well;
 - what has been difficult;
 - the extent to which the goals set have been achieved;
 - what the candidate has learned about him/herself over the year;
 - what goals should be set for the next phase of training.
- the candidate is entitled to bring a companion to the Review meeting, and this person shall have the status of an observer only;
- during the Review meeting, the draft report prepared and circulated by the staff member, will be appropriately amended and approved by all parties;
- following the meeting, the agreed report will be circulated to all parties;
- if any party wishes to disagree with any points in the report, this may be done in writing and appended to the report. Changes shall not normally be made to the report following agreement by the Presbytery and Ministries Council Assessors, except in the case of any factual inaccuracies identified by any party;
- the report will contain the joint decision of the Presbytery and Ministries Council with regard to sustaining of candidature for the year.

Annual Review – Probationary Period

During the fifteen-month (2 months for an OLM) Probationary Period the review sequence will be as follows:

- after a period of approximately six months, an informal review will take place. At this review consideration will be given to the progress of the placement and any necessary action will be taken to ensure that the candidate is able to gain maximum benefit from the probationary period. This initial review will be conducted by a Presbytery Assessor, a Ministries Council Assessor and the staff member responsible for care of the candidate. In

the event that some serious concern is raised, this will be reported to the Training Task Group, whereupon appropriate action will be outlined by the Task Group;

- after a period of approximately twelve months, a normal Annual Review meeting will be held in which a final decision on the candidate's fitness to enter ministry will be determined. At the end of such a review meeting, which indicates a successful outcome to a candidate's probationary period, the report will indicate that an Exit Certificate may be issued by the Ministries Council at the end of the fifteen month period. The Presbytery Assessor so empowered by Presbytery, will indicate the satisfaction of the Presbytery and note this in the final report;
- at the successful conclusion of the probationary period, the Exit Certificate will be issued on behalf of the Ministries Council. From this point onward, the candidate is referred to as a Graduate Candidate. Certificated Candidates normally remain under the care and supervision of the Presbytery within whose bounds the probationary period was successfully completed, until such time as a call or appointment is sustained by that Presbytery;

Annual Reviews — Non-Sustaining of Candidature

In the event that the parties fail to agree at any Annual Review to sustain the candidate or the probationary period, the following options are available:

- the candidate may be given a specified period of time in which to complete the areas of work or outstanding pieces of work that have not been completed or have given cause for concern;
- an extension of training, subject to the approval of the Ministries Council, to allow matters of concern to be addressed;
- an agreement is reached that candidature should be terminated (subject to normal appeal procedures set out in the Act).

An agreement to terminate candidature should be made by the Ministries Council and Presbytery Assessors present at the Review meeting and subsequently reported to and minuted by the Presbytery and the Training Task Group.

The assessment of the candidate throughout the years of candidature shall at all times take place against the criteria outlined in the Ministries Council's *Indicators for Assessment*. In addition, all parties will comply with the *Expectations & Responsibilities* outlined in respect of them in the standard document.

Annual Reviews: Reports

The following parties shall submit reports in good time for all other parties to receive and read them in advance of the Annual Review meeting:

- **Candidate:** the candidate will keep a portfolio over the year, outlining work done and learning outcomes achieved. This is submitted for review at the Annual Review and the Candidate makes a presentation on their year's work.
- **Supervisor:** the supervisor will complete a report on the development of the candidate during the placement under headings relating to the *Learning Covenant*;
- **Ministries Support Network Facilitator:** the Facilitator will comment briefly on the candidate's performance and engagement in the group over the year, and whether he/she has attended the requisite number of meetings
- **College:** the College will complete a report (where applicable) under the direction of the Principal / Master. This may be delegated to those members of College staff who have had direct knowledge and experience of the candidate during the year

- **Ministries Council:** on receipt of the above reports, a member of staff (normally the one in whose care the candidate has been placed throughout the year) will prepare a draft review report. This draft will be circulated with other reports to all parties for discussion, amendment and adoption at the Annual Review meeting.

The aims of all reports should be to:

- give affirmation to the candidate for achievement;
- identify any areas for potential future development;
- note any concerns either already resolved during the year, or still outstanding.

It is important to emphasise that, within the boundaries of normal confidentiality, *all* reports are open to all parties involved in the Annual Review process.

There are 6 sets of Requirements that a candidate must meet:-

I Academic Requirements

Every candidate has a course prescribed for them by the Candidates' Task Group.

The Course

12. (1) Immediately following acceptance as a candidate, each candidate shall, for the purposes of section 13(a) below, have a course prescribed by the Training Task Group from amongst the following Courses: **Course A** shall be followed by candidates who possess a degree (or equivalent qualification recognized by the Council for that purpose) in a discipline other than theology; and shall consist of three years' full-time undergraduate study at an accredited institution leading to the attainment of the BD degree.

Course B shall be followed by candidates who do not possess a degree (or equivalent qualification recognized by the Council for that purpose); and shall consist of four years' full-time undergraduate study at an accredited institution leading to the attainment of the BD degree.

Course C shall be followed by candidates who possess a degree (or equivalent qualification) in theology from a recognised institution; and shall normally consist of two years' full-time postgraduate study at an accredited institution, being a course approved in advance by the Committee.

Course D shall be followed by candidates currently studying theology in the School of Divinity (however termed) at an accredited institution and having at least two years' study still to complete; and shall normally consist of two years' full-time undergraduate study at that School leading to the completion of the degree.

Course E shall be followed by candidates currently studying theology in the School of Divinity (however termed) at an accredited institution and having one year's study still to complete; and shall consist of one year's full-time undergraduate study at that School leading to the completion of the degree and one year's full-time postgraduate study at the same or another accredited institution, being a course approved in advance by the Committee.

Candidates for the Diaconate and Ordained Local Ministry also have academic requirements. In the case of the Diaconate this is prescribed by the Candidates' Task Group. For the Ordained Local Ministry a Certificate in Christian Studies is required prior to Ordination and a diploma post-ordination. This is done through distance learning with Aberdeen University or Highland Theological College.

2 Placements

Every candidate for the full-time ordained ministry and the Diaconate is required to complete **4** placements during their training. Two of these are part-time during the academic session (i.e. October to Pentecost); one is a 10-week full-time summer placement and the final placement, which commences after the completion of academic education, is a 15-month full-time probationary placement. Ordained Local Ministry candidates complete three placements, two of six months and 3 hours a week plus a Sunday and a third twelve month placement of 10 hours plus a Sunday.

GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF THE PLACEMENT SCHEME

- I. As part of the Church requirements, four placements shall be undertaken by the candidate and must be completed to the satisfaction of the Training Task Group.
 - (a) Three of these placements shall normally take place during the academic course; two of these periods of placement work shall be part-time, from 1 October to Pentecost, and last not less than 25 weeks (see note one). The third period of placement work shall be full-time in the summer for not less than ten weeks. Holidays during term-time placements should be negotiated between the candidate and his/her supervising minister, however, the time spent working in the placement should last not less than the 25 weeks period aforementioned. The full-time summer placement should normally be completed prior to the start of the compulsory candidates' conference at the end of August. Holidays will therefore have to be arranged appropriately to accommodate this. The normal holiday entitlement during the summer placement is two weeks. These three placements will be arranged within the three year period prior to the candidate's expected completion of academic studies.

PLACEMENTS

In setting work, supervisors should at all times take account of the pattern of the academic year (which varies from University to University) and allow a certain leeway around the time when a candidate has exams. This is particularly important in first placements where candidates are coming to terms with a number of significant changes in their lives not least of which is the return to, or the beginning of, full-time study.

- (a) The candidate and supervisor must ensure that one of the part-time placements will involve Advent/Christmas and the other Lent/Holy Week/Easter, as an expected minimum involvement. That both should involve both is preferable. In each of these part-time placements, the candidate shall preach on a **maximum of six occasions** and be involved regularly in worship. Included in the **six times** when she/he may preach are to be **three full** services conducted in the presence of his or her supervisor.
- (b) Involvement in parish work/hospital/chaplaincy/other form of ministry will comprise **no more** than a Sunday and two 3½ hour sessions per week from 1 October until Pentecost, a total of 10 hours per week. It should be noted, however, that post-Easter there may be need for extra time off to accommodate exams. Time for worship leadership/event leadership and preparation will be included in the 3½ hour sessions. The completion date may, however, be negotiated to finish earlier than Pentecost to allow the candidate to commence a summer placement immediately after his/her examinations are over. **Please note that attendance at Ministries Training Network meetings (1 per month) is also included in the placement hours.**
- (c) Arrangements for a summer placement of 10 weeks shall be made to allow for candidates to prepare and attend any re-sit examinations. It will comprise a 40-hour week and involve the leadership of worship on Sundays where appropriate*. Candidates will be expected to participate in a variety of pastoral duties. Time to prepare for worship and other responsibilities will be included in the hours worked with at least one full day off per week in agreement with the supervising minister. (see note two) The ten weeks may be split, by prior arrangement, in a 4:6, 5:5, or 6:4 week arrangement with a maximum of two weeks vacation. Candidates must not be unsupervised for longer than one week during this placement.
- (d) Candidates on placement should not expect to be able to offer their services for pulpit supply during the term of the contract.
- (e) The final full-time placement of 15 months will commence on the first day of July, August, September or October in the year of graduation; in exceptional circumstances the Task Group

shall have power to vary this arrangement. A Final Review Meeting will take place at 12 months, at which it shall be decided whether the placement can be sustained and whether the candidate is fit to be ordained in due course. Only after this approval is given, will he/she be able to apply to charges and preach as sole nominee. Where such approval has been given, the Training Task Group shall satisfy itself that the requirements of sections 13-17 of THE ACT have been fulfilled. The Ministries Council will then issue an Exit Certificate upon completion of the fifteen month placement. No-one will be inducted prior to the end of 15 months. (see note three) (Applications for vacant charges can be submitted after 12 months)

- (f) The Bible Portfolio has been replaced by the Ministries Training Network, a series of regional meetings designed to enable candidates to meet together for worship, peer support and learning. The written work from these meetings forms the basis of a portfolio of work which demonstrates the Candidate's integration of theory and practice and will be assessed by an independent assessor. Time to attend MTN meetings is offset against time on placement and so should be included in the duties for the relevant week.

CANDIDATES PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

The suggested process is at best a guideline. It is often the case that supervising ministers cannot offer all facilities to a student and it may therefore be appropriate to involve a neighbouring minister. If, for instance, there is no school within a parish but there is one in a neighbouring parish the minister who is chaplain might be approached and asked to assist. Alternatively the placement may offer specialist experience not covered below. The student's ability and previous experience should also inform the process.

1ST AUTUMN PLACEMENT

WORSHIP	PASTORAL	INTERNAL ORGANISATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic use of the Lectionary • Sermon construction and preparation • Structure of prayers - available resources • Thematic choice and use of hymns - suggested lists • Understanding and presentation of ONE major festival (either Easter or Christmas) • Divisions of the Christian Year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited pastoral work • Introduction to funeral/ bereavement process • Purpose and techniques of visiting - practice in straightforward congregational and parish work. • Mapping and understanding parish and environs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure of Church Courts and relationships • Role and function of Kirk Sessions • Understanding Kirk Session procedures and committee work. • Congregational Board procedures and committees.

2ND AUTUMN PLACEMENT

WORSHIP	PASTORAL	EXTERNAL ORGANISATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing breadth of prayer material and usage • Developing preaching skills • Concentration on other major festival • Speaking to older people • Reality of the Congregational Year • Speaking to children/ schools/nursing homes/ hospitals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage preparation and involvement • Hospital visiting • Being with terminally ill • Difficult funerals and conduct of funerals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presbytery discipline and committee structure – visits of presbytery. • Ecumenical relationships • Schools, role of minister/ chaplain in primary/ secondary

SUMMER PLACEMENT - PARISH

WORSHIP	PASTORAL	EXTERNAL ORGANISATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing breadth of prayer material and usage • Developing preaching skills • Developing worship leadership skills • Contemporary worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holiday club if appropriate • More intensive pastoral work • Residential Homes and hospital visiting • Responsibility for funerals if opportunity presents • Chaplaincies (Hospital, Hospice, Industrial etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish organisation and administration • Kirk Session organisation • Team work if possible

SUMMER PLACEMENT – HOSPITAL

WORSHIP	PASTORAL	TEAM WORK	OTHER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading worship where appropriate or possible • Prayers at the bedside • Liturgies for a variety of common situations e.g. blessing a still-born baby 	Experience different areas of the hospital e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General wards • Psychiatric • Intensive care unit • Maternity Ward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bereavement care e.g. dealing with relatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working as part of a multi-disciplinary team • Working with a specialist Chaplaincy team • Working in a multi-faith situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management • Theological reflection

PROBATIONARY PLACEMENT (after completion of degree studies)

WORSHIP	PASTORAL	ADMINISTRATION	OTHER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theology and practice of the Sacraments • Long term service planning • Contemporary worship • Other festivals, Harvest, Remembrance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honing of pastoral skills • Children's work • Weekend retreats • Person to person skills • Personal support in place • Increased responsibility for funerals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immersion in ministerial routine • Visit to General Assembly • Team development • Flexible prioritisation • Minutiae of the desk. • Time Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and encouragement of the "search" process • Reflection on all aspects of ministry and theology • Schools

PLACEMENT STRUCTURE

Stage	Description	Needs
First placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependant on supervision • Anxious about being evaluated • Diffidence about making professional judgements • Focused on content, task detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure • Information • Teaching • Constructive and regular feedback • encouragement
Second Placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluctuate between autonomy and dependence • Over confident v overwhelmed • Less simplistic engage with complexity • Owning the role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom to test out • Space to learn from mistakes • Reflection on realities and constraints • High support and high challenge or; • do things better, do things differently, do different things
Third Placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased professional confidence • Sees wider context • Can generalise and reflect on learning and skills • Supervision more collaborative and challenging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom to initiate • Further professional development • To be stretched and challenged • Danger of boredom
Probation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional maturity • Can articulate professional knowledge and insight to others • Increased self-awareness of strengths and gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be given wider responsibility • To have experience utilised • Less frequent supervision

SUPERVISOR'S ROLE AND THE PORTFOLIO

INTRODUCTION

Few can doubt that the pressures on Parish Minister today are unlike any from the past. Not only are the range of skills required increasing but the days when she or he could count on the support of knowledgeable office-bearers can no longer be taken for granted. As a result, a minister is very much the hub church management, leadership and communications as well as more traditional tasks. Moreover, this unprecedentedly wide spectrum of tasks must be performed against a background where outreach and mission to an increasingly individualistic parish can never have had a greater priority.

Recognising both the challenges and the opportunities in ministry to 21st Century Scotland, a key set of skills and the training objectives necessary to deliver them has been identified for both full-time and part-time Ordained Ministers by the Church of Scotland's Ministries Council. These form the basis of this Training Portfolio and indeed future assessment of the candidate's successful training.

These tasks are not required to be completed within one placement, but rather are to be accomplished over the relatively long period of all placements and Probation. Ultimately, it may not be possible to demonstrate competence in all the skills proposed. However, even the opportunity to discuss a skill with your candidate would impart valuable information for the future; a lead that could be quickly followed up when encountering a challenge in the early years after ordination. Moreover, the provision of the whole skills-set may also prompt as yet unconsidered avenues for exploration and reflection.

The candidates' portfolio is a method of recording their learning, both for reflection and to assess their progress. It takes the place of the Candidate Appraisal form which previously was completed by every candidate after every placement. Candidates found these forms repetitive and not altogether helpful and it is hoped that the portfolio will be a more personal and therefore more useful document recording learning undertaken, achievements and facilitating the identification of training needs. As it will follow the candidate throughout the entire period of training there is no need to address all the elements of each section in every placement. Indeed, they may reach the end of training with some areas left unaddressed however after each placement there should be evidence of good and broad experience under each of the headings.

Using the Portfolio - An overview

As already mentioned, the Training Portfolio contains a comprehensive skills set to assist in meeting the challenges of early ministry.

Laid out in the Record Section, each of these has an overall heading and three related columns. These are:

Heading - This gives the overall domain in which the skill lies and there are 8 such domains for Full-time Ministry and 7 for Ordained Local Ministry.

Area Column - This gives a more specific skills grouping and scope for the specific skill to be learned & demonstrated.

Task Column - The specific task that will define the skill that is being learned and assessed. This is occasionally accompanied a brief guidance note.

Progress Comment Column - This is the space for comments to be made, usually by the candidate and signed off by the supervisor, as to how well a skill has been demonstrated. In some cases (e.g. Church Law) this may be a one-off assessment after a course and can be marked as completed. However, most other entries in this column (e.g. draft prayers) will be a record of ongoing performance and should be filled in with pencil to allow future updating as attachments and the probation period progress. Clearly there is insufficient room for detailed comment; such comment should be entered into the final report by the supervisor and into the presentation at annual review by the candidate. Instead an 'aid memoire' is more appropriate.

Entries in this column constitute part of the provision of evidence of satisfactory skills performance.

The overall principle in using the Portfolio effectively is to see it as a living document helping the student and supervisor keep an overview of the development of the necessary skills for ministry that will be fully demonstrable at the end of training.

The Portfolio's role in Assessment

The Portfolio has a number of roles in assessment:

Self-Assessment. A frequent survey of the Portfolio and updating by students will give a clear view of what standard needs to be demonstrated in a skill and also a sense of progress to their overall training.

Supervisor Assessment. A regular viewing of a Portfolio will assist in gaining a feel for a student's achievements in previous attachments, a reminder of current skills performance and indicator of areas yet to be addressed.

Review Assessment. It is planned that the Portfolio will play a key role in National Assessment at Reviews. To that end the Portfolio will be presented to the Assessors shortly before the actual meeting and then the Student will give a brief presentation on their progress in their attachment based on their skills achievement.

General Guidance Notes

Role of Student

With regards this Training Portfolio, the student is required to:

- Understand its structure
- The different types of record or evidence each section requires
- Discuss with supervisor current performance each skill against the given criteria
- Gather evidence from all other training activities including retaining essays, sermons, reports of pastoral encounters and personal plans
- Routinely survey the portfolio to ensure that it gives an accurate statement of the current level of competence and progress in learning

In terms of the assessment process the student is required to:

- Be familiar with the each skill he/she is self- assessing
- Know the criteria for assessment
- Collect the evidence of a current training outcome or, with the agreement of the Supervisor, a learning experience from the past which gave rise to a current competence
- Evaluate the evidence using the relevant criteria
- Make a personal assessment decision whether the evidence or performance meets the assessment criteria and discuss with Supervisor

Role of Supervisor

The supervisor's role includes coaching, mentoring and assessment.

Supervision in the sense of coaching is a form of learning requiring a more experienced individual providing and sharing their knowledge directly with the individual. This training method usually provides the most direct approach to acquiring knowledge and is most appropriate for skills-based instruction. When combined with a comprehensive and structured learning programme, coaching is one of the best methods of reinforcing new habits.

Supervision in terms of 'mentoring' is a one-to-one relationship based on encouragement, constructive comments, openness, mutual trust, respect, and a willingness to learn and share. It exists between a more

experienced minister and a less experienced student. The mentor is a model, a motivator and a counsellor to the learner. The mentor's responsibilities include:

- Helping the student set long-term career goals and short-term learning objectives
- Helping the student understand the organisational culture
- Recommending and/or creating learning opportunities
- Transferring knowledge in the designated skills domains (c.f. Portfolio) and generic areas such as communication, critical thinking, responsibility, flexibility, and teamwork
- Pointing out strengths and areas for development
- Answering any questions
- Aiding reflection
- Providing guidance on personal matters

In terms of the assessment process the role of the Assessor is to:

- Inform the learner further about skills laid down in the Portfolio
- Support and guide the learner in the collection of evidence
- Help the learner develop and use their self-assessment abilities
- Ensure that the Portfolio is being used to indicate necessary skills and their performance criteria
- Conduct the skill performance assessments and provide feedback
- Ensure that the Portfolio's recording requirements have been met
- Engage with the National Assessment process by ensuring timely rendering of reports that are accurate, frank and fair

Guidance on the Evidential Sections

The entire Portfolio is a collection of different types of evidence relating to the work being assessed. As already stated, the key evidence of skill's performance is the notes made in the 'Progress Comment' column, but it should also include a selection of the actual work completed by the learner.

When compiling the entire Portfolio, the learners should bear in mind that learning occurs in the following areas:

- Formal education & training programmes
- Formal and informal on the job education and training
- Self-study for enjoyment
- Informal experience gained in the workplace or community
- Non-formal in-house education and training

Whilst the supervisor and student may jointly plan the Portfolio's evidence, it is important to bear in mind that it is the **learner's** responsibility to collect the evidence and compile the portfolio.

The type of evidence required will be determined by current Ministries Council guidelines.

Ultimately, the guiding principle is the continuous development of a balanced portfolio which will then be assessed according to its:

- **V**alidity
- **A**uthenticity
- **C**urrency
- **C**onsistency
- **S**ufficiency

List of Competencies: Full-time candidates for Word and Sacrament

WORSHIP

Reference	Task
Full service of worship	<p>Draft and adapt prayers suitable for a wide range of liturgical and worshippers' contexts</p> <p>Deliver sermons and worship elements effectively in a wide range of context and acoustic environments.</p> <p>Describe liturgical structures and the appropriate time allocation for elements of worship.</p> <p>Explain the place, range and selection of appropriate hymns and church music</p> <p>Discuss with supervisor assisted by the Church's Organist, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hymnaries • Children's music • Anthems • Other musical items <p>Lead effective and appropriate elements of worship for different ages of young people.</p> <p>Lead and retain a record of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's addresses • Youth talks • All-age items • Primary School talk • Secondary School address
Shorter act of worship	<p>Describe the types and purposes of shorter acts of worship</p> <p>Discuss, and where possible lead, a wide range of worship events such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayer Groups • Informal communions • <i>Ad hoc</i> services • Youth services • Services for such organisations (e.g. Guild) <p>Demonstrate use of resources for shorter acts of worship</p> <p>Research, amend and utilise a range of materials.</p> <p>Discuss various leadership styles and group settings for short acts of worship</p> <p>Prepare and lead worship appropriately in a range of chaplaincy contexts (e.g. schools)</p> <p>Identify liturgies associated with pastoral care including healing</p>
Ecumenical context	<p>Discuss worship practices of key ecumenical partners.</p> <p>Discuss the liturgical focus of the Reformed tradition and that of the Anglican and RC churches.</p> <p>Where possible take part in an ecumenical religious event particularly worship.</p>
Funeral service	<p>Identify the pastoral objectives of the funeral service</p> <p>Explain how these pastoral objectives are met</p>

	<p>Explain the differing roles of minister and funeral director</p> <p>Perform a pre-funeral visit and discuss with family their wishes and Christian theology and practice</p> <p>Manage with Funeral Directors the programme and requirements of the service</p> <p>Conduct funeral services in crematorium, funeral room, graveside and church settings</p> <p>Explain the specific pastoral issues associated with services for young people and children</p> <p>Explain the role of ritual and remembering in contexts of grief and loss</p>
Holy Communion	<p>Describe the role of the sacrament of communion and its theology</p> <p>Describe the range of Christian understandings of Communion</p> <p>Conduct a communion service in accordance with one form in Book of Common Order</p> <p>Conduct an appropriate 'home communion'</p> <p>Plan a membership course for new communicants</p>
Infant Baptism	<p>Discuss the sacrament of baptism and its theology, adult and children's</p> <p>Discuss the liturgy of baptism</p> <p>Explain the necessary discussions and possible issues with parents of children presented for baptism</p> <p>Discuss the sacrament of baptism and its theology</p>
Adult baptism	<p>Discuss the liturgy of baptism</p> <p>Describe the instruction necessary to an adult wishing baptism</p>
Wedding ceremony	<p>Explain the legal requirements for marriage services</p> <p>Describe one form of wedding liturgy from the Book of Common Order</p> <p>Explain the necessary discussions and issues with couples seeking a Christian marriage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divorced • Prior Children • Denominations • Inter-faith
Alternative forms of worship	<p>Outline new and emerging forms of worship</p> <p>Give examples of alternative forms of worship led and their contexts</p> <p>Appraise a congregation's potential to develop in worship</p> <p>Draft a plan to develop a congregation's calling and capabilities in worship</p> <p>Draft and adapt worship materials, concepts and reflection for a variety of contexts</p> <p>Manage, lead and contribute to worship in a wide variety of styles</p> <p>Appraise the impact, effectiveness and value of worship items and services.</p>
General worship Leadership abilities and skills	<p>Manage congregations to worship in a wide range of contexts</p> <p>Be able to encourage a spiritual environment conducive to worship</p> <p>Demonstrate the nurturing, enablement and coordination of contributions by others to worship</p>

<h2>Mission</h2>	
Area Title	Objective
Marginalised & Poor	<p>Explain the gospel imperative for the most marginalised.</p> <p>Explain how the Bible may be read in contexts of oppression and marginalisation</p> <p>Describe the Church's engagement with issues of justice in Scotland.</p> <p>Describe the Church's engagement with issues of justice in global context.</p> <p>Explain the Church's engagement with issues of justice in a historical context.</p> <p>Explain the economic and other forces behind issues of poverty and injustice.</p>
Role of mission in the contemporary church	Demonstrate an in depth understanding of missional theology.
Mission in a range of contexts	<p>Summarise the history of mission in Contemporary Scotland.</p> <p>Summarise mission in international contexts.</p>
Mission course materials and methods	<p>Describe the range of mission instructional approaches and materials.</p> <p>Retain some examples with comments in this folder.</p>
Lead and assess missional courses	Lead one missional course and assess its impact and relevance in its context.
School Chaplaincy	<p>Describe the Scottish Government guidelines on Religious Observance.</p> <p>Lead a primary school based act of Religious Observance.</p> <p>Lead a secondary school based act of Religious Observance.</p>
Minister within a multi-cultural society	Demonstrate a sensitivity within a religiously diverse context.
Minister in a range of geographical contexts	Summarise mission within urban and rural contexts.
Debate faith, science and religious issues	Outline how current theology and sociology are engaging with science.
Mission and ministry in specific settings	<p>Identify the challenges and possibilities in ministry/ mission in rural areas.</p> <p>Identify the challenges and possibilities in ministry/mission in priority areas in urban context.</p>
Facilitate congregation's widest involvement with its community	Identify methods for community engagement and partnership.
<h2>Pastoral</h2>	
Area	Objective
General pastoral visitation	<p>Explain pastoral care in terms of encounter, reflection and narrative.</p> <p>Describe relevant approaches in a wide variety of pastoral situations.</p> <p>Observe a range of pastoral visits and discuss approaches.</p>
Pastoral visitation of the unwell	<p>Identify specific issues and counselling approaches to the unwell with regards power, health and body.</p> <p>Summarise pastoral issues surrounding those in palliative care.</p> <p>Describe the particular problems in providing pastoral care to those with dementia.</p> <p>Describe the particular problems in providing pastoral care to those with mental illnesses including addictions.</p>

Pastoral visitation of the bereaved	Summarise pastoral issues and possible approaches to those bereaved. Summarise stages of bereavement and rituals of remembering.
Ministry in cases of domestic Abuse	Identify the role of ministers in cases of domestic abuse and the remit of other agencies.
Other pastoral issues and their counselling	Summarise other pastoral issues and possible counselling approaches. Summarise boundaries to clergy's pastoral care and relevant authorities for referral.

Church Management

Area	Objective
The work of CofS courts and committees	Describe the CofS Court and committee structures.
The 'management structure' of congregations	Describe the usual 'management structure' of congregations. Summarise Presbyterian/reformed theology.
Protection of vulnerable Groups	Recall accurately Child and vulnerable adult protection procedures and issues. Undertake the Church's Vulnerable Person Protection Course
Health and Safety issues.	Summarise methods of dealing with Health and safety issues arising for staff and building users.
Key ecumenical partners	Summarise the constitutions & practices of the Church of Scotland's ecumenical partners.
Chairing and contributing to congregational committees/ groups	Attend and chair a Congregational Board/Kirk Session under supervision.
Strategic planning in Organisations	Summarise the methods of strategic planning in organisations
Methods and 'pitfalls' in management in the voluntary sector	Explain the possible issues and approaches when working with volunteers
Methods of conflict Management	Describe methods of conflict management
Methods of managing change	Describe methods of managing change.
Role of being a line manager	Summarise duties and responsibilities of a staff line manager
Have a broad grasp of resource management and available resources	Discuss resource management and available resources Summarise congregational financial controls and requirements of OSCR.

Geographical and social context on Church Management	Summarise the differing issues surrounding rural, urban and priority parishes
The pastoral role and role of other agencies	Discuss the interface and possible conflicts with other agencies in pastoral cases (e.g. police, social services)

Leadership

Area	Objective
Principles of leadership	Describe leadership styles and functions
Methods of teamwork	Describe team building strategies and approaches Lead a small team to a successful conclusion of a task Summarise strategies in team ministries
Delegation and supervision	Describe strategies for successful via delegation
Nurture and enable leadership in others	Describe methods for developing leadership skills in congregational members

Communications

Area	Objective
Parish ministers & local bodies	Summarise likely interactions with local ecumenical, voluntary and statutory bodies (e.g. NHS, local government and national government)
Internet and multimedia communication	Author digitally projected presentations Describe the purpose of and issues related to Church- based websites, individual websites (e.g. blogs) and social media
Traditional communication with congregation and parish	Write a pastoral letter for a parish magazine Author/select suitable reflective material for a weekly Order of Service

Discipleship

Area	Objective
Theological understandings of Christian growth and discipleship	Describe different theological understandings of Christian growth and discipleship
Church membership classes	Lead a church membership course
House Group concepts and leadership methods	Summarise current House Group concepts and leadership methods
Lead a Bible study	Facilitate a Contextual Bible study
Youth and elderly ministries	Explain principles and methods of youth and elderly ministries
Children's ministry concepts and leadership	Describe approaches, constraints and resources for different ages of young people

methods	
Other specialist ministries	Describe principles, methods and opportunities for ministries to other groups including chaplaincies

Personal

Area	Objective
Time management strategies	Implement good time management principles
Personal spirituality	Maintain a journal related to personal spirituality
Personal reflectiveness on ministry	Maintain a journal reflecting on personal ministry (as per above)
Personal development	Draft a 5 year personal development plan
Personal development resources	Summarise the elements of CofS Study Leave Scheme and other development assistance
Life balance issues	Describe potential life balance issues and methods of resolution
Sense of call	Summarise all forms of ministries including parish ministry
Commitments and empowerment of ordination vows	Explore vows of ordination

List of Competencies: Full-time Diaconal candidates

WORSHIP

Reference	Task
Full service of worship	<p>Draft and adapt prayers suitable for a wide range of liturgical and worshippers' contexts</p> <p>Deliver sermons and worship elements effectively in a wide range of context and acoustic environments.</p> <p>Describe liturgical structures and the appropriate time allocation for elements of worship.</p> <p>Lead effective and appropriate elements of worship for different ages of young people.</p> <p>Lead and retain a record of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children's addresses ● Youth talks ● All-age items ● Primary School talk ● Secondary School address
Shorter act of worship	<p>Describe the types and purposes of shorter acts of worship</p> <p>Discuss, and where possible lead, a wide range of worship events such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prayer Groups ● Informal communions ● <i>Ad hoc</i> services ● Youth services ● Services for such organisations (e.g. Guild) <p>Demonstrate use of resources for shorter acts of worship</p> <p>Research, amend and utilise a range of materials.</p> <p>Discuss various leadership styles and group settings for short acts of worship</p> <p>Prepare and lead worship appropriately in a range of chaplaincy contexts (e.g. schools)</p> <p>Identify liturgies associated with pastoral care including healing</p>
Ecumenical context	Where possible take part in an ecumenical religious event particularly worship.
Funeral service	<p>Identify the pastoral objectives of the funeral service</p> <p>Explain how these pastoral objectives are met</p> <p>Explain the differing roles of minister and funeral director</p> <p>Perform a pre-funeral visit and discuss with family their wishes and Christian theology and practice</p> <p>Manage with Funeral Directors the programme and requirements of the service</p> <p>Conduct funeral services in crematorium, funeral room, graveside and church settings</p> <p>Explain the specific pastoral issues associated with services for young people and children</p>

	Explain the role of ritual and remembering in contexts of grief and loss
Wedding ceremony	Explain the legal requirements for marriage services Describe one form of wedding liturgy from the Book of Common Order Explain the necessary discussions and issues with couples seeking a Christian marriage Divorced Prior Children Denominations Inter-faith
Alternative forms of worship	Outline new and emerging forms of worship Give examples of alternative forms of worship led and their contexts Appraise a congregation's potential to develop in worship Draft a plan to develop a congregation's calling and capabilities in worship Draft and adapt worship materials, concepts and reflection for a variety of contexts Manage, lead and contribute to worship in a wide variety of styles Appraise the impact, effectiveness and value of worship items and services.
Mission	
Area Title	Objective
Marginalised & Poor	Explain the gospel imperative for the most marginalised. Explain how the Bible may be read in contexts of oppression and marginalisation Describe the Church's engagement with issues of justice in Scotland. Describe the Church's engagement with issues of justice in global context. Explain the Church's engagement with issues of justice in a historical context. Explain the economic and other forces behind issues of poverty and injustice.
Role of mission in the contemporary church	Demonstrate an in depth understanding of missional theology.
Mission in a range of contexts	Summarise the history of mission in Contemporary Scotland. Summarise mission in international contexts.
Mission course materials and methods	Describe the range of mission instructional approaches and materials. Retain some examples with comments in this folder.
Lead and assess missional courses	Lead one missional course and assess its impact and relevance in its context.
School Chaplaincy	Describe the Scottish Government guidelines on Religious Observance. Lead a primary school based act of Religious Observance. Lead a secondary school based act of Religious Observance.
Minister within a multi-cultural society	Demonstrate a sensitivity within a religiously diverse context.
Minister in a range of geographical contexts	Summarise mission within urban and rural contexts.
Debate faith, science and religious issues	Outline how current theology and sociology are engaging with science.
Mission and ministry in specific settings	Identify the challenges and possibilities in ministry/ mission in rural areas. Identify the challenges and possibilities in ministry/mission in priority areas in urban context.

Facilitate congregation's widest involvement with its community	Identify methods for community engagement and partnership.
Pastoral	
Area	Objective
General pastoral visitation	Explain pastoral care in terms of encounter, reflection and narrative. Describe relevant approaches in a wide variety of pastoral situations. Observe a range of pastoral visits and discuss approaches.
Pastoral visitation of the unwell	Identify specific issues and counselling approaches to the unwell with regards power, health and body. Summarise pastoral issues surrounding those in palliative care. Describe the particular problems in providing pastoral care to those with dementia. Describe the particular problems in providing pastoral care to those with mental illnesses including addictions.
Pastoral visitation of the bereaved	Summarise pastoral issues and possible approaches to those bereaved. Summarise stages of bereavement and rituals of remembering.
Ministry in cases of domestic abuse	Identify the role of deacons in cases of domestic abuse and the remit of other agencies.
Other pastoral issues and their counselling	Summarise other pastoral issues and possible counselling approaches. Summarise boundaries to deacons's pastoral care and relevant authorities for referral.
Church Management	
Area	Objective
The work of CofS courts and committees	Describe the CofS Court and committee structures.
The 'management structure' of congregations	Describe the usual 'management structure' of congregations. Summarise Presbyterian/reformed theology.
Protection of vulnerable groups	Recall accurately Child and vulnerable adult protection procedures and issues. Undertake the Church's Vulnerable Person Protection Course
Health and Safety issues.	Summarise methods of dealing with Health and safety issues arising for staff and building users.
Key ecumenical partners	Summarise the constitutions & practices of the Church of Scotland's ecumenical partners.
Chairing and contributing to congregational committees/ groups	Attend a meeting of the Congregational Board/Kirk Session. Reflect on the role of the Deacon in relation to these groups.
Methods and 'pitfalls' in management in the voluntary sector	Explain the possible issues and approaches when working with volunteers

Methods of conflict Management	Describe methods of conflict management
Methods of managing change	Describe methods of managing change.
Have a broad grasp of resource management and available resources	Discuss resource management and available resources Summarise congregational financial controls and requirements of OSCR.
Geographical and social context on Church Management	Summarise the differing issues surrounding rural, urban and priority parishes
The pastoral role and role of other agencies	Discuss the interface and possible conflicts with other agencies in pastoral cases (e.g. police, social services)

Leadership

Area	Objective
Principles of leadership	Describe leadership styles and functions
Methods of teamwork	Describe team building strategies and approaches Lead a small team to a successful conclusion of a task Summarise strategies in team ministries
Delegation	Describe strategies for successful task completion via delegation
Nurture and enable leadership in others	Describe methods for developing leadership skills in congregational members

Communications

Area	Objective
Deacons & local bodies	Summarise likely interactions with local ecumenical, voluntary and statutory bodies (e.g. NHS, local government and national government)
Internet and multimedia communication	Author digitally projected presentations Describe the purpose of and issues related to Church- based websites, individual websites (e.g. blogs) and social media
Traditional communication with congregation and parish	Write a pastoral letter for a parish magazine Author/select suitable reflective material for a weekly Order of Service

Discipleship

Area	Objective
Theological understandings of Christian growth and discipleship	Describe different theological understandings of Christian growth and discipleship

House Group concepts and leadership methods	Summarise current House Group concepts and leadership methods
Lead a Bible study	Facilitate a Contextual Bible study
Youth and elderly ministries	Explain principles and methods of youth and elderly ministries
Children's ministry concepts and leadership methods	Describe approaches, constraints and resources for different ages of young people
Other specialist ministries	Describe principles, methods and opportunities for ministries to other groups including chaplaincies

Personal

Area	Objective
Time management strategies	Implement good time management principles
Personal spirituality	Maintain a journal related to personal spirituality
Personal reflectiveness on ministry	Maintain a journal reflecting on personal ministry (as per above)
Personal development	Draft a 5 year personal development plan
Life balance issues	Describe potential life balance issues and methods of resolution
Sense of call	Summarise all forms of ministries including the Diaconal ministry
Commitments and empowerment of ordination vows	Explore vows of ordination

List of Competencies: OLM candidates

WORSHIP

Reference	Task
Full service of worship	<p>Draft and adapt prayers suitable for liturgical and worshippers' contexts</p> <p>Draft and deliver sermons with sound structure and theology appropriate to context.</p> <p>Discuss liturgical structures and the appropriate time allocation of service elements.</p>
Shorter act of worship	<p>Identify types and purposes of shorter acts of worship</p> <p>Identify resources available for shorter acts of worship</p> <p>Explore various leadership styles and group settings for short acts of worship</p>
Ecumenical context	<p>Demonstrate a broad knowledge of worship practices of key ecumenical partners.</p>
Funeral service	<p>Identify the roles of a funeral service</p> <p>Draft and select suitable materials for use during the funeral service</p> <p>Conduct a pre-funeral visit and discuss with family their wishes and Christian theology and practice</p> <p>Coordinate with Funeral Directors the programme and requirements of the service</p> <p>Conduct funeral services in both crematorium and church settings</p> <p>Discuss the specific pastoral issues associated with services for young people and children</p>
Holy Communion	<p>Demonstrate a basic understanding of the sacrament of communion</p> <p>Explore the various congregational views on communion</p> <p>Explore differing liturgies for communion</p> <p>Conduct, as much as is allowable, a communion service in accordance with one form in Book of Common Order</p> <p>Conduct, as much as is allowable, an appropriate 'home communion'</p> <p>Outline necessary preparative steps for new communicants</p> <p>Conduct a communion service in accordance with one form in Book of Common Order</p> <p>Conduct an appropriate 'home communion'</p> <p>Outline necessary steps for new communicants for new communicants</p>
Infant Baptism	<p>Demonstrate a basic understanding of the sacrament of baptism</p> <p>Demonstrate a sound knowledge of the liturgy of baptism</p> <p>Outline necessary discussions and possible issues with parents of children presented for baptism</p> <p>Discuss the sacrament of baptism and its theology</p>
Adult baptism	<p>Demonstrate a basic understanding of the sacrament of baptism</p> <p>Demonstrate a sound knowledge of the liturgy of baptism</p> <p>Outline instruction necessary to an adult wishing baptism</p>

Wedding ceremony	Recall the legal requirements for marriage services Describe one form of wedding liturgy from the Book of Common Order Outline necessary discussions and issues with couples seeking a Christian marriage
Alternative forms of worship	Explore various styles, liturgies and presentational methods during worship
Mission	
Area	Objective
Mission in the contemporary church	Demonstrate a understanding of missional theology
Modern & traditional methods of mission in a range of contexts	Demonstrate a knowledge of mission practices
Mission course materials & methods	Demonstrate a knowledge of mission instructional approaches & materials
Pastoral	
Area	Objective
General Pastoral Visitation	Explain pastoral care in terms of encounter, reflection & narrative Describe relevant approaches in a variety of pastoral situations Observe a range of pastoral visits & discuss techniques
Pastoral visitation of the unwell	Identify specific issues & counselling approaches to the unwell with regards power, health & body Outline pastoral issues surrounding those in palliative care
Pastoral visitation of the bereaved	Outline pastoral issues & possible approaches to those bereaved Outline stages of bereavement & rituals of remembering
Other pastoral issues & their counselling	Outline other pastoral issues & possible counselling approaches
Church Management	
Area	Objective
Church Law, practices and procedures	Recall specified areas of Church Law, practices and procedures
Management in key ecumenical partners	Outline the church structures & management practices in ecumenical partners
Protection of vulnerable groups	Recall Child & Vulnerable Adult protection procedures & define issues
Health & Safety issues with Church premises	Outline methods of dealing with Health & Safety issues arising for staff & building users
'Management structure' of congregations	Describe the usual 'management structure' of congregations
Congregational committees/groups	Contribute & facilitate a Congregational Board/Kirk Session under supervision
Strategic planning in organisations	Outline the methods of strategic planning in organisations

Management in the voluntary sector	Demonstrate an understanding the possible issues & approaches when working with volunteers
Conflict management	Describe methods of conflict management
Managing change	Identify & appraise methods of managing change
Resource management and available resources	Demonstrate a broad grasp of resource management and available resources

Leadership

Area	Objective
Principles of leadership	Describe leadership styles & functions
Methods of teamwork	Describe team building strategies and approaches Demonstrate ability to lead a small team to a successful conclusion of a task
Facilitate leadership in others	Describe methods for developing leadership skills in congregational members Facilitate a small team project
Nurture and enable leadership in others	Describe methods for developing leadership skills in congregational members

Discipleship

Area	Objective
Church membership classes	Demonstrate the ability to lead a church membership course
House Groups	Outline current House Group concepts and leadership methods
Bible study	Lead a Bible study
Youth & elderly ministries	Discuss and explore youth & elderly ministries
Specialist ministries	Outline principles and methods of ministering to special groups (e.g. Chaplaincies)

Personal

Area	Objective
Personal time management	Demonstrate an implementation of time management
Personal spirituality	Draft/author a journal related to personal spirituality
Personal reflectiveness on ministry	Draft/author a journal reflecting on personal ministry (as per above)
Personal development	Draft a 5 year personal development plan
Life balance issues	Describe potential life balance issues & methods of resolution
Commitments and empowerment of ordination vows	Explore ordination vows

Sample Portfolio Page – Full-time Candidate

3 Pastoral		1
Area	Objective	Report
General pastoral visitation	<p>Explain pastoral care in terms of encounter, reflection and narrative.</p> <p>Describe relevant approaches in a wide variety of pastoral situations.</p> <p>Observe a range of pastoral visits and discuss approaches.</p>	
Pastoral visitation of the unwell	<p>Identify specific issues and counselling approaches to the unwell with regards power, health and body.</p> <p>Summarise pastoral issues surrounding those in palliative care.</p> <p>Describe the particular problems in providing pastoral care to those with dementia.</p> <p>Describe the particular problems in providing pastoral care to those with mental illnesses including addictions.</p>	
Pastoral visitation of the bereaved	<p>Summarise pastoral issues and possible approaches to those bereaved.</p> <p>Summarise stages of bereavement and rituals of remembering.</p>	
Ministry in cases of domestic abuse	<p>Identify the role of ministers in cases of domestic abuse and the remit other agencies.</p>	
Other pastoral issues and their counselling	<p>Summarise other pastoral issues and possible counselling approaches.</p> <p>Summarise boundaries to pastoral care and relevant authorities for referral</p>	

Sample Portfolio Page – Ordained Local Ministry

TOPIC	TASK	PROGRESS COMMENT
General Pastoral Visitation	Explain pastoral care in terms of encounter, reflection & narrative	
	Describe relevant approaches in a variety of pastoral situations	
	Observe a range of pastoral visits & discuss techniques	
Pastoral visitation of the unwell	Identify specific issues & counselling approaches to the unwell with regards power, health & body	
	Outline pastoral issues surrounding those in palliative care	
Pastoral visitation of the bereaved	Outline pastoral issues & possible approaches to those bereaved	
	Outline stages of bereavement & rituals of remembering	
Other pastoral issues & their counselling	Outline other pastoral issues & possible counselling approaches	

MINISTRIES TRAINING NETWORK

The Ministries Training Network is a series of regional meetings designed to enable candidates to meet together for worship, peer support and learning. The written work from these meetings forms the basis of a portfolio of work which demonstrates the Candidate's integration of theory and practice and will be assessed by an independent marker. The proposals for a Training Network for candidates, which were approved by the Ministries Council, were also approved by the General Assembly of 2007.

SEQUENCE OF MEETINGS

There will be one meeting per month, organised locally in groups of about 6 - 8 Candidates. These will be held between October and May and will be considered part of the placement. In addition Candidates will be required to journal – about 100 - 300 words per fortnight, reflecting on the placement experience if they are on placement, otherwise on any challenging worship, pastoral, academic experiences.

CONTENT OF MEETINGS

Meetings will consist of biblical/theological reflection and reflection on case studies/verbatim reports brought by each candidate in turn. Candidates will take it in turn to open in worship, leading once during the year. If there are more months than Candidates, the facilitator will lead in the remaining months.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment of development would be on the basis of growing spirituality, leadership skills and awareness of vocation. Once during the year candidates will be asked to reflect critically and theologically on externally provided material and such reflections would be assessed. The material will relate directly to the practice of ministry e.g. material on spirituality or leadership skills. Each candidate would be asked to submit their verbatim/case study (not assessed) alongside a critical commentary which would include theological reflection on it (assessed). These two exercises would amount to the assessed work in the year.

Journals will be submitted three times in the year and read by the facilitator who would identify training needs on the basis of observable development. Journals would be expected to show critical reflection on practice, the development of reflective skills, awareness of vocational process and the identification of learning needs. A short critical commentary on the journal would be appended by the candidate, identifying their own perceived learning needs. This is assessed

CANDIDATES CONFERENCE PROGRAMME CYCLE

The Ministries Council has devised a conference programme to complement the learning experience of both University and placements. These pre-ordination conferences are a compulsory part of training. They allow for a consistent and coherent programme to be followed by all candidates and also develop peer group formation from an early stage in training. They are designed to allow the candidates space for reflection, collaboration with fellow trainee ministers, encouragement and an increase in their sense of belonging to the Church.

Ordained Local Ministry candidates attend the weekend of the August Conference in each year of training, and a weekend conference in the spring.

There are conferences in August/September each year with a given theme and in the spring candidates go on retreat; candidates must complete the full Conference Cycle, details of which are set out below. In addition, in the Probationary Placement, all candidates will attend a further four conferences Ordained Local Ministry Candidates attend the 1st and 3rd conferences which are held at the weekend.

The full details and timing of these conferences are notified to candidates nearer the time. The next pages provide details of the overall structure of the conference programme.

The overall conference programme is rolled out over three years with three dedicated streams within each year: new candidates concentrate on Pastoral Care, 2nd year candidates on Worship and 3rd year candidates on Mission. In addition there are sessions on Church Law relating to these three areas of Church life and a number of plenary sessions which explore issues of significance to ministry in 21st century Scotland. Over the three years the following topics are covered in plenary:

Year A: Focus on Ministry: Being Presbyterian; Interfaith issues, Ecumenical issues, The Guild; Mission and Discipleship
 Year B: Focus on Ministry: Being Inclusive (a broad church); Disability Focus; World Mission; Church and Society
 Year C: Focus on Ministry: Power and Privilege and Use of Authority; Race; Gender; Ministries Council; Crossreach

In the spring the Ordained Local Ministry Candidates have a conference dedicated to their needs.

Spiritual Development

In the spring the full-time candidates have a 48 hour retreat in small groups.

Conference sessions on spirituality are part of the learning experience. Candidates are encouraged to read spiritual classics as part of their exploration of different forms of understanding of the character of ministry and the Church.

The Council will pay for the candidate to have a spiritual director during probation and into the first two year in ministry.

Issues around the provision of training, support and development of spiritual advisers are part of the ongoing work of the Council.

Church Law

It is a requirement for all candidates that they should have satisfactorily attended a course in Church Law. This is now provided as part of the Conferences, which candidates are required to attend. An essay, set by the Principal Clerk's Office, is the method of assessment.

SPEECH TRAINING

It is one of the Church requirements that a candidate must have satisfactory attendance at, and performance in, courses in speech training. This must be completed before entering into the final placement.

At present, instruction in speech training takes place at the Candidates' Conferences. At some point during placements, each candidate will be heard by either Mr Richard Ellis, Mrs Mary Stobo or Mrs Gwen Haggart on one occasion. Candidates are responsible for ensuring that this visit to hear them conduct worship and preach, and to give feedback to the candidate, takes place.

SUMMARY OF ACADEMIC STUDY, PLACEMENTS, PORTFOLIO AND CONFERENCES

YEAR ONE OF STUDY	
<u>Placement One</u> October to Pentecost At least 25 weeks Part-time (Sunday + 2 x 3.5 hours) Preach on at least 6 occasions (3 full services) <u>Must</u> include Advent/Christmas or Lent/Holy Week/Easter and preferably both Paperwork: Learning Covenant, Final Report, Portfolio	<u>Ministries Training Network</u> 8 meetings <u>Conferences</u> x 2 (Autumn 4 nights and Spring retreat 48 hours)
YEAR TWO OF STUDY	
<u>Placement Two</u> October to Pentecost At least 25 weeks Part-time (Sunday + 2 x 3.5 hours) Preach on at least 6 occasions (3 full services) <u>Must</u> include Advent/Christmas or Lent/Holy Week/Easter and preferably both Paperwork: Learning Covenant, Final Report, Portfolio	<u>Ministries Training Network</u> 8 meetings <u>Conferences</u> x 2 (Autumn 4 nights and Spring retreat 48 hours)
ONE SUMMER DURING ACADEMIC STUDIES (flexible)	
<u>Placement Three</u> Summer 10 weeks Full-time (40 hours per week) Paperwork: Learning Covenant, Final Report, Portfolio	
YEAR THREE OF STUDY (Year of Graduation)	
No placement Paperwork: Self appraisal	<u>Ministries Training Network</u> 8 meetings <u>Conference</u> (Autumn, 4 nights)
AFTER GRADUATION	
<u>Probationary Placement</u> Full-time (approx. 40 hours per week) 15 months Starts on 1 st July, August, September or October Paperwork: Learning Covenant (6 weeks), Interim Report (6 mnth), Final Report (12 mnth)	<u>Ministries Training Network</u> 8 meetings <u>Conferences</u> 2 x 2 nights, September, March, 2x3 nights January, June 1 x 1 night, May
The programme culminates in an Exit Certificate at 15 months (12 months for Ordained Local Ministry Candidates)	

It should be noted that this is a programme for a candidate in the last 3 years of academic study. There are many instances where a candidate follows an adapted programme, and flexibility is critical to the operation of the whole process. One example would be where a candidate has already completed all academic work before they are accepted at assessment conference. In this case, their placements etc would be condensed over a shorter time period. The summer placement would have to be placed between the 2 part-time placements, with the probationary placement commencing immediately after the part-time placements.

SUPERVISION

Introduction – What is Supervision?

- First of all it is the provision of a relationship in which learning takes place through disciplined reflections upon practice. We learn from experience – or do we? We only learn from experience when we are given the space to reflect upon that experience.
- Secondly, part of the process of supervision is to enable people to integrate theory and practice. Theory is necessary. It has been said that there is nothing as practical as a good theory. But theory is not enough. People need to reflect upon theory in the light of practice and practice in the light of theory.
- Thirdly, and this is central to the supervision of students in ministry, part of the process of supervision is to enable the integration of theology and practice.

The days are now past of working with a model of training for ministry in which theology and theory are taught and learned in the university and then applied in the parish. What we now know about the way in which adults learn – from both theory and practice – is that learning is a cyclical process in which people move backwards and forwards between theory and practice, each of these polarities sometimes challenging and sometimes reinforcing the other.

While this emphasis upon the place of supervision in ministry training seems to be a new phenomenon, it is arguable that it goes back a long way. In Luke's account of the spending out of the Twelve, the story ends in verse 10 with these words: *On their return, the apostles told him what they had done. And he took them and withdrew apart to a city called Bethsaida.* Can you imagine the kind of discussion they might have had at Bethsaida as they shared experiences, reflected upon what had happened, and what they had to do next? This surely is a classic example of the action/reflection model of ministry.

So what's new? Why has there been a renewed interest in supervision as an integral and essential component of preparation for ministry? There are two general factors. First of all, supervision has become an integral part of many other aspects of professional education particularly in the so-called helping professions. No one today can become qualified as a social worker, psychiatrist, psychotherapist or counsellor without prolonged and intensive supervision. Inevitably, with so much ministry involving helping relationships, training for ministry could not but be influenced by the culture of supervision. The second influence has come from the North American Clinical Pastoral Education movement. Begun in the 1920s as a way of training for ministry mainly in hospitals, it has evolved over the past decades into a highly sophisticated approach to pastoral education. Not least has been the transfer of the insights from the hospital setting to the local parish and its heavy influence upon Field Education programmes in the United States and beyond.

A Definition: Formational Supervision

Formational supervision is a method of doing and reflecting upon ministry in which a supervisor (or teacher) and one or more supervisees (learners) covenant together to reflect critically upon their ministry as a way of growing in self-awareness, professional competence, theological understanding, and Christian commitment.

This definition has several positive implications:-

- (a) **The double meaning of 'supervision'**. Implicit within this and every definition of supervision is the fact that 'supervision' is used in two senses, a broad, general sense and a narrow, more technical sense. The broader sense of the word refers to the fact that you are a 'supervisor' from the moment that you agree to take a candidate on placement until you write the final report. For the whole of this period, you are supervisor whether you like it or not. This means that how you model ministry is of supreme importance. Candidates learn from what you do as much as by what you teach. Furthermore, no matter how much talk there is about shared ministry and

mutuality, at the end of the day you are responsible for the work of the candidate and for writing his/her report.

The narrower definition of supervision has implications as well. It refers to the fact that supervision is an intentional activity. It is not something which just happens. This means that time must be set aside for the activity of supervision, regular time in a quiet place undisturbed by other aspects of the agenda which are appropriate to the relationship between supervisor and candidate such as the allocation of duties. Supervision needs to take place regularly, probably once a week, certainly no less than once a fortnight and one would not expect the work to be completed in less than an hour per week.

- (b) **Supervision as Covenant.** The definition refers to minister and candidate 'covenanting together'. Certainly the supervisory relationship is something more than a mere agreement, for there is a shared commitment to ministry. It is interesting to note that in some circles the Learning Agreement is referred to as the Learning Covenant. This can be the cement which binds the supervisory relationship, when minister and candidate have to work through issues from different perspectives, of which the theological may not be the least insignificant.
- (c) **The Practitioner as Supervisor.** Ideally supervision is optimally given by a practitioner because supervision is essentially reflection upon the work of ministry. Theoretical perspectives are important, but these are never disembodied, unrelated to the work of ministry. Theory is only relevant when it illuminates the work of ministry. It is practitioners who know best what the real issues are. It is equally true however that supervisors need to be *reflective* practitioners. It might be argued that the process of supervision is one in which a reflective practitioner facilitates the formation of another reflective practitioner.
- (d) **Supervision as the management of anxiety.** Unspoken but implicit within this definition is the fact that the process of supervision can create much anxiety – for both candidates and supervisors. We take candidates on trust as having gifts, skills and the potential for ministry and turn them loose on our patch. We have spent years building up relationships, developing a reputation for competence. We know that there are vulnerable people around and we fear that the candidate may screw things up leaving 'you know who' to clear up the mess.

Let it be acknowledged that there is only one set of circumstances liable to create more anxiety than the incompetent learner – and that is the candidate whose gifts are manifestly greater than our own! Whether this is objectively true, or merely the apparently endless ability of congregations to encourage young (and not so young) candidates, it can sap one's confidence to hear more words of appreciation given to a candidate in a month than we have been given in a whole ministry.

The management of anxiety – both our own and the candidate's – is crucial to the process of supervision, yet if supervisees never make any mistakes, no learning is taking place. If there are never any problems then one of two things may be happening. Either, the candidate is only being given work which lies within their competence and not being pushed to work on the edge of it. Or else, the candidate is being stretched so far, that he is paralysed and plays for safety all the time. The art of supervision is to keep the candidate's anxiety at an *optimum* level, neither so low that there is no challenge, nor so high that paralysis sets in. But to allow the candidate to work within this optimum level of anxiety is risky, mistakes may be made which provide the opportunity for reflection and learning. Supervision, then, can only be offered by a minister who already enjoys the trust of his or her congregation. It is this trust which enables the supervising minister to manage his or her own anxiety.

- (e) **Supervision focuses on the work of ministry.** Nevertheless, what we bring to ministry, indeed our main tool in ministry, is ourselves. Ministry is not simply the application of theory or even of technique. In ministry we bring ourselves. Knowledge is important, technique is

important, but Phillips Brooks' description of preaching as 'the communication of truth through personality' is true of the whole of ministry.

Through this definition, it is clear what supervision is not:-

- (i) COUNSELLING: where there are personal problems: refer.
- (ii) ADMINISTRATION: it is vital to keep the times needed for administration separate from the time allotted to supervision.
- (i) A TUTORIAL: Supervision is not lecturing but may direct the candidate towards relevant reading, for example.
- (iv) PASTORAL CARE, which is the responsibility of his/her presbytery.
- (v) LINE MANAGEMENT, although it is necessary to allocate work and ensure that it is done.

THE MATERIAL FOR SUPERVISION

Normally a supervision session will have a specific focus in the form of some piece of work which is to be discussed. The form in which this piece of work is presented will vary. Do not, however, underestimate the value of a brief informal 'How are things going?' to begin with provided that the candidate does not use this as a way of avoiding getting down to business.

What may be the material of supervision? Anything! Sermons, orders of service, pastoral visits, Bible study groups, meetings.

How is material presented?

- (a) Orally
- (b) In writing sermons, orders of service, funerals
 Pastoral encounters – verbatims
 Reports of a series of visits

The following pattern, which could be used in relation to sermon preparation, may prove helpful especially for students on their first placement:-

- (a) With the student discuss "what are the main points from this passage, what is God saying to you through it"
- (b) Help the student to develop a basic framework for the sermon
- (c) The student goes away and constructs the sermon
- (d) Review what has been written – how does this compare that with what the student really wanted to say
- (e) Redraft the sermon and further discuss

This can be time-consuming but for many inexperienced students is a valuable learning tool.

The following questions, which could be used in relation to a pastoral visit, may prove helpful:-

- (a) What are the facts? Clarification for mutual understanding.
- (b) What feelings can be identified? In the candidate? Within the pastoral situation?
- (c) How can this situation be understood? Is there any relevant theory?
- (d) What alternative courses of action were open to you?
- (e) What needs to be done now?
- (f) What has this incident contributed to your understanding of ministry?
- (g) What has this incident contributed to your understanding of how you function in ministry?
- (h) What has this incident contributed to your understanding of God i.e. to your theology?

Sample Verbatim Report Form (From “Helping the Helpers”, Rev Prof David Lyall, adapted)

VERBATIM REPORT FORM

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Name of Parishioner

Location of Visit

Name of Visitor

- 1) **What facts did you gather about the person visited?**

- 2) **What did you observe and feel as the visit began?**

- 3) **Record what you remember of the conversation, what you said and what the person you were visiting talked about?**

- 4) **Analysis (What do you think the person was thinking and feeling during the visit and how was he/she at the end of it?)**

- 5) **What was happening to you? (What were your feelings and where do you think you were effective/ ineffective as a listener/pastor?)**

- 6) **Theological reflection (What beliefs and meanings were expressed? Note any Biblical associations that came to mind and record any ethical issues that arose.)**

- 7) **Future Aims (What do you hope to do next in this context? How frequently would you visit? Who else would you want to involve?)**

MEETING TO DISCUSS A POSSIBLE PLACEMENT

After you have been asked to see a candidate, and agreed to see him or her, the candidate will be in contact with you to arrange a meeting at a mutually agreeable time. At this meeting you will want to explore the candidate's attitude and aptitude, which would make him/her an appropriate person to work alongside you in your particular congregation.

Various methods are available for trying to explore this helpfully and usefully. Sometimes a particular theological slant of a candidate will be very obvious. It will be important to ensure that you and your congregation can work effectively with this person if this theological approach is not necessarily congruent with where you are, or reflective of that of the congregation.

Some questions that might well be asked in the process are as follows:

1. Do I discern a willingness in this person to learn?
2. Do I have someone here who thinks he or she is the finished article, or is this someone who is aware of their experience, their limits and their ranges of skills, and have they something to learn in this situation?
3. Can I work with this person despite their theology?

In the exploratory meeting you should indicate where you are theologically, your understanding of parish ministry and the ethos of the congregation. However much you might have written about this in the parish profile and the information you have given to the Council, it is always helpful to actually reflect with a candidate what you understand you are doing in ministry and what the congregation's overall "character" might be.

Such an interview should invite them to share their ideas, their approaches and their background. It should be a reasonably "in depth" interview so that you might be honest and upfront about things yourself and ask them to have a similar level of honesty. There is no point in starting in supervision without many issues being transparent and clear for the future.

We need to remember as supervisors that there are some things that we cannot change. There are some battles that are unimportant and inappropriate to fight, as in every part of our ministry. Therefore, if there are some particular issues that might cause tension, they should be named and some reflection should take place on whether or not either the candidate or you would find them extremely difficult, or impossible to deal with.

It is important to remember that when we are supervising someone we are not there to criticise them in terms of their theological stance. What we should be looking for is a respect from them and from ourselves for both sides of an argument and the need to minister to this particular congregation appropriately.

Each candidate should, through the vocational guidance process, be a person whom you could challenge, question and engage in creative dialogue. They should be able to analyse and be asked to support, justify and defend their position, with integrity, honesty and openness. It is this quality of engagement and willingness to have dialogue that is the critical factor in any relationship with a supervisor and it is our hope that most, if not all, of our candidates will be able to accomplish this.

MEETINGS IN GENERAL

It should always be stressed how important the regular meetings with a candidate are. This should be signalled by the fixing of a regular time that is sacrosanct and free from interruptions of telephone and other people. The meeting times should be observed by you as a priority and should only be delayed or postponed by the direst of emergencies. You should be on time, and you should expect your candidate to be on time, as repeated lateness, and avoidance behaviour, need to be challenged and recognised as an evasion of their responsibility.

The privacy and confidentiality of these meetings is also important. While you will be asked to report on issues to the Council, along with the candidate, the confidential dialogue and reflections within your meetings should not be discussed elsewhere or alluded to at other times.

Boundaries are extremely important and it needs to be remembered that there are issues of touch, physical contact and emotion that are important. The Council expects professional behaviour to be observed both by the supervisor and the candidate and any infringement of this should be recognised as an infringement and addressed immediately. While it may be helpful to have meetings in the Church when there is no one else present, due to the problem of disturbance and distraction, this may not always be the best approach. It might be helpful, if you have someone else working within the church building, to meet when they are present, and allow them to screen and keep the time free from distractions and disturbance.

The processes of each meeting might include the following:

1. Review of past experiences.
2. Planning for future events.
3. Evaluation and critique of the candidate's work.
4. Analysis of what this has taught the candidate regarding ministry and the experience as a part of their ministry.
5. A discussion of a verbatim, or a reflection paper on some particular piece of work that they have prepared for this meeting.
6. Some reference to an article, or something from the Reports to the General Assembly, or a serious discussion of a book or a chapter of a book which the candidate and you have agreed might be read throughout the period of the placement. These books should be selected with a view to them contributing to your mutual ongoing understanding of ministry.

FOCUS IN PLACEMENTS/PROBATION

There are obvious differences between the placements which take place when a candidate is at University and the Probationary Placement. There are some supervisors who believe that the emphasis in placements one, two and three is that of teaching. You are helping the candidate relate what they are learning in college and what the demands of ministry are in practice, through demonstrating to them the techniques, the skills and the particular aptitudes that are necessary for them to function as a minister or deacon.

There are those who would subscribe to the view that it is more difficult to do the teaching role in these placements due to the limitation of time and the many distractions the candidate will have through the demands of their University courses. Some others will argue that it is much more difficult to adapt your programme when you are supervising a probationer because of the enormous amount of work that they must be allowed to participate in and you have to adjust your timescale and expectations accordingly.

There is little doubt that there are some differences in emphasis in the supervision of a probationer. By the time someone has become a probationer most of the tasks of ministry should be in some way familiar to them. Sometimes, however, they have not had the chance of participating in a funeral or in some particular area of ministry due to the lack of opportunities in their first three placements and their University courses. Part of the responsibility of the supervisor of a probationer will be to identify these and to ensure that these “gaps” are addressed.

However, in most instances, the person who is a probationer will bring some degree of competence and awareness of the tasks of ministry. Your challenge then is to engage them in more reflection on these tasks and discover their theological base and how these integrate into their understanding of ministry. This involves a refinement of skill, alongside an ability to step back a little and examine how these tasks contribute to an effective ministry.

It should be noted that there are many distractions from the supervisory task. There are many games which are played either consciously or unconsciously by the candidate or even the supervisor. It is best if we are aware of these and it would be useful for you to refer to the extract from David Lyall’s book (Appendix I).

When we have called certain things to attention they cannot do the same damage and it is best when some kind of game is going on that it is named and addressed in the supervisory sessions.

Throughout any meeting and, indeed, all contact with the candidate, it is important that you show that you are still able to learn, be challenged and engage effectively with the excitement of ministry. While it is not always the case that we enjoy our ministry 100%, the vast majority of the time we should show some degree of energy and enthusiasm for the congregation and the parish, and the enrichment and engagement the work of ministry brings. If we demonstrate through our attitudes and approach that we are aware of the complexities of the functions of ministry, and the demands of “performance” in a public role, we will help the candidate a great deal. They should see us as people who need to learn and that we have not worked everything out perfectly, but are prepared to respond, adapt to change and find theological reasons for what we do and how we understand and react in ministry.

THE VARIETY OF TASKS

It is important that a candidate be introduced to the multitude of demands that being a Minister of Word and Sacrament or a Deacon of the Church involves. Many of our candidates do not come from a Church of Scotland background and have little understanding of parish ministry either as a Deacon or Minister of Word and Sacrament. They have some experience from their engagement in the enquiry process, but this might not be enough to let them understand what is involved and how complex the issues and conflicting demands may become. It is vital therefore that you explore with the candidate what experience they have had and help them to build on this and introduce them to the possibilities and issues which are current in your particular area.

One of the most helpful ways of doing things in this regard might be to send the candidate to meet, on an individual basis, those who are leaders in the congregation, for example, Session Clerk, Clerk to the Council, Chairpersons of various Task Groups and other prominent church members, to hear from them of their understandings and their particular views of the congregation and parish. It is also helpful, particularly in the Probationary Placement, to allow the candidate to meet with people from the community and learn firsthand how the Church is perceived within the parish in a wider and less denominational sense. Reflection with a candidate after such meetings will help you understand more of the candidate's perceptions and how they have listened and how they have learned from such an experience.

The placement programme is considered by the Task Group to be an integral strand of the formation process of candidates. As such, the importance of giving candidates the opportunity of involvement in the regular routine of ministry is paramount. The parish and the congregation will dictate, to some extent, what is possible and what is not possible, but it would be the hope of the Council that some of the following might be available to every candidate:

1. The Leadership of Worship

It would be the hope that you would enable a candidate to discuss the parts of the service, the particular forms of prayers, the different types of prayers and the necessity of good planning of hymns and other praise items. The selection process of hymns, the repertoire of the congregation and the need to introduce new material sensitively and appropriately should be rehearsed and candidates should be encouraged to consider this area competently. Similarly, you are expected to discuss the language and content of prayers and how their language constructs may help or hinder communication, especially when they are talking to children, and preaching. It is often the case that the candidates forget that they are not in the classroom and use theological terms and jargon which are quite inappropriate for public worship.

2. Preaching

This is an extremely personal issue to individuals and it is often difficult to give feedback and appropriate responses. It is useful for you to listen to what the congregation has to say in response to a candidate's preaching and also your own reaction to the presentation of theological ideas. There is a whole section in the Handbook which deals with enabling you to use lay groups to give feedback and find ways of addressing particular issues with the presentation of a candidate from the pulpit.

Note: Appendices II and III provide a number of templates which can be used to gather feedback from lay groups or for you to use in your evaluation of your candidate. This should help you address particular issues with the candidate.

There is a degree of responsibility that we have for our pulpit. As one supervisor has said, “When you have said it from the pulpit, you cannot take it back”. We should be very careful when there are contentious and difficult concepts presented by a candidate that the issues which these create in the congregation are addressed and the candidate is made aware of what they have done and how they might have done better. You have a degree of responsibility both to the candidate and to your congregation which have to be held in balance to allow freedom, but also responsibility. Congregations should not be made to feel guilty, harassed, depressed or their anxiety raised. When, or if, these occasions arise, these must be spoken about honestly and openly. Some particular theological expressions cannot necessarily be tolerated within the bounds of good taste or appropriate pastoral care. Appendices III, IV, V and VI on methods of appraisal and feedback may be of assistance here.

3. The Sacraments

It is always helpful for a candidate to be allowed to observe the celebration of the Sacraments from the perspective of the minister. It gives him or her a new understanding of their place and some of the dynamics and particular mechanics that are involved. After involving a candidate in such a participation in the celebration, it would be valuable to discuss and reflect with them what they understood of what was going on and why you do what you do. It should always be remembered that what we do is often interpreted theologically by a congregation and a candidate.

An example of this comes to mind. In one collegiate relationship, both ministers had a very different attitude in the celebration of baptism. One refused to receive the child into his arms at baptism due to the fact that he believed that this was disruptive to the child and that the Christian nurture of the child would take place within the home and therefore the parent should hold the child over the font while he baptised. The other minister believed that symbolically it was important that he, as the minister of Word and Sacrament representing the Church, received the child into his or her arms and baptised appropriately.

The congregation however was totally divided. One group believed that the minister who did not receive the child was rejecting the child and acting inappropriately and would not attend baptisms when he was conducting them. Another group believed that he was extremely sensitive and believed the other minister showed a lack of understanding of the parental issues and interpreted his reception of the child in a negative manner. We must allow candidates to reflect on what we do and how we do things and be able to justify what we are doing and ensure that our congregations understand why we are doing what we are doing.

4. Pastoral Work

In the first three placements it is often helpful for the supervisor to take a candidate on visits, showing him or her how you visit, and what you do during a visit, when you pray, when you do not pray, what you discuss, and what you do not discuss. Reflection on these visits will help them have the courage, energy and confidence to conduct visits themselves, when you act in a secondary role and observe them conducting them. It is important that you allow them to visit not just the difficult cases, but those who will contribute to their understanding of what ministry is all about, and give them gifts of faith, encouragement and challenge.

5. Courts of the Church

It is always helpful to have a candidate, as far as possible, be present at meetings of the Session, Council and other groups within the Church which are part of the governance of a congregation or parish. On these occasions, they should be allowed to observe and make comment when appropriate. It is sometimes the case that when a candidate has been an Elder, he or she mistakenly believes that they have the right to speak, and you should be very clear about the parameters and boundaries which would restrict their participation. It is also helpful, in particular when they become probationers, for them to take part in the leadership of the session and to chair a particular discussion, and allow you to observe them in this role, and see how the dynamics work with a different personality in charge.

Planning for these meetings should also involve the candidate as far as is possible. They should be able to review the agenda and look for the various dynamics that are going on, and perhaps contribute to the devotions which would constitute the meeting. It would also be useful, particularly when they are probationers, for them to be part of the Presbytery meetings on a regular basis, and observe what is going on superficially, and what might also be going on without explicit expression, through these meetings. Perhaps preparation for a Presbytery visit and a reflection session thereafter would be appropriate on a regular basis so that they might come to grips with the issues and dynamics of such a Court of the Church.

6. Reading

It is often helpful if you can identify some particular areas that you would like to discuss through focussing on an article or a chapter of a book, or even a whole book, in their probationary period, when you might engage helpfully with another partner in conversation. The discussion will enable you to challenge the candidate, and perhaps, through taking an opposite view, which is not even your own, you might stretch the candidate to engage with difficult issues and identify areas where he or she needs to develop their theological insight and thought.

All of what we are doing in supervision is helping them grapple with the challenge of ministry and building on their understanding of what they are doing and what they learn through college work and reading. Through worship and engagement in pastoral care and working with groups in the congregation, they come to understand what it means to occupy the role of minister, how this effects their identity, and how the issues of ordination and integration of theology and practice come together, and raise issues and questions that will not go away.

7. Particular Issues

There are times when we may identify specific weaknesses, or blanks in the experience of a candidate. This is especially true now of candidates who do come from a wide variety of backgrounds and who have little awareness of Church of Scotland and its parish system. Some areas are difficult for us to address, especially in placements one to three, when they have university responsibilities. It may be possible, as has been the case in the past, that someone becomes a probationer without having ever attended a funeral and being involved in the bereavement care and pre-funeral visits, and post-funeral visits. Therefore, it is important that you try to identify clearly early on what might be priorities for their placement under your supervision, ensure that opportunity is given to them to observe the ministerial role in particular functions and help them to understand fully and comprehensively what is involved. Then we need to engage them in theological dialogue about the issues raised for their self understanding, their understanding of the particular theological issue and how this fits into their perspective on ministry.

OTHER MATTERS TO CONSIDER

1. Welfare of Candidates

Any candidate may have times when they are under many pressures from a variety of sources. While it is important that candidates are not excluded from important experiences, it should be acknowledged that there may be times when these pressures and responsibilities may impact on planning for engagement in the work of the parish.

Another issue which should be considered is one of safety and security. There may be at times a degree of physical danger in, for example, visiting a particular area at a particular time, and we should be very cautious about putting a candidate into such a situation. Supervisors and candidates are encouraged to engage in discussion about appropriate boundaries and self-care, in order to develop useful guidelines for the future.

2. Time Management

It is important for us to introduce the candidate for ministry to what happens within a week in a parish minister's life. You need to engage them with questioning what is needed in the week and how this might be marked out on a calendar basis. It is also important to demonstrate that there needs to be flexibility regarding what is put into the calendar and their commitments are made in an appropriate way to allow emergencies to be addressed. Similarly you need to teach them about the importance of time for preparation and time off. In the dialogue on this important issue of time management they need to see how they are able to think out issues, make commitments to people that are reasonable and flexible, while ensuring that they have the necessary time for the task of ministry.

3. Theological Understanding of Ministry

Most of what we are doing in supervision is enabling them to reflect on why we do what we do, how we do what we do and what issues it raises for us theologically. While we might be teaching more of the mechanics in placements one to three, we should always attend to the fact that there are theological reasons for what we are doing. When we have a probationer we are talking about refining their abilities, and ensuring that they are aware of the theological dynamics that are going on in bringing together all the tasks of ministry in the package of offering ordained service to the Church.

At all times we should be trying to encourage integration of theory and practice. This is done by asking questions about very simple tasks and challenging them to think them out. Some examples might be of assistance here. What a congregation sing is often what it believes; therefore, the choice of hymns is critical in the theological development of a congregation. Have them review the hymns that they are using, what kind of picture of God, what understanding of atonement, the character of Christ, and what emotional issues these songs or praise items engender in a congregation.

We also might look at how we conduct a wedding and where we place people at a wedding or a funeral and how we invite appropriate expression at such events. We need also to help them reflect on their personal emotions as they engage in the tasks of ministry and become a conduit or a catalyst for other people's expression of deep feelings, strong and powerful emotions, e.g. sadness, anger, rejection, loss and other fear inducing experiences.

It might also be helpful to refer our candidates to the reading of Rabbi Edwin Freidman's *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. They need to become familiar with how often people in parishes project characters, emotions and patterns on to those who minister or fulfil the role of minister, from their own family situation, and work out of that projection, rather than reality.

4. Rhythm of Preaching and Teaching

It is helpful to introduce the candidate to how you plan for the preaching and teaching that is undertaken in your parish and congregations.

- Do you use the lectionary? Why, or why not?
- What are the rights and rituals that are familiar to this congregation?

- What are the topics you always preach on in a year?
- Do you preach regularly on marriage, baptism and death?
- What are the particular festivals, beyond those of the Christian calendar, or even the secular calendar that are celebrated in the parish?
- Why are they celebrated?
- What are the issues for you?
- What do you find difficult about them and what do you find challenging and rewarding?

It is important that they absorb something of the particular life of this congregation so that they then might begin to question what are the particular issues and context of a congregation where they might be the called pastor and preacher.

5. Projects

Sometimes it is appropriate to give a candidate a particular project to undertake in the parish. Perhaps it might be the leadership of a Bible Study, or participation in a leadership role with colleagues of a youth group, Sunday School group or Outreach Programme. It is always vital to ensure that the whole business does not depend on their presence, as they will pass on and move to another place. It is best that they are seen as a resource and a participating person with others in leadership, so that the project will be owned by the parish, but they might make a vital and important contribution to the effectiveness of this part of ministry. By giving them the opportunity to contribute in a particular way, perhaps when you are not involved directly, they will gain confidence and an understanding of the issues of planning, engagement with other lay leaders, and empowering others to offer their gifts for ministry.

This is an area of initiative which ensures that they are encouraged to do some thinking, but not take total responsibility. If they wish to launch some new idea or introduce some new form or worship or service within the life of the congregation, this should be discussed fully with you first and you should be happy about it before it is publicly announced. It is your privilege as the called minister to take responsibility for all that is going on in the parish and you should not be put into the embarrassing situation of having to clean up a mess that has been thrust upon you out of the blue. Try to engage with them and talk things through, so that they may see the pitfalls and limitations of any project that they are proposing and recognise how it might lead to difficulties and problems if there are any present. Similarly when something has gone wrong you must be able to present matters so that they are protected from extreme reaction and hostile criticism that would be highly inappropriate and destructive.

We often learn from things that go wrong, and we cannot always ensure the success of the project and/or experiment. However, it is important that a candidate's initiative and creativity is not sacrificed or endangered by launching into something precipitately without due thought and consideration in a planning session.

6. Conference Programme

It is always useful for the conference programme to be part of the discussion at some of the supervisory sessions. Copies of the programme topics are available in the Handbook, and we hope that the candidate would share the particular programme with you as a means of preparing for the conference and reflection on what was learned at the conference. In particular, the Probationers' Conferences will focus on the developing understanding of sacramental practice and the legal aspects of ministry within the Church of Scotland, as well as the processes of seeking a call and applying for vacancies. It would be of great use to allow the candidate to discuss issues and perspectives and questions they may have through conference participation as they engage with the practicalities of ministry under your supervision.

7. Support (Feedback) Groups

It is important to have these groups, especially in a probationary period, so that the candidate may have the benefit of other perspectives on his or her growing understanding of what it means to be a minister.

There are important issues in preparing for such a group to be formed. The first is the selection of a chairperson. The chairperson's particular skills should include abilities to be pastorally sensitive, awareness of some of the issues of ministry in the Church and perceptive enough to be of assistance in the selection of other members. The chairperson will be instrumental in preparing an appropriate agenda for the meetings with the candidate, and guiding the other members in their attempts to offer assistance and insight to the candidate.

It is important that this group recognises its purpose is to give feedback in a supportive and non-threatening environment. There may well be nervousness exhibited by the candidate and members of the group in engaging in this challenge, but it is an important and helpful experience for all concerned.

This support group is not a substitute for your supervision sessions. It is important that they do not cross boundaries and remain faithful to their task which is to give honest and helpful comment on how the candidate's ministry is perceived by members of the congregation. Sometimes, either consciously or unconsciously, support groups have become manipulated by candidates, and used inappropriately as a means of contradicting and countermanding what is being given through the supervision of the minister.

Meetings of support groups should take place on a regular basis, with dates and times appropriate to the membership and the candidate, marked in the diary well in advance. The basic agenda should address how the individual's preaching, leadership of worship and delivery of pastoral care has been perceived and received by the congregation. This is not just a case of friendly comment, which would be of little use in helping a candidate address particular weakness or difficulties. There should be affirmation of the candidate's particular skills and pointers to areas where he or she needs to develop other awareness or insight. There is a degree of honesty required here, so that the candidate is not shielded from the realities.

In one particular instance there were many complaints that the candidate had no "terminal function", often preaching for over forty five minutes and incorporating nine prayers in every service. The supervisor tried, on many occasions, to address this problem, but the support group would not mention anything negative to the candidate, believing, however mistakenly, that it was there to be supportive, and could not bring anything critical to the candidate's attention. Therefore with mixed messages coming from both the supervisor and the support group, the candidate learned nothing. Triangulation is an important area here and we should try to avoid any engagement in such patterns.

There are sometimes power issues here, where a candidate may exhibit inappropriate attitudes to women and men who are involved in the group. These should be reported to you, so that you are aware of them, and find some means of discussing them with the candidate. Some questions may be raised there that cannot be addressed appropriately by the group, but should be filtered through so that you are enabled to assist the candidate develop an appropriate understanding of the nature of pastoral care and the leadership of worship.

These support groups are not just about friendship and mentoring, though this is an important area which should not be forgotten. It is often useful to appoint a couple within the congregation to have the particular responsibility of relating in a pastoral sense to the candidate. This would allow the candidate to have a safe and secure place to visit on a regular basis, perhaps having a meal at regular intervals. It may help them settle in to a congregation and feel that there is a space where they are not being evaluated and where they receive ministry from the congregation.

GUIDELINES FOR CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT GROUPS

You have kindly agreed to become a member of the Support Group for the probationer who is to be attached to your congregation. Such groups have a significant role in enhancing the value of this important final phase of training for the ordained ministry of the Church.

Obviously, responsibility for the supervision of the probationer falls upon the minister of the congregation. Nevertheless, it is felt that there is a different but complementary kind of feedback which can be provided by members of the congregation. In the normal course of events, your trainee minister will soon be minister of a charge, ministering to people like you. The reflections, discussions and contributions which you and your group may provide can both affirm the probationer in his/her calling to the ordained ministry, and at the same time enable him/her to take account of constructive comment which reflects the views of members. This is NOT intended as an exercise in negative criticism, nor as an opportunity to receive uncritical admiration but as a positive learning experience for the probationer in these first important months of full-time ministry.

The Practicalities

1. It is expected that the Congregational Support Group (consisting of about 4 - 6 people) will initially meet with the probationer about once a month. As relationships develop, frequency of meetings may (or may not) reduce.
2. The Group will help facilitate the entry of the trainee minister (and where appropriate any family) into the life of the congregation. Members of the Group will be in a position to help the trainee minister understand the nature of the congregation and parish, its history and its story and its understanding of how it sees its present purpose. The Group will be a resource for the trainee minister as he/she begins to come to grips with the work of the ministry.
3. Within the overall aim of being supportive and encouraging, the Group will enable the trainee minister to 'hear' the reactions of the congregation to his or her ministry in its broadest sense and to aid reflection upon and interpretation of this experience.

The Group will have a particular role in providing feedback, from the perspective of members of the congregation on preaching and the conduct of worship. Ministers and congregations do not necessarily hear (nor do they look for) the same things in these two areas of ministry!

The group should not be afraid to occasionally say hard things to the probationer if necessary. Constructive feedback is a necessary part of support.

4. Feedback also implies enabling the trainee minister to 'hear' responses to his or her pastoral ministry and to reflect upon the importance of establishing good human relationships within the congregation.
5. The Group will meet with the trainee minister on his/her own, usually but not necessarily without the presence of the minister, the discussions being conducted in a spirit of openness and honesty. It is NOT the role of the Group to provide an alternative mode of supervision for the trainee minister, least of all to exclude the minister from an awareness of the issues being explored by the Group and the trainee minister. The Convener of the Group will have a crucial role by way of liaison with the minister. The relationship between the minister, trainee minister and Group should be one of mutual trust and openness, with the observance of appropriate degrees of confidentiality rather than of secrecy. In no sense should the minister be seen as being excluded; rather the Group should see itself as providing the opportunity for a mutual exchange with the trainee minister in a non-supervisory setting. At the end of the day it is the minister who has responsibility for the trainee minister's work and learning.
6. Most important, this group is a feedback group (not an inquisition) conducted in a climate of support. It needs, wherever possible, to encourage and affirm a new minister in his/her unaccustomed role within the Church. Hopefully it will be a positive experience for all concerned.

BENEFITS OF BEING A SUPERVISOR

1. Collegiality

There is, even in a time when we are discussing team ministry and parish groupings, a sense of isolation in some ministers. Many ministers appreciate having a companion with whom you can spark off ideas and debate and have creative and dynamic discussions and reflections. There is a concept of collegial ministry here and they can enrich you by their friendship and stimulate you to think theologically about ministry in ways that you would not have thought possible when you were a student, or throughout your earlier ministry. You have the benefit of their creative skills, which might stretch and improve your own.

2. Theological Thought

You have the opportunity to engage on a regular basis in theological thinking. It seems, often to some, that while we are trained to a high level as practical theologians and theological thinkers, we do not often practice at that level. One minister remarked that we seem to be qualified “in the same way as a brain surgeon, but only see ingrown toenails!” A candidate engages us in discussion and dialogue of what is happening in college and in church and in conferences, and allows us to be stretched and helped to continue on with our own explorations and development.

3. Observation of other Approaches

It can be extremely helpful to you as a minister of the congregation to observe how people react to new proposals, new ideas and new ways of working. When they come from a student there will be different reactions, rather than the ones that you might expect if you had proposed the same ideas. It may help you to understand what is going on within the congregation and open up opportunities for new developments and creative ideas.

4. Other Perspectives in Pastoral Care

While it is not always the case, sometimes a student, of another gender, of another theological persuasion, or another understanding of ministry, can present a different view which “reframes” the whole pastoral care situation that you have found particularly difficult and troubling. In preaching and the conduct of services, in the arrangement of weddings or in funerals, they can do things or suggest things, that may challenge and engage you in ways that allows you to understand other dynamics, and open up new opportunities for ministry.

THE CHALLENGES OF SUPERVISION

Some might be identified below:

1. Time Management

There is a difference in incorporating a candidate into the life of a congregation on a placement on a part-time basis or in a ten week summer placement, from that of probation. Some supervisors find it more difficult to introduce a candidate on such a limited timescale to the congregation, while others find it more difficult to give up things and allow the candidate the space, opportunity and challenge of undertaking a large share in the preaching, worship and pastoral care of the congregation's life. The time management involved for supervisors is enormous. It is vital that you provide the following:-

- a) a regular supervisory session
- b) time to plan ahead effectively
- c) time to prepare for any supervisory session, in which you will think about what has been done, plan how you are going to address any issues and also formulate some aims, goals and processes of evaluation

The congregation may be under the misapprehension that "when you have a student to supervise you have assistance". It needs to be made clear to them, perhaps through the use of the letters from the Council, (Appendix VII) that having a candidate to supervise is not necessarily giving you less work, but allowing you to do different work. While they may appear to participate in worship and do things around the congregation and in the parish, they are doing so at your behest and under your supervision, and you must devote time and energy to their process of reflection on what they have learned from their practice.

2. Halo Effect

There is what is termed the "halo effect" in the congregation perceiving the student as someone who is very gifted, able and has the characteristics of the "perfect minister". While the congregation may not see the limitations, the problems or the issues of the candidate, you may see them and be very conscious of them, but cannot reveal them under the rules of confidentiality and appropriate pastoral care. It can, at times, be extremely wearisome to hear the candidate praised so much, without any objectivity regarding their limitations or problems.

3. Control of Expectations

There is a challenge, at times, of controlling the expectations of the candidate. While they may be visionary, energetic and excited about various projects or new initiatives within the congregation, you may have to pour cold water on them or actively dissuade them from attempting to introduce them. They do not know the ethos of the congregation as you do, and you must recognise what will or will not be appropriate. You also have the responsibility of assessing their needs and balancing this against their desires, which might not be congruent.

4. Challenging the Candidate

There are times when we need to raise and identify issues and enable the candidate to address problem areas. They will not all like the same tasks, and sometimes be indignant or resistant to direction and instruction. Often this relates not to theology, but personality. It will sometimes be difficult to instruct a student that he or she needs to spend more time dealing with the pastoral care of the family affected by suicide, while they would prefer to proclaim the Christian message, and convert the heathen from the pulpit.

5. Settling into the Congregation

It takes a great deal of work to ensure that the student is settled in and able to produce work and benefit the parish or congregation directly. Then, of course, comes a time when they need to detach themselves from your parish and congregation in order to go to a new appointment. It demands effort from the supervisor to help a candidate become relaxed and at home within a congregation and able to work through their perspectives and ideas so that they might be supported and corrected in their understandings of what is likely to be acceptable or unacceptable within this particular context. The candidate is there to be nurtured and allowed to be vulnerable, where their mistakes can be made without fear of the consequences. This is one of the major challenges of supervision.

SUPERVISION OF PLACEMENTS I-3

1. Teaching the Skills and Methods of Ministry

In these placements teaching a candidate is the critical issue. We cannot assume familiarity and often they are extremely anxious about the tasks of ministry. It is our main concern at this time to ensure that they become competent in a wide range of ministry tasks which might be included in the rubric of the Academic Questions Committee Report to the General Assembly of 2004, as “The Practice of Ministry and Mission”.

This involves teaching them the mechanics, and introducing them to how we do things, the language that is appropriate, how we plan, what are pitfalls in their methods and approaches, the strengths of their understandings, the importance of tradition and the power of change and the need to offer alternatives in an appropriate manner.

2. Parish Ministry

We also teach them that they are involved in parish ministry and are not chaplains to a congregation. This means that we will give them the opportunity to become able to relate to all people, which is not always easy. As one of the supervisors remarked, the words of a stanza from “Courage Brothers do not stumble” are always appropriate in this regard.

Some will hate thee, some will love thee,
Some will flatter, some will slight;
Cease from man, and look above thee;
Trust in God, and do the right.

It is vital in the process of introducing them to the principles of parish ministry, that we ensure that they are aware of the basic purpose of ministry as being that of offering the grace of God, a radical and disturbing force in our lives, to other lives, and allow God’s grace to do its work.

3. Routine and Rhythm

We are not merely teaching them weekly time management, but the particular chores and tasks of ministry in the Presbyterian system. This may include the attestation of records, the planning for the Christian Year, the involvement of others in the leadership of worship, and the fact that it takes much more time and energy to involve other people than to do it yourself. The issue here is to create an increasing awareness within the candidate of what the demands are, that cannot be escaped, and that are essential for a practitioner to fulfil in his or her regular duties.

4. Conference Programme

It is always useful for a supervisor to enquire what the candidate has studied in the conference programme in the previous August/September or April and what might be useful to incorporate in their parish experience in the coming term.

SUPERVISION OF PROBATIONER

When a probationer is appointed to you for supervision, there are various issues that need to be considered.

1. Space

Where is the probationer to work from? Where will their base be within the parish? Often they do not live very near and we need to consider this as an important area of their pastoral care and assistance in their appropriate development and function.

2. Time

What arrangements are to be made for time off? When are the days that they will be responsible for all parish work? Remember that it is important that they have some idea of when you are off, and when they have responsibility for what is going on in the parish, and when they need to refer to you, even though it is your time off. Sometimes it is a good idea to give them the same day off that you have, but you should discuss this and reflect on how it affects them and you.

3. Long Range Planning

You will be informed of the dates of the conferences which usually take place in September, January, March and June. Your attention is directed to Pages 11 and 12 of the Handbook which gives you an outline of the conference topics and the programme. It is important that you do not schedule the candidate for any major responsibility immediately before or after these conferences so that they might be able to make the most of this opportunity and experience. However, it is also useful for you to incorporate into your discussions and supervision sessions comment on some of what they learned at the conferences and what is applicable or inapplicable to their particular situation and experience.

4. Interim Moderator

It is useful, but not always possible, to allow a probationer to be introduced to an interim moderator who has just about completed his or her task. This will allow the probationer to see the process from a different perspective before he or she becomes an applicant. It would be useful for them to see the parish profile, even have some time with members of the Nominating Committee, and be part of discussion of some of the issues which were raised. This gives them a new viewpoint, even though they may have been on a nomination committee before, and they may begin to grapple with some of the understandings and particular perspectives that are brought to the process when they become applicants themselves.

5. First Year of Ministry Preparation

It would be our hope that during the fifteen months of their probationary period the probationers will accrue a number of materials that will help sustain them during their first year of ministry. Some may be able to take to their first placement a number of sermon outlines, notes and background information which would be of assistance to them. This may be difficult if they are going to use the lectionary, but it will be invaluable perhaps in their third year of ministry to have this resource. It would also be useful for them to have sets of prayers and orders of service for various ordinances and special services, and even the sacraments. It would be very important for you to encourage them to have accumulated, by the end of their fifteen month period, a wide resource pack for their future ministry that will allow them to have less fear about their initial months after ordination.

6. Creativity

It is very difficult to teach people to be creative. Probationers need to be encouraged to realise that there are often no simple, direct and easy answers to be found immediately in a book. They are to be encouraged to become theological thinkers and it is important that you challenge them to think out issues and address problems, situations and challenges in a creative manner. It might be useful to ask them to design some of the following:

- a) An order of service for an adult baptism
- b) A dedication service for a funeral parlour
- c) A service celebrating fifty years of marriage with reaffirmation of vows
- d) A blessing of a child after a long illness
- e) A house blessing service
- f) A dedication service for gifts given to a church
- g) A service for a specific anniversary within the church
- h) An order and address for suicide/violent death
- i) A scattering of ashes

7. General Assembly, Presbytery, Board and Session

It is important that probationers are made aware that sometimes what is on an agenda is not what is really being discussed or is the main focus of business. It is helpful for them to be made aware of the political and other social issues which do impinge on the work of the Courts of the Church. It is also helpful for them to have experience of leadership roles and to observe those who are in leadership roles in the congregation and how the dynamics of the various Courts of the Church work. Their perceptions, their understandings and their awareness may not be the same as yours, but might provide a challenge and assistance to you as a supervisor. It will also lead them to think out how often personal issues and personalities determine the work of a board, committee or session in the life of the Church. It would also be useful, on a regular basis, to have them write a review or reflection on the dynamics of one of the session or board meetings.

Probationers are paid travel expenses to allow them to attend and observe one day of General Assembly business.

	Probationer's point of view	Supervisor's point of view
TRUST	<p>Will I be constantly watched over or will they treat me as a probationer?</p> <p>Are they going to be a 'control-freak' or will they let me let me make mistakes that I can learn from?</p> <p>Will our reflections be two-way or simply me exposing myself?</p>	<p>The Pastoral relationship – will they harm it?</p> <p>What if they are better at something than me?</p>
WORK	<p>Will there be enough variety and exposure to the full extent of parish ministry to help me long term?</p> <p>Will I be able to experience everything or will they have 'sacred cows'?</p> <p>Will I be expected to become a 'clone' of my supervisor in how they work?</p>	<p>Can I conjure up a full time job for them?</p> <p>What am I willing to give up? [wrong approach]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All those things I don't want to do? • A bit of everything? <p>Can I differentiate between doing something well and doing it in a different style to mine?</p>
What are they thinking about me?	<p>How are they going to manage me?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch my every move? • Allow me to work away on my own but be monitoring from a distance? • Will I be given any guidance or left to fend for myself? <p>Will they allow me to bring my experience into the parish from life before ministry as well as from other parishes or is their way the only way?</p> <p>Are they going to build on my gifts and strengthen my areas of weakness or are they going to destroy my confidence in both?</p>	<p>What am I really trying to achieve?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing them to run/lead a church/parish. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it ever be finished? • Helping them understand the dynamics of leading others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a Minister - As volunteers • Helping them discover their natural style • Developing their gifts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do I play to their strengths? - Do I fill in the gaps? - Do I relate it to leading a church?
What are my thoughts?	<p>Will I survive 15 months?</p> <p>Can I take feedback from yet another supervisor?</p> <p>Am I trying to pass a test or learn from my supervisor to help me be a more effective servant of Christ?</p> <p>Will I have created a job for myself at the end of the 15 months, a cap that the minister will have to take on or will I have enabled others to share in the work of the minister?</p>	<p>Am I willing to learn from them?</p> <p>Can I take criticism from my 'junior'?</p> <p>Do I have the courage to fail them?</p> <p>Will I miss them when they go?</p> <p>Am I willing to put in the time/effort/energy to train another person?</p> <p>Am I really training a probationer or am I needing help in my Parish?</p>

ENJOYING THE ROLE

- Companionship and stimulation that you might never have in other ways.
- An opportunity to be challenged and to grow through dialogue, discussion, debate and critical analysis.
- The engagement and investment of the congregation in the formation process of a future minister or deacon.
- The excitement of being stretched by planning the integration of another person's gifts, abilities and skills into the ministry of a congregation or parish and the valuable possibility of being enriched and encouraged by their efforts.
- To listen to sermons from your own pulpit, rather than occupy your own pulpit. This is a strange experience for many of us and can be a very difficult and personally demanding privilege and opportunity.
- To return to the system some of the gifts which were given to you during your training.
- To be part of the shaping and formation of the next generation of ministers and deacons of the Church.

It will require energy, effort and enthusiasm and will be very rewarding, while demanding so much of you.

A haiku is a Japanese poem of a limited number of words which is designed to say something about a particular issue. A haiku relating to the process of supervision may be appropriate here.

We meet awkwardly
I invite you to walk
I find you dancing
May we all be witnesses to much dancing!

SUPERVISORY STYLES

Supervisory Style

A concluding section in the Learning Covenant asks the supervisor and candidate to make a supervision covenant. This is the framework for your meetings. However, within that covenant you will have your own particular style and it is important that this is explicit in order to minimise the confusion which can arise from unspoken expectations or very different approaches to working practices. It would be helpful for student and supervisor to discuss this and perhaps to construct an agenda for supervision meetings. You should both be clear that supervision is work, and it calls for preparation ahead of time and concentration during the session. These weekly meetings are intentional and should have structure and an agenda, even if established informally. The candidate needs to know from day one what to expect from the supervisor. Writing it down means that the two of you know where you stand, and how you may reach one another.

Supervision styles vary but all should provide the following: good standards of professional conduct; good line management; good professional relationships; critical feedback, and opportunities for the student: to take initiative; for spiritual growth; for critical reflection. Supervision should, for instance, include the opportunity for the student to comment on and question each aspect of church life with which he/she is involved and discussion of different practices including the opportunity for the student to explore/explain his/her own approach. Appraisal should be honest and open including due praise, honing of the student's self awareness and concrete suggestions for improvement. On-going reflection on the goals and objectives outlined in the Learning Covenant is essential.

The Supervisory styles outlined are not mutually exclusive and it would be common for a supervisory relationship to display all the different aspects from time to time. For instance, an enabling approach would not rule out the possibility of being very directive on occasion, a collegial relationship can nevertheless allow for a managerial one when required and in reflection there may be the need on occasion to be more didactic. It is possible to offer both the structured and formal approach to supervision in the supervision sessions alongside an informal approach in day to day encounters. The opportunity to "shadow" the supervisor and later reflect on the experience is crucial, particularly in the early placements. Perhaps the word which sums up the experience of supervision at its best is "mentoring" as a candidate both observes and participates in ministry, and reflects on the experience with the supervisor. The quality of the candidate's reflection should be noted and good reflective practice encouraged.

We ask you to state the time and place for supervision at the commencement of your relationship, and to be consistent with the arrangements. Supervision needs focus and requires time for the undergirding of theological reflection. Sunday after worship may not be the best time. **A regular, uninterrupted 60 minute minimum period is essential.** No placement will be considered complete without it.

In addition to being open about your style, you should be clear about the method and criteria of evaluation. Every effort should be made to say what satisfactory performance looks like in terms that are objective and clear. Although it may be difficult, we ask you to spell out your standards from the beginning. How will you measure satisfactory performance? In assessing performance the candidate should have a clear idea of areas of weakness and how these might be addressed.

In our work with candidates we have learned that the greatest misunderstandings happen around assumptions about time in the placement and in preparation. We ask supervisor and candidate to be very clear about expectations and hours. **Travel time to and from the site is not included.** Holiday periods should be mutually set. Assignments need to be given, at minimum, a week ahead of time, so that candidates can adequately prepare to read publicly, lead prayer, or conduct a discussion. Supervisors need to say when the candidate is to be at the placement, and when the day ends. Candidates must be able to decline opportunities that violate their contract or compromise their work at University. Take time as you are working together to speak openly about time expectations. Respect the candidate's need to prepare. Please indicate, for worship, pastoral, mission etc., the number of hours planned for each week out of total weekly hours (although this will vary).

Supervisory Styles

Below are a number of descriptions of supervisory styles based on examples from experienced supervisors:

Example A.

My approach to supervision is to “mentor”. This will mean the candidate both observing and participating in ministry activities, e.g., observing Session and Board meetings, participating in worship leadership, pastoral visiting etc.

I will expect the Candidate to reflect on all that he or she does and on what he or she observes. The quality of that reflection will be significant.

I will comment on the manner and content of his/her performance in given tasks in a constructively critical manner and expect to see evidence of development.

Reflecting on the preceding week with critical analysis and evaluation, and discussion of the forthcoming week.

My expectations will be met if:

1. The performance of the student is effective in connecting with and impacting on people.
2. The student is open and frank in discussion with the supervisor.
3. Shows signs of responding to constructive criticism and concrete suggestions for improvement

Example B.

A weekly meeting lasting one hour to review work done and to make any necessary forward arrangements

Meetings of longer duration to cover specific topics eg administration, theological reflection on pastoral care. To work in a collegiate/collaborative way that is affirming yet constructively critical. My basic criterion for assessment is to look for improvement in those areas specifically identified as requiring attention beforehand or as the placement proceeds.

I would regard as satisfactory

1. A willingness and enthusiasm to learn from the overall setting of the placement
2. Signs of an honest effort and attempt made at all tasks
3. Evidence that the candidate has taken on board and tried to apply constructive criticism and suggestions and that improvement is evident
4. Evidence of developing skills and of personal growth
5. Clear indicators of potential as minister

Example C.

We will meet once a week to discuss any issues arising and plan the week ahead, as well as constructively critiquing the work of visiting and preaching that has been done the week before. My preferred method of evaluation is to allow the student to make her own evaluation and then compare that with how I have observed her.

Supervision, however, will be given both “on the job” and in the structured setting.

My expectations will be met when all the tasks set are accomplished and that the student has demonstrated that she has usefully reflected on them. I would also expect that tasks would be accomplished on time and to good standard.

An agenda will be agreed prior to each weekly meeting, every Tuesday from 10am-12 noon. This will include time for brief devotions together – reflection on some verses of scripture and prayer for one another and the work we do. Some elements of reflection on what has been done in the past week will

combine with planning ahead for worship and pastoral work, etc. Every task assigned will have a clear and stated aim, such that it is possible to discuss afterwards what went well and what did not and to learn from all experiences.

Example D.

Supervision will take the form of regular frequent contact. Mondays 9.30am for up to 3 hours, with the offer of additional contact and consultation at any time.

The student is given unaccompanied exposure to regular pastoral encounters, which may sometimes be unfamiliar or disconcerting, with opportunity for later discussion and reflection.

The student is sometimes offered the opportunity of taking a shadowing role when the minister is engaging in complex or confidential pastoral circumstances.

There is continual posing of questions about the work and its theological basis, with a view to stimulating the student to reflect on the role of minister and of the church and to enable the development of a biblically based theology.

Example E.

Weekly on Monday mornings from 9.30am for approx 2.5hours.

Reflection on and assessment of contribution to Sunday Worship; discussion of and reflection on pastoral work carried out during previous week; raising awareness of any issues arising within the context of ongoing congregational life; touching base on personal and family wellbeing; planning for the coming week's work; planning worship programme approx eight weeks ahead. Time for general conversation to ensure that we get to know each other as human beings and not just as fodder for the supervisory process.

Appraisal is based on the integration of the student's academic experience and previous placements into her ongoing development as preacher and pastor; identifying comfort zones and challenges to ensure the possibility of ongoing ministerial growth and development. My previous experience of supervising probationers gives a basis for appraising each probationer's development and identifying any areas which need to be addressed. Openness on the part of each of us towards each other and the opportunities provided by the placement is key.

THE SUPERVISORY COVENANT

This can be found at the end of the Learning Covenant and indicates the basic expectations supervisor and supervisee have of one another, as well as the Council's expectations for the placement.

SECTION 3: SUPERVISION COVENANT						
Supervisory Sessions	Frequency		Duration		Location	
Supervisor and Supervisee Agree:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the purpose of supervision is to reflect on the supervisee's work and ministry as a developmental opportunity • That while issues of a personal nature may arise, sessions are neither pastoral care nor spiritual direction • That appropriate confidentiality will be maintained at all times* • That assessment will be on the basis of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ appropriate engagement with the placement and initiative taken ○ assigned tasks completed in good time and to satisfactory standard ○ openness to learning and capacity for reflection ○ appropriate preparation evident ○ evidence of developing skills and of personal growth ○ evidence of affirmation of call and a deepening understanding of the distinct role of the ministry for which the candidate is presenting 					
Supervisee Agrees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage fully in the placement • To prepare for supervision sessions through thoughtful reflection on work done, achievements, disappointments and any issues arising • To arrive at sessions punctually • To be open and honest at all times • To carry out all tasks with commitment and as fully as possible • To act on constructive feedback 					
Supervisor Agrees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prepare for sessions through thoughtful reflection on work done, achievements, disappointments and any issues arising • To arrive at sessions punctually • To offer uninterrupted, structured and dedicated time and space • To offer attention, support and constructive challenge to increase professional competence and abilities and build up skill base • To offer a range of experiences and opportunities in the placement, with appropriate support • To be clear about expectations and aims of all work agreed and to give appropriate notice of tasks • To offer honest appraisal of work and abilities • To offer additional support if and when necessary • To undertake training and professional development in supervision as appropriate 					

Appendix I

GAMES IN SUPERVISION

The problems about learning which inevitably engage supervisor and student, particularly in the early stages of their work together, are of the utmost importance. They help alert the participants to the anxieties which emerge from the work itself, and which supervision has to contain sufficiently for effective work to be done. They help the aspiring shepherd to recognise both strengths and weaknesses, and how these can be fashioned and modified through the experience itself and reflection upon it. In his important book *Supervision in Social Work*, Kadushin takes up the metaphor of 'games' to describe how the problems about learning are most likely to appear in supervision. Berne, the pioneer of transactional analysis and author of the book *Games People Play*, defines a game as an 'ongoing series of complementary ulterior transactions, superficially plausible, but with a concealed motivation. Supervision is directed towards a change in behaviour, and such changes are likely to be painful and anxiety provoking experiences. Games are indulged in as an attempt to reduce anxiety.

The games played by supervisees illustrate, in a light-hearted way, some of the 'Problems about Learning' previously identified. Kadushin's work refers of course to the training of social workers but it may easily be adapted to demonstrate some of the games played by both learners and supervisors in pastoral education. Among the most common of the games played by learners in pastoral education we find:

I have three papers to write this week. In this game the learner resists demands to produce a verbatim by pleading that his academic load is excessive. The supervisor should check that the learner is not playing another similar game with his academic tutors, viz *Don't you know how heavy my fieldwork is?* This pair of games illustrates the need for regular and effective communication between academic teachers and field education supervisors to make sure that one is not being played off against the other.

You are the best supervisor I have ever had, in which flattery is used to divert the supervisor from holding the learner to the legitimate agreed task. Most supervisors are vulnerable to the invitation to play this game! The learner may offer expressions of appreciation such as 'I'll be a better minister because of you', being sensitive to the supervisor's own need to be needed.

In *Treat me, don't beat me*, the learner seeks to change the supervisory relationship into a counselling one. Ministers, who feel themselves 'called to care', may find it hard to resist this game which in essence allows the learner to expose *himself* rather than his *work*.

Evaluation is not for friends also seeks to redefine the supervisory relationship. The learner seeks to befriend the supervisor or establish a social relationship outside the work setting, perhaps so that the supervisor finds it hard to hold his new 'friend' to the agreed task.

The following games may be offered by the learner as an attempt to reduce a perceived disparity between himself and the supervisor:

If you knew Tillich like I know Tillich. In this game a student may display a superior or more up-to-date theological knowledge than the supervisor. Supervisors tend to find this threatening! They may respond by admitting that they have read little of Tillich, leaving themselves in a decidedly 'one-down' position, or else they may refuse to acknowledge their ignorance and work on in the continual fear of having their bluff called. On the other hand, they may know Tillich better than the student and call his/her bluff!

What do you know about it anyway? This game may be played by mature students who perceive themselves as being more experienced than the supervisor in some areas of life, for instance by married students with an unmarried supervisor, by reformed alcoholics, or by older students with wider experience of church life in relation to a young supervisor.

Other games seek to give the learner a greater measure of control in the supervisory relationship:

In *I've got a little list*, the learner comes to a session with a list of questions to ask the supervisor. A question is asked, the supervisor responds and as soon as he shows signs of coming to a stop another question is asked. The learner thus controls both the content and the direction of supervision by appealing to the supervisor's narcissistic gratification in displaying his knowledge.

In *Heading them off at the pass*, the learner openly admits to his poor work so that the supervisor has little alternative but to show sympathy and no genuine supervision takes place.

I did it like you told me is an attempt by the learner to blame the supervisor for work which has not turned out right.

What you don't know won't hurt me. In this game the learner only presents those aspects of his/her work which show him in a good light.

It is not, however, only students who play games in supervision, and Kadushin points out some games commonly played by supervisors:

I wonder why you said that. This is the game of redefining honest disagreement so that it appears to be psychological resistance. Instead of engaging in a rational discussion based on evidence, the emphasis is shifted to the psychological defences of the student.

One good question deserves another. In this game the supervisor asks a learner to work out the answer to his own problem, while the supervisor desperately tries to work it out for herself. If neither comes up with an answer, the supervisor suggests that the learner goes away and thinks about it some more so that they can discuss it next time, and meanwhile the supervisor finds out the answer.

I can hardly catch my breath. This is the supervisor's flight from supervision, as he pleads that the demands of the church/hospital mean that he must postpone the supervision session.

Games are only possible when two parties want to play them. A supervisor can prevent games by refusing to play or by confrontation. In refusing to play, the supervisor must be willing to forsake his own advantages, and exercise a self-denying ordinance on the fruits of flattery or of being liked. If a confrontational approach is to be used, it must be done with care, realising the defensive significance of the game for the learner. This is, however, a different way:

Perhaps another approach is to share honestly with the supervisee one's own awareness of what he is attempting to do but to focus neither on the dynamics of his/her behaviour nor on one's reaction to it but on the disadvantages for him in playing games. These games have decided drawbacks for the supervisee in that they deny him the possibility of effectively fulfilling one of the essential principal purposes of supervision – helping him/her grow professionally. The games frustrate the achievement of this outcome. In playing games, the supervisee loses by winning.

Appendix II

WORSHIP REVIEW: NOTES FOR GUIDANCE

Feedback

1. In giving feedback it is helpful to acknowledge who we are and what are our own strengths and weaknesses.
2. We should say clearly and directly what from our vantage point and experience we are able to say. We need not be hesitant or embarrassed, our viewpoint as a worshipper is valid; even if we are not ourselves trained to lead worship, we have a great deal of experience of receiving worship to bring.
3. In giving feedback we need to say what we mean as accurately as possible and in specific terms. It is much easier to do something with specific feedback than with generalisations. For example, “you tend to drop your voice at the end of a sentence” is better than “I find you difficult to hear”.
4. We should only offer feedback on things which the person has the power to change. For instance “I find your tendency to flick your hair distracting” could be helpful, while “I really don’t like your accent” is not.
5. Giving feedback is a sensitive issue. People may be unused to receiving feedback or have had destructive experiences in the past which produces anxiety about feedback. In these situations it is often helpful to spell out in full what you are doing by using “I” rather than “you”.

 (“I felt lost and rushed and found I was distracted during the first prayer. It might be helpful to slow down a bit”, rather than, “You prayed too fast in the first prayer.”)
6. In giving feedback we need to be aware that we may be “off the track”. This is why feedback sessions should be a group activity in which we can all help one another and care for one another.
7. In giving feedback we need to be aware that it is usually as helpful and creative for people to receive feedback about their strengths as it is to receive it about weakness, since it enables them to affirm what they have and build upon it with confidence. All feedback should include affirmation of strengths. Besides, few people are strong enough to cope with too much awareness of needs all at once. A good model to follow is “two stars and a wish”.

SERVICE FEEDBACK FORM

- 1) **Liturgy:** How effective were the various parts of the service in holding together? Was there a flow, from approach to God at the beginning, through hearing the word of God in bible reading and addresses, and finishing with our response to God and God's word?

Comments:

Overall rating: Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

- 2) **Prayers:** their content and form and effectiveness as public prayers. Did you feel led in prayer? Did the prayer express things you want to say? Was there a clear prayer of approach to God and confession of sin at the beginning of worship? Were there prayers of intercession for others, where in the service did they come and did that seem appropriate? What about prayers of thanksgiving and dedication of the offering?

Comments:

Overall rating: Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

- 3) **Hymns:** their function and appropriateness in relationship to the service as a whole. Did they fit the theme? Was there a good balance between different types of hymns during the service? Were quiet hymns and louder hymns used appropriately?

Comments:

Overall rating: Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

- 4) **Symbols:** The effectiveness of means other than hymns and prayers used in the act of worship (e.g. symbols, solos, experimental activities etc.)

Comments:

Overall rating: Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

- 5) **Style and Delivery:** Pronunciation, pitch, tone, variation, clarity, warmth, flow ... in speaking throughout the service as a whole.

General bearing, bodily presence, movement, idiosyncrasies, habits, mannerisms; how have they affected your experience of worship.

The use of language; habits of speech, creativity, use of slang, grammar.

Length of service. Balance of the different parts. Use of notes; how much obvious dependence on notes?

Overall impact as an act of worship. What were the highlights? Where did it need strengthening?

Comments:

Overall rating: Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

Sermon

1) Organisation:

- a. Does the introduction get attention?
- b. Is there a clear structure leading the listener through?
- c. Can you identify a central idea?
- d. Does it address a real need or have an obvious purpose?
- e. Is there a clear conclusion?

Overall rating: Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

2) Content

- a. Is the sermon clearly related to the text?
- b. Does it demonstrate good knowledge and use of the bible?
- c. Is the preacher convincing? Original?
- d. Is the subject and content appropriate to the congregation?
- e. Are the illustrations
 - i. Effective in conveying the message?
 - ii. Varied?
 - iii. Appropriate in number?

Overall rating: Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

3) Style

- a. Is the grammar correct?
- b. Is there good use of vocabulary; original and interesting?
- c. Is language used appropriately within the context?

Overall rating: Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

4) Delivery

- a. Is the preacher engaging the congregation – eye contact, warmth, presence?
- b. Is there variation of pitch, tone and speed in the delivery? At appropriate points?
- c. Is pause used effectively?
- d. Does the preacher use gesture to good effect? Are there distracting mannerisms?

Overall rating: Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

5) General Effectiveness

- a. Did you find the sermon interesting?
- b. Could you understand it?
- c. Does it meet a real need?
- d. Does the preacher seem to be aware of the congregation's response?

Overall rating: Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

Appendix II I**SERVICE FEEDBACK**

Date

I'd like to know what you think of today's service so I that can improve my worship leadership. Be frank, I want to know what you think. I haven't given everyone this form so please complete it, if you possibly can. Try to do it before you leave today but if not please return it to me as soon as possible.

Thank you for taking the time to fill it out.

1. What did you most enjoy about today's service?

2. Were the prayers clear? Well structured? Easy to follow? Could you identify the different types of prayer, e.g, approach to God, confession of sin, intercession for others, thanksgiving, dedication of ourselves and the offering?

3. What was the main point of the children's talk? Do you think this would have been clear to the children? Is there any way I could have made this clearer?

4. Did the choice of hymns enhance your experience of worship? Did they add to the message being delivered?

5. What, if anything, did you learn from today's sermon?

6. What did you appreciate about today's sermon?

7. What did you dislike?

8. What advice would you give me to improve my preaching?

9. Was the link to the bible passages clear?

10. Any other comments?

Sex: male/female

Age: 13-17, 18-24, 25-40, 41-54, 55+

Name: (Optional)

To congregations about to receive a candidate on probation

The Training Task Group of the Ministries Council is delighted that you are going to provide a training placement for a candidate on probationary placement. Most congregations find this a stimulating, enriching and enjoyable experience, but it also means change, especially if you are having a candidate for the first time. The Task Group thought it might be helpful to outline its hopes for the placement, and the thinking that underlies it.

The background

The placement is made by the Task Group in careful consultation with the candidate. The aim is to ensure that the candidate receives the best possible training, and is given ample opportunity to receive constructive criticism, and to reflect on the relationship between their theological education and parish life. All salary costs and travelling expenses are met centrally. The placement is normally for 15 months.

Changes for your minister

It might seem that your minister will be having an easier time with a candidate to share the load. The task of training, however, is a major one, and will occupy a great deal of your minister's time, energy and imagination. This work is largely unseen, but it is vital for the candidate to receive a well planned range of experiences, good critical feedback on the work that has been done, and time to discuss, reflect and ask questions.

Changes for the congregation

There will be a new face, a new voice, perhaps a new approach to some areas of parish life. On occasions where in the past you would have seen only your minister, now you may see minister and candidate together, or perhaps the candidate on his/her own. Please understand that if the candidate visits you at home or in hospital, or is asked to conduct a funeral, this does not mean that your minister is not interested in you. These are important areas of work for the candidate to experience before going to his/her own parish.

The Task Group hopes that you will warmly welcome the candidate, and offer to him/her (and where appropriate spouse and family), support and encouragement. Each candidate brings a unique blend of skills and gifts, and these need to be used to the full; at the same time, however, it is important to remember that there is no guarantee that a replacement candidate will be allocated, so it is unwise for the candidate to develop too many new initiatives which cannot be sustained when he/she has gone.

Changes for the candidate

For most candidates this is an exciting time; it is full-time ministry, an opportunity to get to know a congregation well, the challenge of fulfilling their calling. Parish life is very difficult from university life, and time is needed to adjust. Every candidate makes mistakes; so please be patient and understanding!

Conference programme

The Task Group arranges a series of four residential compulsory conferences for all candidates to enable them to work together on issues relating to ministry.

If things go wrong

Thankfully this is a rare occurrence; if there are problems, the Task Group will seek to deal with them in a caring and pastoral way.

Finally

The church's candidates represent the next generation of ministers, and this final stage of their pre-ordination training is an exciting and vital task. The Task Group hopes that you will enjoy sharing in it. At

the end of the placement, your candidate will go to his/her first charge. That congregation as well as the Task Group and indeed the whole church looks to you to prepare them as fully as possible.

We wish you God's blessing as you undertake this task.

Yours sincerely

Convener
Training Task Group
Ministries Council

To congregations about to receive a candidate on placement (1/2/3)

The Training Task Group of the Ministries Council is delighted that you are going to provide a training placement for a candidate on placement. Most congregations find this a stimulating, enriching and enjoyable experience, but it also means change, especially if you are having a candidate for the first time. The Task Group thought it might be helpful to outline its hopes for the placement, and the thinking that underlies it.

The background

The placement is made by the Task Group in careful consultation with the candidate. The aim is to ensure that the candidate receives the best possible training, and is given ample opportunity to receive constructive criticism, and to reflect on the relationship between their theological education and parish life. All salary costs and travelling expenses are met centrally. The placement normally lasts from October to Pentecost.

Changes for your minister

It might seem that your minister will be having an easier time with a candidate to share the load. The task of training, however, is a major one, and will occupy a great deal of your minister's time, energy and imagination. This work is largely unseen, but it is vital for the candidate to receive a well planned range of experiences, good critical feedback on the work that has been done, and time to discuss, reflect and ask questions.

Changes for the congregation

There will be a new face, a new voice, perhaps a new approach to some areas of parish life. On occasions where in the past you would have seen only your minister, now you may see minister and candidate together, or perhaps the candidate on his/her own. Please understand that if the candidate visits you at home or in hospital, or is asked to conduct a funeral, this does not mean that your minister is not interested in you. These are important areas of work for the candidate to experience before going to his/her own parish.

The Task Group hopes that you will warmly welcome the candidate, and offer to him/her (and where appropriate spouse and family), support and encouragement. Each candidate brings a unique blend of skills and gifts, and these need to be used to the full; at the same time, however, it is important to remember that there is no guarantee that a replacement candidate will be allocated, so it is unwise for the candidate to develop too many new initiatives which cannot be sustained when he/she has gone.

A candidate will have a heavy workload from his/her University studies and therefore time spent in placement is limited and very much on a part time basis. Involvement in the life of congregation will therefore be restricted and this should be borne in mind.

Changes for the candidate

For most candidates this is an exciting time; a real taste of ministry in practice; an opportunity to get to know another congregation, the challenge of fulfilling their calling. Parish life is very difficult from university life, and time is needed to adjust. Every candidate makes mistakes; so please be patient and understanding!

Conference programme

The Task Group arranges compulsory conferences for all candidates to enable them to work together on issues relating to ministry.

If things go wrong

Thankfully this is a rare occurrence; if there are problems, the Task Group will seek to deal with them in a caring and pastoral way.

Finally

The church's candidates represent the next generation of ministers, and this stage of their pre-ordination training is vital. The Task Group hopes that you will enjoy sharing in it. Future congregations as well as

the Task Group and indeed the whole church looks to you to prepare them as fully as possible for the challenges of ministry that lie ahead.

We wish you God's blessing as you undertake this task.

Yours sincerely

Convener
Training Task Group
Ministries Council

Appendix V CANDIDATURE REVIEW PROCESS: INDICATORS FOR ASSESSMENT

These indicators are used throughout the processes of assessment and training for all candidates throughout the Church of Scotland. The qualities and skills named here are not all of equal importance, nor is the list comprehensive, but it does give supervisors a guide as to the areas to consider when drawing up the final report. **There is no suggestion that each candidate must meet all indicators!** The indicators can also be used to identify any areas which could be developed as the formation process continues. The 6 main areas will form the basis of the report discussed at the Review Meeting. This is held at the end of each academic year, and a decision is made jointly by Presbytery and the Training Task Group as to a candidate's continuing suitability. The supervisor's report makes an important contribution to this meeting.

Each of the 6 areas is listed below, along with suggested indicators.

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?

The candidate:

- shows commitment to a Christ-like form of service;
- displays a degree of integrity of word and action;
- exhibits balance in talking about faith;
- has a disciplined approach to personal devotion;
- is open to exploring different expressions of spirituality;
- relates well to people with differing expressions of spirituality;
- is able to relax;
- has a breadth of interests other than Church life.

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?

The candidate:

- generates trust and displays honesty;
- forms positive relationships with a variety of types of people;
- works well in a team setting;
- is able to respond to others with flexibility;
- is patient and tolerant in expressing views;
- demonstrates listening and empathic skills;
- communicates well in language people understand;
- offers appropriate openness and vulnerability to relationships;
- shows self-awareness in relation to verbal and non-verbal communication skills;
- is able to offer and receive feedback in constructive ways.
- demonstrates the potential to offer leadership to others;
- shows awareness and understanding of different styles of leadership;

Openness to Learning:

How does the candidate learn and how open are they to learning? How does the candidate handle criticism, both just and unjust?

The candidate:

- shows an aptitude for listening and responds to ideas;
- is able to express themselves well both orally and in written work;
- enters constructively into dialogue;
- shows the ability to live with difference;
- responds appropriately to criticism;
- reads broadly: General: *fiction; non-fiction;*
 Theological: *different stances; different disciplines;*
- is able to formulate a cogent argument;
- shows awareness of the implications of lifelong learning;
- employs different styles of learning:
 Pragmatic: *looks first to the practicality and applicability of ideas;*
 Activist: *will try almost anything first to see if it works;*
 Reflective: *will first spend time thinking about the pros and cons;*
 Theoretical: *looks first to the connection between new and existing ideas.*
- works well with others who use learning styles other than the Applicant's preferred ones.

Preparation and Reflective Skills:

How is the candidate preparing? How does the Applicant assimilate, analyse and integrate experience? How does the candidate organise and manage their time and work?

The candidate:

- is able to make basic connections between different kinds of experience:
 church; community; intellectual; spiritual
- generally presents as a well-integrated, holistic person;
- is reasonably self-aware and can recognise strengths and weaknesses;
- exhibits awareness of the global context and can relate it to the local;
- shows creativity analysing and interpreting experiences;
- gives proper space and time to the reflective process;
- shows the aptitude for coping with the intellectual demands of ministry;
- can assimilate and deal appropriately with negative or difficult life experiences;
- encourages others to engage in the reflective process.
- possesses good administrative and organisational skills;
- is able to manage time reasonably;
- copes adequately with stress.

Handling and Facilitating Change:

How does the candidate initiate and respond to change and help others deal with it?

The candidate:

- collaborates well in drawing up plans for change;
- works willingly at addressing identifiable weaknesses;
- is motivated towards the implementation of goals in an action plan;
- is able to offer and analyse differing perspectives on problems;
- tries to elicit and investigate alternatives;
- can assess the benefits and costs of change;
- demonstrates awareness of issues arising from the transition to the role of minister.

Discernment and Affirmation of Call:

How does the candidate view their call? In what ways has their call been affirmed? What is their understanding of the Ministry for which they are applying in the life of the Church of Scotland?

The candidate:

- can clearly articulate a sense of call towards ministry;
- is positively motivated towards fulfilment of ministry;
- demonstrates knowledge of the life and structures of the Church of Scotland.

Appendix VI COVENANT LITURGY: CANDIDATE PLACEMENT

This is intended to be used at the beginning of the placement as part of Sunday morning worship.

Introduction of Candidate to Congregation

Candidate comes forward to stand at the front of the chancel facing the congregation. Supervisor stands beside Candidate, also facing the congregation.

Minister: We welcome (NAME) into our fellowship and as part of our congregation for this season of his/her formation.

In the course of this placement, the congregation can share support and challenge, offer care and feedback as (NAME) explores his/her call, prepares for the (FORM OF MINISTRY) and develops his/her skills. And so, this is a process which involves us all. May God bless us as we journey together. Let us pray:

Lord of heaven and earth
 who calls us, equips us and sustains us,
 and whose ministry is the ground and source of all that we do,
 we give you thanks for the gifts you have granted to (NAME) and the call that the church
 has discerned in him/her.
 We give you thanks for the journey of formation upon which he/she has embarked and
 for all the surprises, delights, challenges and adventures that he/she will encounter along
 the way.
 We give you thanks for the privilege of joining (NAME) for part of that journey.
 Grant to all gathered here a humble spirit to learn from one another
 a gracious spirit to encourage one another in ministry
 and a faithful spirit to follow where you lead.
 As we walk with one another
 may we grow ever closer to your vision of us and your hopes for us.
 Bless us now as we commit ourselves to one another for this time of growing into the
 ministry of your Church.
 through Jesus Christ our Lord
 Amen

Congregation stands

Promise of Candidate:

I, (NAME), commit myself to this congregation; to serve willingly, to learn humbly, and to minister faithfully during this time of formation.

Promise of Supervisor:

I, (NAME), commit myself to this candidate; to reflect attentively, to support rigorously, to challenge graciously, and to give of my time and my experience generously in walking this road together.

Promise of Congregation:

We, (NAME OF CONGREGATION) commit ourselves to support this team in their learning, in their serving, and in their growing in ministry.

Congregation is seated

Covenant Prayer: (said together)

**Loving Lord
 unite us in worship
 strengthen us in service**

and bless us in our commitment to one another.

**When we rejoice, laugh with us
when we struggle, weep with us.
May we always speak the truth in love,
offering support and challenge when appropriate.
Guide us over the coming months
that we may encourage and nurture (NAME),
seek the good of the church,
and the glory of your kingdom.
Through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
Amen**

Hymn

Suitable hymns are:

CH4 250	Sent by the Lord am I
CH4 251	I, the Lord of sea and sky
CH4 496	Humbly in your sight we come together
CH4 500	Lord of creation, to you be all praise
CH4 502	Take my life, Lord, let it be
CH4 505	All that I am, all that I do
CH4 533	Will you come and follow me
CH4 542	Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
CH4 677	In the name of Christ we gather
CH4 678	Here is the place, now is the time
CH4 679	One is the body and one is the head
CH4 680	You are called to tell the story

Appendix VII

THEORY INTO PRACTICE: A CHALLENGE FOR SUPERVISORS IN FORMATION FOR ORDAINED MINISTRY from *Enriching Ministry: Pastoral Supervision in Practice*, Michael Paterson and Jessica Rose, Eds.

This chapter arises from research done by the author into ministerial formation within the Church of Scotland. She looked particularly at the integration of theory and practice as well as the value of practical placements and other requirements of the Church of Scotland Ministries Council for the formation of candidates.

The Churches are struggling. This is an observable fact, as the mores of society shift beneath our feet and the Churches become ever more peripheral. Numbers are falling and deeply held traditions are becoming irrelevant to the younger generations. In this context, how do we train and prepare our ministers to nurture the new – to take bold and prophetic steps into the future – whilst also equipping them to pastor those faithful and committed members who do not want to see their beloved church change?

The challenges are clear in the Board of Ministry's report to the general Assembly in 2000 'Ministers of the Gospel' (MG):

How is ... ministry to be understood and exercised today, in a Church that rightly affirms the ministry of the whole people of God and in a rapidly changing society that questions the relevance of [the] Gospel? And what does it mean to be ministers of the Gospel ... at a time when some are experiencing a crisis of identity and purpose in wrestling with inherited models and conflicting expectations of ordained ministry?¹

This report was prompted by the recognition that for years we have been failing our ministers, and therefore our Church, by inconsistency of training and lack of engagement with the real issues facing the Church. It clearly identifies reflective practice as a significant tool to equip ministers for ministry in these challenging times: 'Those called and ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament ... must be reflective practitioners, collaborative leaders and formative learners' (MG, 2.4.5.3-5).

While reflective practice has been fundamental to professional training in various disciplines since the early 1980s, only recently has it been a feature of the Church of Scotland process. Nevertheless, it has become increasingly valued for its potential to enable and encourage professionals to challenge their own practice and refresh their skills in response to the pressure to manage decline while engaging in mission.

During formation in the Church of Scotland, practical placements are the forum in which academic training meets the 'coal face' of parish work. Candidates are encouraged and sustained by the supervisory relationship as the primary context in which reflective practice takes place. Recent research suggests that this relationship is crucial in encouraging the gifts of reflection which sustain candidates into ministry, and indicates the problems which can arise when the supervision offered is not sufficiently rigorous or supportive. A number of candidates and ministers, interviewed for the research, are quoted here.

Recent developments in ministerial formation

Over the last fifty years a profound change has taken place in ministerial formation across all the Churches. Historically, the classroom was given pre-eminence over practical experience and study was isolated from the real life situations which both students and members of congregations encountered. Indeed, Schleiermacher's *Brief Outline of Theological Study* characterised practical theology as the application of philosophical understanding.² This

¹ *Church of Scotland Blue Book*, 2000, Ministers of the Gospel, 2.2.2.

² See Edward Farley, 1983, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

privileging of theoretical knowledge over lived experience led to a breakdown in the relationship between academic theology and the life of faith communities. Even when there were practical placements, David Lyall points out that ‘the role of the supervisor [was] to help the student apply a predetermined theological position’.³ This *a priori* theoretical approach was challenged from the 1940s onwards with the development of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), which recognised the value of reflection on practice as a pedagogical tool. The dialogical approach promoted by CPE encourages the continuous and contiguous development of both theory and practice, leading to the formation of ministers as described by Michael Carroll:

[who have t]he capacity ... to lead the church to act in ways that are faithful to the Gospel and appropriate within the situation ... [Ministers] who function as reflective [practitioners and] leaders who function with authority – not in a top-down, asymmetrical fashion but in partnership with laity (MG, 2.4.5.3.2).

Opportunities for reflective practice are embedded into the formation process in order to instil the habits of reflection which will foster resilience and sustain practitioners in a ministry which has the capacity to respond creatively to a constantly shifting paradigm. It is the process by which we encourage ministers to develop the skills required to react to a changing role in society. This is enabled through the consideration of the range of factors which affect outcomes, including the individual’s agency and response but also behavioural implications and, critically, theological assumptions. Thus, possibilities for prophetic action are identified, enabling ministers to respond more appropriately in context.

Ministerial Formation – the Process

Although in theory training equips candidates with skills of reflective practice, Kinast reminds us that ‘moving from “what happened” to “what it means” is not automatic’.⁴ It is crucial to enable candidates to make this journey, deepening their theology through critical reflection and praxis. A rigorous analysis of assumptions and ideology is required for learning to take place: ‘experience without reflection is not education’.⁵

It is widely acknowledged that learning which is focussed, structured around appropriate goals and outlined in a contract to which student and supervisor are held accountable, is more apt to produce measurable results and development. Accordingly, at the outset of a placement candidates draw up a learning covenant with their supervisor. During the placement, they meet weekly with the supervisor for reflection and guided learning, and a final report evaluates and critiques success in reaching their identified goals. Proceeding to the next stage of training depends on reports from the university, Ministries Training Network facilitator, supervisor and candidate to a panel of representatives from the Ministries Council and Presbytery. The panel also determines future training needs, setting goals and objectives for the year to come.⁶

This preparation for ministry aims to be grounded in the reality of the parish, rather than in an historical ideal. Its goal is to equip ministers with tools for a very different role from one they may have seen modelled and support them in ministries which are pioneering, prophetic and visionary.

Theological Reflection as Professional Development

To be effective, reflective practice needs to go beyond a model which simply asks the candidate to consider how well something went and how it could be improved. As David Walters has

³ David Lyall, 1990, Education and Ministerial Formation, in Duncan B. Forrester (ed.), *Theology and Practice*, London: Epworth Press, pp.106-119, p. 107.

⁴ Robert L. Kinast, 1996, *Let Ministry Teach: A Guide to Theological Reflection*, Minnesota, The Liturgical Press.

⁵ William Pyle, 1995, Theological Reflection, in William Pyle and Mary Alice Seals, (eds), *Experiencing Ministry Supervision*, Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman and Holdman Publishers, p. 109.

⁶ A series of locally organised small groups of candidates who meet together on a monthly basis with a facilitator for peer reflection and learning.

noted, to be a truly developmental tool reflective practice has to address more than mere function:

We should ... be seeking to act as facilitators of learning in which the outcomes go beyond subject knowledge and reach into the promotion of deeper-level learning capacities, which are transferable to new and less predictable areas.⁷

As Kinast suggests, 'there is a divine dimension at the origin of all experience'.⁸ As theological educators have adopted reflective practice, therefore, so it has been adapted from the process described by Schön, Kolb and others into a more intentionally theological act which seeks to identify God's agency in addition to other factors. It is the forum where theological disciplines meet. Here, practice engages with our perceptions of the history and traditions of our faith, the propositions of our particular faith position, and our biblical understanding. Theological reflection is developing into a discrete discipline which is the focus for critical attention by a growing number of practical theologians.⁹

It is the nature of parish business is to be doing several contradictory and personally demanding tasks simultaneously, so ministerial formation is an appropriate arena for reflective practice as described by David Saltiel:

[Reflective practice] engages with the messiness, the unpredictability, the uncertainty of practice, focussing not on abstract theory but on the ... real experiences of practitioners and the skills they develop as they try to make sense of these experiences.¹⁰

Theological reflection draws upon a diversity of skills – cognitive, relational, professional and spiritual – and it takes imagination to work across various disciplines and enable transformation in the practice of a minister. It requires time to reflect, honesty and a willingness to be vulnerable to re-enter a dissonant situation and consider the situation critically from a variety of perspectives not pre-eminently the candidate's own. A fruitful engagement with the process involves study, prayer and creativity.

It is often the case that candidates have a poor understanding of reflective practice prior to training. Experience also suggests that, as Lambdin and Tilley put it, candidates in training 'don't always know what they don't know'.¹¹ However, training increases in effectiveness as candidates gain understanding and develop a context for interpreting new discoveries and knowledge. As Jennifer Moon explains, in reflective practice meaning is constructed through lived experience, rather than distilled from wisdom imparted by didactic means.¹² An able supervisor as a reflective partner is important in facilitating the deep reading of an incident required to promote understanding and development.

It is clear from the recent research that the emphasis on reflective practice promoted by the Board of Ministry in 2000 has begun to shape the formation process in the Church of Scotland today, as reflected by the comments of those interviewed:

The reflection thing ... got so drummed into us from day one ... it became part of what I started to do quite naturally ... in my theology ... which is why I think it's always a kind of shifting sands thing ... your theology it shifts because of this whole reflective process (Anne).

⁷ David Walters, 2007, *Who do they think they are? Student's perceptions of themselves as learners*, in Anne Campbell, and Lin Norton (eds), *Learning, Teaching and Assessing in Higher Education: Developing Reflective Practice*, Exeter, Learning Matters, p. 58.

⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁹ See, for example: Elaine Graham, Heather Walton, and Frances Ward, 2005, *Theological Reflection: Methods*, London, SCM Press; Kinast, *op.cit.*; Sally Nash and Paul Nash, 2009, *Tools For Reflective Ministry*, London, SPCK; Judith Thompson with Stephen Pattison and Ross Thomsson, 2008, *Theological Reflection: SCM Study Guide*, London, SCM Press; Frances Ward, 2005, *Lifelong Learning: Theological Education and Supervision*, London, SCM; James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead, 1995, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry*, Lanham, Chicago, New York, Oxford, Sheed and Ward.

¹⁰ David Saltiel, 2010, *Judgement, narrative and discourse, a critique of reflective practice*, in Helen Bradbury, Nick Frost, Sue Kilminster, Miriam Zukas, (eds), *Beyond Reflective Practice: New Approaches to Professional Lifelong Learning*, London and New York, Routledge, p.131.

¹¹ Keith Lamdin and David Tilley, 2007, *Supporting New Ministers In the Local Church: A Handbook*, London, SPCK, p. 24.

¹² See Jennifer Moon, 2004, *A Handbook of Reflective and Experiential Learning: Theory and Practice*, London and New York, Routledge Falmer.

Being required to step outside the comfort zone was a learning experience in what Sandra called 'those ... first time opportunities where you just get sort of plonked into it and it's actually the only way you can learn' (Sandra). Kinast suggests that this requires the ability to 'reformulate one's theology in order to express the truth which that theology intends'.¹³ A level of discomfort in a situation increases reflection and enhances learning: 'Negative situations can be a very good learning curve' (Anne). In reflection on such situations, the supervisor needs to be able to be constructively critical even as appropriate support is offered, and to journey with the candidate in discovering new ways to make connections between theory and practice. Trust is necessary to be open to the reflective process:

It's up to the individual to reflect. We can't make anybody else reflect; they must do it for themselves, and do it in the security that they can express themselves that they won't get any repercussions (Sam).

The value of reflective practice is not obvious to everyone, however: 'If you're being asked to reflect on things that you didn't think were important to your view of ministry then ... you question the viability of that' (Derek). Courses that prioritise reflection as part of a theology degree are not always popular with candidates for ministry. Jennifer Moon found that 'not all learners find reflection easy when it is introduced as a specific requirement'.¹⁴ When MTN was introduced into training, it was initially met with high anxiety and resistance. Journaling remains the least popular aspect, as exemplified by two of my interviewees: 'I still have an ambivalent relationship with journalling' (Louise); 'Reading back was good to see how my confidence had grown but even so did not enjoy this aspect at all.' (John).

Important questions also arise when it comes to assessing reflective practice as a skill. Assessing reflective practice is potentially difficult; it can shape the nature of the learning, and there are problems about how such a personal activity can be assessed.¹⁵ Hewitt and Smith, however, found that students are 'better able to develop their own assessment skills when they experience placements in which assessment [is] ongoing'.¹⁶

Supervision as a Pedagogical Process

An academic degree bearing little relation to the real work of ministry can be dangerous without practical formation, and this too was borne out in the research: 'I would say the vast majority of what I studied at university had nothing at all to do with becoming a minister' (Sandra). A high degree of responsibility is placed on the supervisor, then, to allow, encourage and facilitate the integration of theory and practice. This also has its risks, as Farley suggests:

The alienation between theological studies and the needs and tasks of the church's leadership is promoted, not reduced, by the functionalist attempt to make the tasks of ministry themselves the criteria, subject matter and the end of theological study'.¹⁷

Such an approach confines theological disciplines within the constraints of a didactic exercise, failing to consider the teleological and redemptive nature of the community they seek to serve. It is essential, therefore, to give candidates theological and practical tools to exercise a ministry which takes that community seriously.

While practical placements are generally highly rated by the candidates it is clear from their lived experience that the learning process is extremely dependent on the quality of supervision. Experiences range from those where 'my first placement didn't really prepare me for ministry at all' (Peter), to those where the candidate gets a real feel for ministry, and the supervisor is prepared to 'take the back off the television set and let you see how it works' (Sandra). A

¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 122.

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 134.

¹⁵ See Sue Schutz, 2008, 'Assessing and evaluating reflection' in Chris Bulman, and Sue Schutz, (eds), *Reflective Practice in Nursing 4th Edition*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, pp. 55-80.

¹⁶ Dierdre Hewitt and Deborah Smith, 2007, 'Formative assessment of the practice-based element of degree work' in Anne Campbell, and Lin Norton (eds), *Learning, Teaching and Assessing in Higher Education: Developing Reflective Practice*, Exeter, Learning Matters, p. 107.

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 127.

supervisor's willingness to show vulnerability is a significant teaching tool. However, while there are supervisors who model this – 'I learned a lot I suspect because I was used by my supervisor as a sounding board' (Fran) – others act protectively, shielding their candidates from difficult or contentious experiences. It is not always clear, however, whether they are protecting the candidate or themselves, and such protectiveness is counterproductive to a good learning experience:

I think [my] supervisors ... found it difficult to admit when they had difficulties and I don't actually think I saw a crisis situation ... and so when I came into it in my own church I found that really difficult to deal with (Julie).

Issues in Supervision

An identified weakness in some current supervision is that supervisors have not themselves been trained under a reflective model and may not have developed the skills to engage in helpful critical reflection with their candidates. Supervisors inevitably tend to model a ministry in which they themselves were trained, rather than encourage styles of ministry for a new context, as described by Peter: 'In these placements ... my supervisors ... were training me to do what they had been trained to do'. The training of supervisors in reflective practice and in what is expected of a supervisor is key to dealing with this issue.

Rigorous supervision is crucial to enabling theological reflection to provide a bridge between theory and practice: 'The most important skills [of the supervisor] are the willingness and ability to nurture and challenge the candidate's ... progress towards deeper spirituality, and biblical and theological reflection on reported ministry events'¹⁸ Reflective practice requires action, demanding that renewed understanding be put into practice and further tested. This means that supervision needs to be a place of safety where discomfort can be aired, new courses of action identified and risks taken in the context of support offered.

Ministry experience is not, however, simply a matter of conversations between minister, or candidate, and parishioner: the course of the conversation is also influenced by unspoken factors such as emotions, assumptions, issues of power and the environment. The supervisor/candidate relationship is an unequal one and participants must be alert to this. Reflective thinking must take into account the subliminal forces of power. Support and challenge are both necessary in mentoring, but at the right level: too much support and too little challenge communicates that there is no need for growth and development, while the reverse can be demoralising.

We cannot ignore issues of psychology and personality in the supervisory relationship, and there are many rocks on which the relationship may founder.¹⁹ Candidates may become dependent upon the supervisor or play games, for example comparing one supervisor with another or playing academic demands off against the placement demands. Boundary issues can be significant and it is not always clear when the candidate-supervisor relationship is compromised by becoming, for example, too pastoral in nature, or too friendly. Transference, resistance to learning and clashes between supervisor and candidate are all dangers of which supervisors need to be aware. Foskett and Lyall demonstrate the necessity for a supervisor's self-awareness: the critical ability to reflect on personal responses to the candidate's experience and reflection without prejudicing the supervisory relationship. However the ability to confront and challenge must go hand in hand with support in order to promote growth and development. Specific and practical feedback is essential and should interact continuously with the other aspects of teaching:

¹⁸ Walter C. Jackson, 1995, An Introduction to Field Education in William Pyle and Mary Alice Seals, (eds), *Experiencing Ministry Supervision*, Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman and Holdman Publishers, p. 11.

¹⁹ For a detailed discussion, see John Foskett and David Lyall, *Helping the Helpers: Supervision and Pastoral Care*, London: SPCK.

Feedback should ... motivate learners to move forward into their next episodes of *learning by doing*, and focus their efforts ... towards bringing the experience from their past work to bear on making their next work better.²⁰ (Race, 2005, p. 95).

It is also the case that individuals can be closed to learning for a variety of reasons. It seems unlikely that anyone would volunteer that they are resistant to learning, particularly in an environment where openness to learning is valued. However, some candidates interviewed identified this characteristic in their peers:

I think there are people who come into ministry older but think they're virtually formed [who] think 'I've been saying prayers in the church I belonged to for years'. Or 'I'm already an elder so why should I do all this?' (Peter).

Learning is, of course, less likely to take place where the learner has no context for it, or does not understand why it is required: 'because I hadn't really seen how you do it I couldn't learn how to do it because I didn't know what I was supposed to do' (Anne); 'I would find it much easier coming to something ... knowing why I'm being taken through things, what I then make of it is up to me ... if there is seen to be context (Derek).

In this situation, therefore, the supervisor has a responsibility to promote conditions for learning, making clear what learning is expected, and why – selling the need for learning to the candidate. It is helpful, therefore, if supervisors are given some understanding of issues such as learning styles, personality types and conflict management preferences. These tools both enhance self-awareness and enable a greater understanding of how candidates differ in their approach to learning.

Wingate observes that one quarter of students engage fully with the process, absorbing the learning and making it their own while one quarter are unaltered and unaffected by it. The remaining half *can* be engaged and the imperative on the process is to facilitate this.²¹ Supervision requires specific skills which not all possess, and it is necessary to provide tools and training to enable robust mentoring of candidates. For candidates, early and continuing induction into expectations and skills greatly enhance the learning experience.

Conclusions

It is undoubtedly the case that 'those who have charge of the preparation of people for ministry ... have extraordinary responsibilities and marvellous opportunities'.²² It is a privilege to nurture a vocation. Equally, however, there is a responsibility to ensure that the process is both as rigorous and as enabling as possible.

Four overarching themes are central to a good and helpful learning experience in ministerial formation:

- context
- reflection
- trust
- respect .

Without a comprehensible context, experience delivers little in the way of learning: 'I think I got more out of the post ordination conferences, because by that point I knew I what wanted to know' (Anne). To learn from an experience, there has to be an element of sense-making: 'when you're just told to do it by rote, there's no context for what you are doing' (Peter). Reflection has a significant role to play in this, but a level of trust in the process and the people, and a sense of mutual respect between candidate and supervisor, enhances the learning process. This cannot be prescribed, but enabling candidates to have an

²⁰ Phil Race, 2005, *Making Learning Happen; A Guide for Post-Compulsory Education*, London, Sage Publications, p. 95.

²¹ Andrew Wingate, 1999, *Does Theological Education Make a Difference?* Geneva, WCC Publications.

element of choice in where they go on their placements, and therefore who their supervisor is, helps to create favourable conditions for respect to grow.

While academic theory, i.e., theology, is not in itself geared towards the development of ministry skills, it is nevertheless a necessary foundation for ministry. However, making the links between one and the other can be difficult for the candidate, especially those who are not naturally reflective. This gap in training between experience and theology is expressed by both candidates in training and ministers in the early stages of ministry: 'The academic training wasn't vocational at all ... I was very disappointed ... ever since then I've been convinced that doing ... a purely academic degree, is not the way that we should be doing ministerial formation' (Sandra).

The challenge facing the supervisor, therefore, is to enable greater integration between theory and the reality of practice, creating the conditions for learning by enlisting the cooperation of the candidate in his or her own development. Ultimately, practical placements are the most useful context for making those significant links between practice and theory. It is here that the candidate is exposed to the reality of the parish; here that theology is challenged by the messiness of real life situations; here that practical skills are practised and honed; here that support and challenge combine to train and equip our ministers for their own distinctive ministry. The supervisor is reflective partner, teacher, coach and mentor through all of this, and in a ministry formation programme has the single most important role in equipping the ministers of the future for this most exciting but demanding of roles, the ministry of the Church.

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²² Kenneth Wilson, 2008, Professional, Purposeful, Ecclesial and Liturgical, in Angela Shier-Jones, (ed.), *The Making of Ministry*, Peterburgh, Epworth, p. 113.