

PLACEMENT SUPERVISORS' HANDBOOK

Initial Ministerial Education

August 2023



Introduction

We wish to extend a very warm welcome to all those who are a prospective, or already serving in the role of, placement supervisor to ministry candidates (referring to candidates for the ministry of word and sacrament, and for the Diaconate) in the Church of Scotland.

In seeking to serve as a placement supervisor, we believe you are responding to a call by God; a call which, supported by the discernment of the Church, releases you into a particular ministry of aiding and contributing to the formation of ministry candidates.

Time spent in placement is so valuable for our candidates, allowing them to experience all aspects of ministry, enabling them to ground their theological learning in ministry practice, encouraging them to grow in character and formation for ministry and sharing with them the experience of leadership in local church ministry.

Our expectation is that a placement supervisor will fully embrace the opportunity to share their approach to leading their particular church community. They then have the privilege of enabling candidates to openly reflect on that approach, providing the space to try things out and in turn be able to form and shape their own approach to leadership.

The formation process that ministry candidates are engaged in is guided by the Acts and Regulations of the Church of Scotland and the General Assembly. Please familiarise yourself with the relevant Acts in Church Law regarding training, which contain important information. Please visit the [Acts page](#) of the Church of Scotland website to find:

2004 Act 10: Selection and Training for Full Time Ministry Act

and

2011 Act 9: Ordained Local Ministry Act

We appreciate that there is a lot to the role of a placement supervisor. This handbook has been produced to assist in accessing key information and guidance associated with the role, but please get in touch with the training team if you have any questions or queries. Training materials and resources, required to effectively serve in all aspects of the role, are provided separately during the discernment, preparation and ongoing training activity, that the training team will invite prospective and serving placement supervisors to participate in.

Contact: ministrietraining@churchofscotland.org.uk

As a team we look forward to providing training and support that is aimed at enabling you in this important role.

Contents

Introduction	2
Section 1: Who is involved in the formation process of a ministry candidate?.....	4
The Church of Scotland	4
Presbytery	4
Faith Action Programme Leadership Team (FAPLT).....	4
Training Officers	4
Placement Supervisor	4
Formation Partner	4
Ministries Training Network Facilitator	4
Pastoral Support Team	4
Congregational Support Group.....	4
University.....	4
Academic tutor	4
Section 2: Outline of the elements of mandatory formation provision	5
Academic Studies.....	5
Placements	5
FTWAS/Diac	6
Conferences.....	7
Additional FTWAS, OLM and Diaconate requirements	7
Section 3: The candidate's formation whilst on placement	9
Formation Framework.....	9
Skills development within placements	10
Section 4: Other features of a placement to consider	12
Welfare of Candidates	12
Time Management.....	12
Theological reflection and understanding of ministry	12
Rhythm of Preaching and Teaching.....	13
Projects	13
Support/Feedback Groups	13
Section 5: Candidate Appraisal.....	14
Initial Course Meeting (ICM)	14
Learning and Serving Covenant.....	14
Year 1	14
September	14
Year 2/3/4	14
June or September.....	14
Probation Interim Appraisal.....	14
Probation Final Appraisal	14
Interim Appraisal (during probation)	15
Final Probation Appraisal	15
Section 6: What the placement supervisor should be seeking to bring to the formation process.....	16
Section 7: Recruitment, Training and Assessment of a placement supervisor	17
Recruitment of prospective placement supervisors	17
Training and assessment of prospective placement supervisors.....	17
Probationary period	17
Continuing training and assessment of Placement Supervisors.....	17

Section 1: Who is involved in the formation process of a ministry candidate?

The placement supervisor provides a significant element within the whole formation process that a ministry candidate participates in. It is important to understand what the other elements are, so that the placement supervisor can play their part in bringing an appropriate degree of connectivity, progression and collaboration to the process. Below is a brief description of the role and responsibility associated with the other elements of the formation process.

The Church of Scotland

Presbytery

Continuing support throughout the formation process. The presbytery presents a candidate for ministry training and is the court that gives the final approval, or not, that they are ready to be ordained into a ministry role following the probationary period. A Presbytery Assessor will be present at Candidate Appraisals.

Faith Action Programme Leadership Team (FAPLT)

The Faith Action Programme Leadership Team has oversight of all aspects of training, including ministerial training and formation.

Training Officers

Staff deployed from the FAPLT's People and Training Team, the Training Officers and associated administrative staff journey alongside candidates throughout their formation process, coordinate placements, and host conferences and other training provision for the candidates.

Placement Supervisor

The minister of word and sacrament, or deacon, who will supervise candidate placements and report on the progression of the candidate during the placement. They will facilitate ongoing theological reflection, learning and development, as well as acting as a line manager during candidate placements.

Formation Partner

As part of an ongoing pilot, a Formation Partner will journey with candidates as a critical friend and will develop a unique relationship with them throughout the duration of training.

Ministries Training Network Facilitator

A facilitator who leads an ongoing theological reflection group that candidates participate in.

Pastoral Support Team

Central pastoral support is available to everyone in training. The team can help find a spiritual director, a pastoral supervisor or a coach, depending on the needs.

Congregational Support Group

A group set up during the candidate's probation placement to aid you in your ministerial development, through providing a combination of support and critique.

University

Academic tutor

An individual from the candidate's academic provider, who will seek to support them to effectively complete their theological education.

Section 2: Outline of the elements of mandatory formation provision

In order to successfully complete initial ministerial education, candidates are required to complete several mandatory components of the formation process. The information below summarises these components and has been included to further enable placement supervisors to play their part in bringing an appropriate degree of connectivity, progression and collaboration to a candidate's formation, as they see how placements fit within the other elements of the mandatory formation provision.

Academic Studies

While in discernment candidates will have applied to study at an academic provider.

Type of ministry	Required academic qualification
Full-time Ministry of Word and Sacrament	Bachelor of Divinity
Diaconate	Bachelor of Divinity
Ordained Local Ministry	Certificate of Higher Education
Reader	Certificate of Higher Education

Where candidates already have academic qualifications in theology, this is considered and an appropriate course found to refresh and update theological knowledge and understanding.

The modules selected are required to cover the following subject areas:

- Modern Church History
- Old Testament
- New Testament
- Worship
- Missiology
- Practical Theology
- Systematic Theology
- Sacramental Theology

Placements

Training Officers arrange placements in congregations where a trained placement supervisor serves. The choice is also based, as much as possible, on the candidate's formation, learning and development needs. Some points to consider:

- In planning the 'Autumn' placements, which are undertaken between October and May, the candidate and placement supervisor must ensure that one of these will involve Advent/Christmas and the other Lent/Holy Week/Easter, as an expected minimum involvement. Ideally, both placements should involve both parts of the liturgical year.
- It is the responsibility of the candidate and placement supervisor to arrange the start date of placements. However, it is important that the placement does not start until the candidate has had the Annual Appraisal. This is an important part of their training process at which point they will be given permission to proceed to the next stage of their training.
- The 'Autumn' placements will also normally take place during the period when the candidate is also participating in academic study. This provides a valuable opportunity for discussion and practical experience to occur, that applies what has been learnt in study to the practice of ministry. However, in planning developmental activities during placements, 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 participating in new academic study.

- Attendance at Ministries Training Network meetings is also included in the placement hours.
- Candidates on placement should not expect to be able to offer their services for pulpit supply during the term of a placement.

As set out below, there are different placement requirements for the different ministries.

FTWAS/Diac

Placement	Duration	Timeframe	Details	Time commitment
1 Autumn	25 weeks	October - May	Part-time	10 hrs per week
2 Autumn	25 weeks	October - May	Part-time	10 hrs per week
3 Summer	10 weeks	Summer	Full-time	40 hrs per week
Probation	15 months	Starting between July and October	Full-time	40 hrs per week

Per Autumn placement	Probation
3 complete services Preach 6 times (min.) Holidays to be arranged with supervisor, but placement must be a minimum of 25 weeks	Preaching 23 times 6 weeks holiday plus 8 days public holiday (not including Sundays)

- N.B. The full-time 'Summer' placement should involve the leadership of worship on Sundays, where appropriate. Candidates will also 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. The 10 weeks may be split, by prior arrangement, in a 4:6, 5:5, or 6:4 week arrangement, with a maximum of two weeks of leave. Candidates must not be unsupervised for longer than one week during this placement. Allowance should be made, where required, to enable the candidate to prepare and attend any re-sit examinations. Furthermore, the summer placement should normally be completed prior to the start of the mandatory Candidates' Gathering, which is run by the Training Team at the end of August.

OLM

Placement	Duration	Timeframe	Details	Time commitment
1 - Autumn	25 weeks	October - May	Part-time	3 hrs per week plus Sunday
2 - Autumn	25 weeks	October - May	Part-time	3 hrs per week plus Sunday
Probation	12 months	Starting between July and October	Part-time	10 hrs per week plus Sunday

Per Autumn placement	Probation
3 complete services	4 complete services
3 Sundays holiday plus associated work	Preaching 8 times (min.)

- N.B. While OLM training should be completed in three years, a period of up to six years could be allowed from the point of beginning training until finishing probation. It is requested that an OLM candidate seek to complete at least one module of academic study and one placement in their first year to ensure the relationship between theological learning and ministry practice is strong. Thereafter, if required, the candidate could alternate academic study with placement until the completion of their training. A year of deferral of both study and placement would be possible, as long as everything is completed within six years. A minimum of three Candidate Gatherings and two Probation Conferences should be attended.

Conferences

Conferences are run by the FAPLT and, while mandatory, are a great opportunity for all candidates to come together to learn and develop as a group.

Conference	Required	Details
Candidates Gathering	All	August (3 times/2 times for Readers)
Probation Conferences 1 and 3	FTWAS/OLM/Diaconate	September and March
Probation Conferences 2, 4 and General Assembly visit	All FTWAS/Diaconate probationers; OLM optional	January, June and May (General Assembly)

- N.B. Before a candidate can begin their placements, they must be PVG checked and attend the Safeguarding Training provided, even if they have attended this locally. Safeguarding Training for new Candidates includes initial online training and the participation in follow-up sessions at the first Candidates Gathering that they attend.

Additional FTWAS, OLM and Diaconate requirements

Ministries Training Network (MTN)

Ministries Training Network (MTN) groups are peer learning groups designed to enable the integration of all that a candidate is learning in both the academic and placement spaces, by encouraging and developing their reflective skills.

They meet monthly, between October and May for two hours each time. These groups are facilitated by practitioners, sourced by the Training Team, who serve in a variety of roles across the Church.

Each year has a theme which runs through all of the groups and there will be an element of preparation required. Candidates will be expected to contribute to discussion and reflection at each meeting.

Occasionally candidates will be asked to lead worship or contribute an example of a recent experience of significant learning for ministry.

The Training Team will assign candidates to an MTN group each year.

These groups are compulsory for FTWS candidates and full attendance is expected unless there is a good reason for absence. Membership of an MTN group is optional for OLM and Diaconate Candidates and Readers-in-Training. They are asked to indicate any desire to participate by the end of August.

The time spent in these meetings are counted as part of the placement hours, so it is appropriate to adjust other expectations for weeks that these are happening.

- N.B. Probationers participate in their own MTN groups, which have a different format.

Speech Training

Those training for the national ministries need to be able to communicate the word of God in various ways to different audiences, with confidence and clarity.

Speech Training gives a space for all candidates in their first year of study to examine the purpose, mechanics, handling of self and importance of connection in communication; giving everyone access to good training wherever they are in the country. A series of three mandatory online sessions will be run each winter, while participants have current experience of preaching and opportunity to practise and grow. Another mandatory follow-up session will be arranged for the summer, to both reflect and identify future development. It is hoped that peer support and accountability will come from this, giving each other honest and helpful feedback.

The time spent in these sessions are counted as part of the placement hours, so it is appropriate to adjust other expectations for weeks that these are happening.

Church Law

In addition to attending Church Law training at conferences candidates are required to pass a Church Law assignment, which will be set at the third probation conference.

Section 3: The candidate's formation whilst on placement

Formation Framework

The Church's **Formation Framework** outlines the Formation Framework for candidates for ministry of word and sacrament in the Church of Scotland. Its purposes include: 'to nurture and guide candidates in their calling'; to provide 'a clear structure for formation for ministry'; and, to give 'candidates confidence about the expectations required of them and [to assure] the Church that there is a thorough approach'.

As depicted below, the Formation Framework identifies 'eight dimensions that are key to the Formation Framework', each of which 'has elements that sit within the Formational Layers'. The Formational Layers are 'Who we are', 'Theory, Tradition and Knowledge' and 'Skill, Practice, Abilities and Qualities'.

The Formation Framework requires that 'not only does each dimension need to be addressed with care, but each of the layers needs attention and development'. The Formation Framework also identifies 'key elements of formation' which 'are spread across the Formational Layers and defines how each of the dimensions is interpreted and the expectations of development across the entirety of the initial ministerial formation journey, from initial selection, through the academic phase, into probation and then at ordination'.



Skills development within placements

The Formation Framework gives a thorough breakdown of each of the dimensions of ministry. In recognition that development occurs in a range of contexts this table offers a quick overview of the skills that are most importantly focused upon during placements.

Across the placements we are expecting to see the skills, ability and confidence of candidates develop significantly. Many of the areas mentioned below will be revisited frequently during initial ministerial education and throughout ministry. Each time something is encountered we'd hope that there is a new depth of understanding as more of the complexity of things is understood.

Clearly not every placement will be able to include space to explore and develop in every aspect detailed below, but across the range of placements it is expected that all will be addressed. This is something to have in mind when you're putting together learning covenants at the start of a placement. The column 'Probation' highlights areas that are especially important to explore during a probation placement, but of course if there are great opportunities to explore these in other placements you should do so.

Dimension	Placement 1 and 2	Probation
Faith vocation and spirituality	Reflection on vocation as minister in the local church. Serving in an accountable way Theological reflection on ministry practice	Reflecting on the place of the Minister within the Church of Scotland Developing a sustainable and sustaining personal spiritual life
Character, ethics and development	Developing appropriate boundaries in ministry Demonstrating self-awareness – reflecting on ministry, alongside approaches to self-understanding and understanding of others, e.g. personality preferences, emotional intelligence, leadership styles etc. Operating with an appropriate degree of vulnerability in ministry Demonstrating a commitment to life-long learning and development	Developing personal support structures
Leadership and relationships	Experiencing and reflecting upon different models of leadership, for both ministers and others in church Developing collaborative approaches to working and serving Developing skills in a variety of leadership approaches Understanding of and working with difference Understanding role of teaching elder	Reflecting biblically and theologically on a range of styles and approaches to leadership Understanding and experience of supervising others (volunteers, employees etc.) Understanding and experience of handling change and conflict
Worship sacraments and preaching	Leading worship and preaching, demonstrating understanding of how context impacts the planning and delivery of worship Observation of and appropriate involvement in the sacraments Using understanding of the Christian year (and cultural year) and the lectionary to shape the provision of worship	Equipping and enabling others in the leading of worship

Pastoral care	<p>Pastoral visiting in a range of contexts (home, care home, hospital, workplaces etc.)</p> <p>Developing skills of providing pastoral care</p> <p>Understanding different approaches to using a care team (role of elders etc.)</p> <p>Observing and involvement in funerals and bereavement ministry</p> <p>Developing listening skills</p>	Sole responsibility for delivering funerals and carrying out bereavement ministry
Discipleship	<p>Discipling others (individually & groups)</p> <p>Engaging others in ministry discernment (beginning to identify and draw out gifts in others) Growing as a disciple</p> <p>Teaching the faith – developing skills of planning, preparing and delivering adult education in the church context</p>	Take responsibility to lead a discipleship initiative
Mission	<p>Participating in a range of missional activities</p> <p>Discerning the potential for mission activity (potentially carrying out an audit) Participating in school's work Participating in community work (particularly seeking to work in partnership with others)</p>	<p>Lead mission activity (time limited project)</p> <p>Reflecting on the Five Marks of Mission and how they would/could shape ministry in the congregation</p>
Church management	<p>Participating in Kirk Session meetings</p> <p>Observing Presbytery meetings</p> <p>Routine involvement in and responsibility for the planning and preparation of all aspects of worship, occasional services etc.</p>	<p>Moderating part or all of a Kirk Session meeting Contribute to the life of Presbytery</p> <p>Developing understanding of OSCR, Finance, Church law</p>

Section 4: Other features of a placement to consider

Welfare of Candidates

Candidates may have times when the pressure of the multi-faceted nature of the formation process becomes overly challenging. While it is important that candidates do not miss out on important experiences, it should be acknowledged that there may be times when the plans for engagement in the work of the parish have to be adjusted.

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 an area of housing at a particular time, and the supervisor should be alert to addressing potential situations. Supervisors and candidates are encouraged to engage in discussion about appropriate boundaries and self-care in ministry, so as to develop healthy habits for the future.

If you have concerns about a candidate's welfare, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Training Team for support and guidance if needed.

Furthermore, we recognise that few individuals will go through their candidacy without becoming ill or having some sort of injury which requires them to take time off from their studies. The FAPLT appreciates this, is sympathetic to candidates who are unwell and is committed to supporting them wherever possible to return to good health. There may also be other circumstances where candidates are unable to attend studies e.g. carer responsibilities, pregnancy, emergency domestic situations.

If any such situation should arise, candidates should contact the People and Training Team to notify them of absence and to seek for support and guidance. All Candidate policies can be found [here](#).

Throughout training, candidates are responsible for:

- attending all placements, unless unfit to do so
- investigating alternative arrangements to compensate for missed work
- ensuring that proper notifications are made when unwell, in line with policy
- ensuring that when they return, they complete the Student Absence Return form
- taking personal responsibility for their health

Time Management

It is important that a placement supervisor introduces the candidate to what happens within a week in a parish minister's life. Candidates should be equipped to question 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 commitments are put into the calendar, so as to allow for the emergency situations that are a regular feature of ministry. Similarly, candidates will need to become adept at judging what time is required to prepare for different tasks and making sure appropriate time-off is factored in. A key skill is confidently being able to know how and when to say yes, and when to say no, and when to give time to personal well-being.

Theological reflection and understanding of ministry

A significant part of the supervisor's role involves them in enabling candidates to reflect on why we do what we do, how we do what we do and what issues it raises for us theologically. While the supervisor might be teaching more of the mechanics in placements one to three, it is important to attend to the fact that there are theological reasons for what we are doing.

At all times candidates should be encouraged to integrate theory and practice. Challenging candidates to

question the many 'givens' of church life is important. For example, it would be appropriate to question what the choice of hymns says about what a congregation believes, and hence, how the choice of hymns is a critical aspect in the theological development of a congregation. Candidates should review the hymns/songs that they are using, and seek to answer, for example: what picture of God arises; what understanding of atonement or the character of Christ do they foster; and what emotional issues these praise items might engender in a congregation.

Rhythm of Preaching and Teaching

It is important to enable candidates to plan for the preaching and teaching that is undertaken in the parish and congregation(s).

- Is the lectionary used? Why, or why not?
- What are the rights and rituals that are familiar to this congregation?
- What are the topics that are often preached on in a year?
- Is there regular preaching on marriage, baptism and death?
- What are the particular festivals, beyond those of the Christian calendar, or even the secular calendar, that that are celebrated in the parish? Why are they celebrated?
- What are the 'big' issues to be aware of? What can be difficult about them and is challenging and/or rewarding about addressing them?
- It is important that candidates are enabled to absorb something of the particular life of each congregation they are placed with, so that they then might learn how to recognise distinctive contextual features and issues. This will assist them 'in the moment', but will also enable them to connect and serve more effectively in the setting where they will be called to once ordained.

The following templates are available to enable reflection on aspects of led worship:

- Worship Assessment **form**
- Worship Assessment **guidance**

Projects

Sometimes it is appropriate to give a candidate a particular project to undertake in the parish. For example, the leadership of a discipleship group, or participation in a leadership role with colleagues of a youth group, Sunday School group or Outreach Programme. Giving candidates the opportunity to contribute and lead in a particular way, preferably where the supervisor is not involved directly, will provide the opportunity for gaining confidence and an understanding of the issues of planning, engagement with other lay leaders, and empowering others to offer their gifts for ministry. We cannot always ensure the success of a project or experiment, and indeed we can learn a lot from things that don't go as expected. However, it is important that a candidate's initiative and creativity is not sacrificed or endangered by launching into something precipitately, without due thought, consideration and advance planning. Obviously, it is important to set up and run these opportunities in a way that, where appropriate, the initiative will continue and thrive beyond the candidate's input.

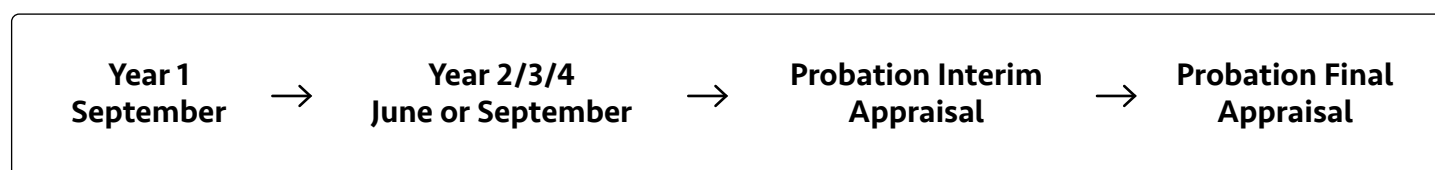
Support/Feedback Groups

Although generally only utilised during the probationary placement, a support/feedback group, made up of individuals from the placement congregation(s), can be beneficial for providing other perspectives on a candidate's formation and another avenue of support. The placement supervisor should oversee the establishment of the group, ensuring that it is facilitated well and those involved understand its purpose (primarily to give feedback in a supportive and non-threatening environment, but also to offer pastoral support). This support group is also established with the clear understanding that it is not a substitute for the placement supervisor's supervision sessions.

Section 5: Candidate Appraisal

A candidate's progress through their formation process will be appraised regularly throughout their candidacy. Various key documents, including the placement supervisor's report (described in more detail below), are submitted, appropriately in advance, to be discussed at a meeting of an appraisal panel. The panel is made up of representatives of the FAPLT and/or its People and Training Team, and presbytery. The placement supervisor is not required to attend. At the appraisal meetings, the candidate attends and they are asked to reflect on their progress and identify their learning and development needs for the next stage of their training. These learning and development needs should be addressed, as appropriate, in the next stage of a candidate's formation process, whether on placement, through academic study, or via some other developmental activity. The appraisal panels also confirm support, or otherwise, of the candidate progressing to the next stage of the formation process.

Appraisals can be called at any time, but they generally fall into the following pattern:



Initial Course Meeting (ICM)

Having successfully passed through the discernment process, including the assessment conference, but prior to actually starting their initial ministerial education, candidates have a one-on-one meeting with a Training Officer. They discuss what formation process the candidate needs to engage in, within the parameters that all candidates are required to follow. This includes any specific academic training requirements, developmental points identified at the assessment conference and any other personal goals they have, such as the nature of placements they would appreciate participating in. Hence, when a placement supervisor is due to work with a candidate serving in their first placement, it will be necessary to discuss how to address what has been identified in the ICM.

Learning and Serving Covenant

Before the beginning of a placement, some goals for the coming period will have been drawn up and agreed through the annual review meeting or initial course meeting. These goals represent formational needs for the candidate and will help form the basis of a Learning Covenant that the candidate and supervisor will collaboratively devise. Hence, at the start of a placement, the supervisor and candidate together should use those formational needs to identify goals to be addressed during placement. They would then need to identify appropriate activities, experiences and opportunities, including time for reflection, that will be put into place to enable the candidate to achieve these goals by the end of the placement. A well-thought-out Learning Covenant is a significant learning tool and should be referred to throughout the placement. It needs to be completed and returned to the Training Team within four weeks of the start of the placement (within six weeks of starting probation). There is a **standard template** for the Learning Covenant and guidance is provided on its completion.

Annual Candidate Appraisal (the pre-probation years)

As mentioned above, this is a meeting of facilitated conversation and discussion, that includes a mix of: supporting and encouraging candidates, confirming their progress has been satisfactory, or not; seeking clarification where required; and setting formation and learning goals for the following year. More details about these can be found in the **IME Handbook**. The appraisal paperwork that is required and by whom:

- **Placement report** - completed by the placement supervisor towards the end of a placement, this provides the tool for the supervisor to reflect on how the candidate has progressed in the eight dimensions that are key to the Church of Scotland's Formation Framework for ministers of word and sacrament. **Templates** of the report for the different ministries are provided (Diaconate, FTWAS and OLM). It is important that this report is completed by the deadline and submitted to the Training

Team, as intimated by its admin staff.

- **Candidate self-appraisal** - completed by the candidate, this provides the opportunity for the candidate to reflect on how they believe they have progressed in the eight dimensions of the formation Framework. A **template** of the statement is provided. It is important that this report is completed by the deadline and submitted to the Training Team, as intimated by its administrative staff.
- **Appraisal report** - this is brought to the appraisal by the Training Officer and is fully completed once the meeting is over, as a way of recording a summary of what was discussed, including the decision that was reached about the candidate progressing, or not, to the next stage.

Interim Appraisal (during probation)

This appraisal takes place six months into the candidate's probation placement. It is an informal discussion between the candidate, supervisor and a Training Officer, which focuses on learning, development and formation needs. The Training Officer will also have a phone consultation with the presbytery assessor prior to the appraisal.

Final Probation Appraisal

This appraisal will follow the same pattern as the annual candidate appraisal and on this occasion will be the point at which it is decided whether the probationer has sufficiently completed their initial ministerial formation, appropriate to this stage, and is ready to go forward for ordination.

Section 6: What the placement supervisor should be seeking to bring to the formation process

The Church's Formation Framework identifies 'skilled placement supervisors', among others, as supporting and encouraging formation by the 'expertise' that they bring to their role.

Right at the start of this handbook it was recognised that placement supervision is a calling by God, and furthermore, the expectation is that a placement supervisor operates from the foundation of a dependent relationship with God and mature and reflective ministry.

Placement supervisors are required to have certain abilities, knowledge, experience and willingness required to support and encourage the formation of candidates, as set out in the Formation Framework.

Whilst prospective placement supervisors would be expected to come with some of these, the FAPLT's People and Training Team would enable initial developmental activity to be engaged in, in order to meet the full competence requirements, before being fully deployed as a placement supervisor. Furthermore, placement supervisors, themselves, must be willing to continue their ongoing formation as placement supervisors.

In summarising the role of the placement supervisor, it is to create the conditions and ethos, where they model ministry and then allow the candidate to try things out, whilst mentoring the candidate through that experience. In doing so, the supervisor seeks to enable a significant skill to develop in candidates, namely, that of appropriate self-awareness, through a balance of critique and affirmation, that enables the candidate to accurately identify their strengths and areas for development.

Section 7: Recruitment, Training and Assessment of a placement supervisor

To serve as a placement supervisor, an individual will have been nominated via one of a number of avenues and their nomination assessed by the FAPLT. In order to be approved to serve as a placement supervisor, prospective supervisors are required to participate in a staged developmental process, and when in service there are expectations about engagement in ongoing developmental activity. These are described below.

Recruitment of prospective placement supervisors

The FAPLT will monitor its pool of placement supervisors and, when new supervisors are required, will invite nominations. These can be received via the following avenues:

- A presbytery may nominate a minister of word and sacrament or a deacon, from whom consent has been obtained, as a prospective placement supervisor.
- A minister of word and sacrament or deacon may themselves seek nomination by their presbytery.
- The FAPLT may ask a presbytery to nominate a minister of word and sacrament or deacon as a prospective placement supervisor.

In order to assist presbyteries, the FAPLT has an application form which must be completed by a minister of word and sacrament or deacon. The application form will require them to consider and respond to what the FAPLT requires of prospective placement supervisors, what will be expected of them during their formation as placement supervisors and what will be expected of them when supervising candidates as placement supervisors.

Training and assessment of prospective placement supervisors

The training of prospective placement supervisors is carried out in three stages:

- **Stage 1:** The prospective supervisor shall reflect upon an overview resource, provided by the Training Team, which will set out what the FAPLT expects placement supervisors to be and do. This may be completed at any time within six months of becoming a prospective placement supervisor.
- **Stage 2:** Upon completion of Stage 1, the prospective placement supervisor shall complete online training modules as specified by the FAPLT.
- **Stage 3:** Upon completing Stage 2, the prospective placement supervisor shall participate in a conference, hosted by the Training Team, at which:
 - i) the theory and practice of placement supervision will be further explored; and,
 - ii) suitability as a placement supervisor will be assessed. Each prospective supervisor will be assessed by a panel, which shall report and make a recommendation as to whether a prospective supervisor is suitable to be a placement supervisor on probation.

Probationary period

A placement supervisor on probation may be allocated a candidate to supervise.

They will be assessed, usually at the end of the first placement that they have supervised for, against the placement supervisor requirements set out by the FAPLT, as to whether they are suitable to continue as a placement supervisor.

Continuing training and assessment of Placement Supervisors

All placement supervisors are required to undergo further training provided by the FAPLT. The purpose of such further training is to encourage and enable the ongoing formation of placement supervisors. As far

as is reasonably practicable, this further training will be delivered on a three-yearly cycle, taking account of the professional commitments of placement supervisors.

Any placement supervisor who declines, or is unable to satisfactorily complete, the further training provision, will meet with a panel to ascertain whether they can continue in the role, or are likely to continue to meet, the placement supervisor requirements set out by the FAPLT.

At any time, a placement supervisor may be assessed against the requirements for the role set out by the FAPLT.