

Summary of the Invitation and Stationing Process for appointments commencing September 2021

Please use this summary as a quick reference as to what is usually done and when for the invitation and stationing of ministers in circuit appointments.

For more information, please look in the publication *Code of Practice for all involved in the Invitation and Stationing Process 2021*. The figures shown below in the 'Ref' column indicate the appropriate sections of that document where you will find more details of each stage.

References to the process for presbyteral appointments are in sections E-I.

References to the process for diaconal appointments are in sections J-N.

'Minister' is used to mean both presbyters and deacons.

1 FIRST STAGES

Timing	Action	Who is involved	Ref
March 2020	Appoint Circuit Invitation Committee (which may have delegated powers to offer initial invitations)	Circuit Meeting	C1-6
April	Application for grant funding for appointments to the Connexional Grants Committee	District Chair Superintendents Circuit stewards	A13
May	District briefing meeting to explain the process Code of Practice is distributed	District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Ministers involved in reviews/moves and their partners Superintendents Circuit Stewards Church Stewards	D1-2
	Period of reflection on circuit's policy and future needs	Circuit Stewards	D4,D6
	Period of reflection and discernment conversations to establish whether minister wishes an extension to be considered If 'Yes', go to Stage 2 below If 'No', go to Stage 3 below	Minister Circuit Stewards	D3,D5 - D8 D6

2 NEXT STAGES – if an Extension is Sought (for new appointments see Stage 3)

Timing	Action	Who is involved	Ref
May–July 2020	Meet to consider any personal or family issues	Minister and household members Circuit stewards	E3,J4
	Meet to plan and agree the consultation process (District Chair or her/his representative is invited if a Superintendency is being considered)	Circuit Invitation Committee Superintendent Minister (District Chair)	E2,E4, J5,
	Briefing on how to conduct the consultation (where appropriate)	Circuit Stewards, Church Stewards	E5,J6
July–August	Consultation in local churches (max. 3 weeks)	Circuit Stewards, Church Stewards	E5,E18-25, J6, J18-23
	Consultation in other circuit churches (if for a Superintendent's extension)	Circuit Stewards, Church Stewards at other churches in the Circuit	E6
	Consultation in other areas of minister's work e.g. ecumenical work; chaplaincies; community	Circuit Stewards	E7,J7
	Gather all responses and prepare written report which is shared with minister; minister decides whether to seek an extension	Circuit Stewards Minister	E8,J8
	Meets (with minister present) to receive Circuit Stewards' report; decides its recommendation to September Circuit Meeting; decision conveyed to minister Minister confirms decision on seeking an extension	Circuit Invitation Committee Minister	E9,J9
	Prepares a reasoned statement and sends it to District Chair, Lay Stationing Representative and Warden of the Diaconal Order (if appropriate) at least 3 weeks before the Circuit Meeting	Circuit Invitation Committee	E9,J9
	Approve reasoned statement (and amend it if necessary)	District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Warden of the Diaconal Order	E9,J9
	If the minister does not agree the recommendation, she/he may prepare her/his own reasoned statement.	Minister	E10, J10
	Distributes reasoned statement(s) to members of Circuit Meeting before the meeting with an explanation of the voting procedure	Circuit Meeting Secretary	E10, E11, J10,J11
On or before 20 Sept	Considers the extension	Circuit Meeting	E2,E12-15,J12-15
After the Circuit Meeting	Reports the Circuit Meeting's decision to the District Chair and Warden of the Diaconal Order if the decision is about a deacon	Chair of Circuit Meeting	E16,J16
	If an extension is offered and accepted, prepare and issue a Letter of Understanding.	Circuit Stewards Minister	E17,J17
	If decision is against an extension, proceed as for 'New Appointment' - see Stage 3 below	Circuit Stewards	F,K

3 NEXT STAGES – New Appointment

Timing	Action	Who is involved	Ref
May–Sept 2020	Vacancy is notified to the District Chair and, for diaconal appointments, the Warden of the Diaconal Order	Circuit Stewards	F1 K1
	Consultation and decisions about the appointment(s) to be filled	Circuit Invitation Committee Circuit Leadership Team Superintendent District Chair Warden of the Diaconal Order Lay Stationing Representative Ministers	F2, K2,K3
	Profile forms sent to ministers and circuit stewards; application forms for initial appointments (i.e. probationer presbyters or presbyters taking up first appointments in the British Methodist Church) sent to circuit stewards	District Chair or Lay Stationing Representative	F3,K4
	Prepare draft profiles and application forms as above	Ministers Circuit Stewards	F3, G,K4,L
	Meet to discuss minister's profile	District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Minister (and family member(s))	F3-5, K4,K5
	Meet to discuss draft circuit profiles and application forms for initial appointments	District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Circuit Stewards	F4,F5, K4,K5
	By 9 Sept	Application forms for presbyteral probationer appointments and Ministers from Other Churches and Conferences (MOCC) to the District Chair and Lay Stationing Representative	Circuit Stewards
By 11 Sept	Application forms for above appointments to the Conference Office	District Chair or Lay Stationing Representative	F2
By 21 Sept	Circuit profiles for ordained presbyters and deacons to be with the District Chair and the Lay Stationing Representative.	Circuit Stewards	F5
	Profiles of ordained presbyters and ordained deacons to be with the District Chair and the Lay Stationing Representative	Ministers	F5,K6
	Profiles of ordained deacons Circuit profiles for diaconal appointments forwarded to the Warden of the Diaconal Order	District Chair or Lay Stationing representative	K6
By 25 Sept	Forward circuit profiles for presbyters and deacons and profiles of ordained ministers to Stationing Administration	District Chair or Lay Stationing Representative or, in the case of a deacon, the Warden of the Diaconal Order	F7,K6

4 FINAL STAGES – Matching of Presbyters, Direct Stationing and Visits

Timing	Action	Who is involved	Ref
Late Sept 2020	Probationer presbyter appointments and those for transferring presbyters are designated.	Initial Stationing Sub-committee	
During Oct	Preparation to explain procedure for visits of ministers	District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Circuit stewards Other members of the CIC Church stewards involved in visits	I1,N1
By 1 Oct	Regional Stationing Groups meet to identify critical appointments and forward to Scrutiny Panel	District Chairs and District Lay Representatives from the Region	H2
6-7 Oct	Connexional Scrutiny Panel meets		H2
After 14 Oct	Circulation of circuit profiles and profiles of ordained presbyters and deacons	Stationing Administration	F7,K8
Mid-late Oct	Discuss possible suitable matches and possibly those which should not be matched for serious pastoral reasons	Circuit Stewards, ministers, District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Warden of the Diaconal Order	F10, K10
Late Oct	Identifies deacons with exceptional circumstances and identifies appropriate appointments for them	Warden of the Diaconal Order in consultation with the Diaconal Stationing Sub- committee	K12,M1
Oct–Dec	Preparation for possible visits	Circuit Stewards	I, N
2 - 5 Nov	Considers all presbyteral appointments	Stationing Matching Group 1	H,M1
5 Nov	District Chair notifies each minister and Circuit whether a 'match' has been made	District Chair Circuit Stewards and Ministers	F14,K14 M1, I3,N3
6 Nov	Circuit stewards contact minister to arrange a visit to the Circuit	Circuit Stewards Minister	I4,N4
6-16 Nov	Information pack sent to minister	Circuit Stewards	I6,N6
	Minister's visit to Circuit	Circuit Stewards and minister/Superintendent Others in the Circuit, as appropriate	I, N
Within 2 days after visit	Separately: prayer, reflection, consultation, then decision on whether to accept the match Together: share decisions and agree outcome	Circuit Invitation Committee Presbyter	F16,I15
	Circuit stewards and ministers report the outcome (with feedback form if declined) to their own District Chair and Warden of the Diaconal Order (for diaconal appointments).	Circuit Stewards and minister /District Chair Warden of the Diaconal Order	F17,F18 I15 K16,K17 N14

4 FINAL STAGES (continued) – Matching of Presbyters, Direct Stationing and Visits

In the next few days	Issues formal invitation to presbyter	Circuit Invitation Committee	F17
	If accepted, Letter of Understanding agreed with presbyter	Circuit Stewards	F17
	Reports outcomes to Stationing Administration for circuit appointments in their District	District Chair	F17
30 Nov – 2 Dec	Deals with as many of the remaining vacancies as possible and notes diaconal appointments	Stationing Matching Group 2	F12,H, M1
	Matching reports and visits (see above steps following SMG 1)	(See above)	(See above)
Dec - Jan	Informs deacons, circuit stewards and Stationing Administration of all diaconal appointments	Warden of the Diaconal Order	K16
	Letter of Understanding agreed with deacon	Circuit Stewards	K16
	Student deacons and identified Circuits informed of their appointments	Tutors District Chair	M1
	Visits to Circuits planned for student deacons followed by reports and Letters of Understanding	Circuit Stewards Minister Superintendent /supervisor	N
6-7 Jan 2021	Meets to consider appointments for probationer presbyters.	Initial Stationing Sub-committee	
Following few days	Student presbyters and identified Circuits informed of their appointments	Tutors District Chair	I16
	Visits to Circuits planned for probationer ministers, followed by reports and Letters of Understanding	Circuit Stewards Minister Superintendent /supervisor Others as appropriate	I16
11 Jan	SMG 3 – deals with as many of the remaining vacancies as possible	Stationing Matching Group 3	F12,H, M2
12–22 Jan	Matching reports and visits (see above steps following SMG 1)	(See above)	(See above)
6 Feb	Stationing of ministers of other churches or Conferences (ISCC2)	Initial Stationing Sub Committee	
Feb–June	Tries to resolve unfilled stations	Stationing Action Group	H11,M2
March	Appoints Circuit Invitation Committee	Circuit Meeting	C1–6
April	Application for grant funding for appointments for next year to the Connexional Grants Committee	District Chair Superintendents Circuit Stewards	A13
April/May	Recommends the stations to Conference	Stationing Committee	
July	Stations approved	Methodist Conference	

All Stationing forms and guidance available from:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/ministry/stationing/stationing-forms-and-guidelines/>