

Ministerial Development Review

Chaplain's papers

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1. Introducing Ministerial Development Review for chaplains

The Bishop's MDR Scheme

Across the Church of England, not least in response to the Covenant for Clergy, dioceses have been improving the support they try to give to their clergy over recent years. This includes developing our MDR processes.

MDR is a legal requirement for those on Common Tenure, but we know that we all need this kind of reflection and support. The Bishop expects all licensed clergy to take part in MDR.¹

MDR is about maturity in Christ and in Christ's service. It is a chance for us as deacons and priests to stop and take stock of ourselves and the ministry to which we are called, and to be renewed in Christ.

MDR is about affirmation and celebration. In the midst of the busyness and pressures of ordained ministry it is too easy to lose sight of the gifts we have been given and are exercising. MDR enables us to see these again for ourselves and to receive encouragement from others, including our reviewer.

MDR is about honesty and accountability. This is a chance for us to ask ourselves some searching questions and for us to hear how others see us, even if that can be sometimes uncomfortable. It is also about our accountability to our Bishop and to the Church.

Fundamentally, MDR is about our own motivation as clergy of the Church of England to be and minister in as Christ-like a way as possible.

¹ The supporting documentation for this can be found at "Ministerial Development Review Guidance, approved by the Archbishops' Council January 2010".
https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/ministry_development_review_guidance.pdf

This includes the following helpful reference to clergy employed by outside bodies: "a person employed by an outside body but licensed by the bishop should be within the MDR scheme in respect of the licence. The scope to their review should be appropriate to requirements of the post."

Chaplains

Chaplains, and others who are employed, normally have appraisal schemes required by their employers which are often quite robust.

In addition to the formal requirement for all licensed clergy to take part in MDR, we know that chaplains often value a regular meeting with a member of the Bishop's Staff both in order to stay in touch personally and to express a sense of connectedness with the Diocese as a whole.

The simpler MDR package described here is therefore offered to chaplains. It is based on the idea that an employer may review the professional expectations of the job but the vocational, priestly nature of ministry may be better reviewed within the Diocesan Scheme. This paperwork is offered as a potential support to chaplains but it is not required. Chaplains are encouraged to use it flexibly, with their Reviewer, as a framework to encourage and enable their ministerial flourishing.

Ministerial vocation is to be lived and experienced in the context both of the church and of the communities where we live and work. MDR is a process through which the Bishop's senior colleagues work together to support those who are called and ordained to ministry and who exercise it with the Bishop's license and authority. It is not conceived in the same way as 'appraisal'. It is about sharing in responsibility under God for the well being of the clergy and the effectiveness of all our ministerial and missionary efforts.

Ministerial Development Review (MDR) is a *process* that enables clergy to become even more effective in the service of Christ through careful reflection, support and growth.

Through MDR clergy are given the opportunity to

1. reflect before God on their vocation and ministry;
2. stand back and look at their ministry thus far, and identify what most needs development and attention;
3. receive both encouragement and challenge;
4. become more aware of their own strengths and weaknesses;
5. discern some priorities for personal and ministerial development;
6. begin to identify and arrange resources to help with (5) above.

2. The MDR Process

Overview

The MDR Process reflects very closely the familiar Pastoral Conversation method. The difference is that with MDR the emphasis is on process and outcomes rather than on 'conversation'. For this reason we have called the conversation which stands in the middle of the process the MDR Meeting.

The Steps in the Process

Step	What	When
1	Reviewer initiates the process by agreeing a date for the MDR meeting and sending paperwork to the priest.	2 months before
2	Priest returns the Personal Preparation form to the Reviewer.	3 weeks before
3	MDR Meeting	
4	Agree and sign the Agreed Record	Within 2 weeks
5	Agreed Record goes to Bishops (and last side to the CMD officer)	Within 2 weeks of signing
6	CMD officer to contact the priest to offer support with following up on Development Objectives	Within 6 months of receiving the form

3. Preparing for the MDR Meeting

The Preparation Form is appended to this document as appendix 1.
(or download from www.durham.anglican.org/resources/mdr.aspx).

There is also a personal preparation form based on reflection inspired by the Ordinal.

Appendix 1 MDR Personal Preparation Form (Chaplains)

Chaplain's Name

Date of MDR Meeting

Reviewer

Please return this form in the envelope provided by

1. (If this is your first MDR and you do not have previous objectives to review you may find it helpful to look at your last professional review and see if there are any ministerial development objectives which complement what was said there.) If objectives were agreed at your last MDR, indicate both the extent to which they have been achieved and what has come from working at them.

Development Objective	How has this progressed and how fruitful has this been for your ministry context and for you?

2. What do you feel you have done particularly well in ministry over the last 18 months?

1
2
3

3. What do you feel you have done least well in ministry over the last 18 months?

1
2
3

Church of England and Diocesan Priorities

4. Are you up to date with safeguarding training? (This is to double check that your workplace policies comply with CofE requirements – see the most recent version of the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy? Are you finding any aspect of this work hard to implement? Can you offer any help to others in this area?”)

5. How do you connect with the diocese and how does the diocese connect with you?

6. How have you and your chaplaincy been involved with the diocesan priorities: Energizing Growth, Engaging Children and Young People, Challenging Poverty, Caring for God’s Creation?

What do these objective look like in your context?

Questions of Wellbeing

7. Relationship with God is at the heart of the vocation to ministry. Please note anything in this aspect of your life and ministry which could feed into a Development Objective.

8. What CMD have you undertaken since your last review? Have you found it helpful? How does it relate to your professional in-service development ? (Stipendiary parochial clergy are expected to do '5 days' CMD each year. SSM in proportion to the time spent in public ministry. Chaplains are assumed to be undertaking professional development but are also encouraged to join in with appropriate CMD in the Church. *Archbishops' Council Guidelines 2010.*) NB CMD might be attendance at a training event, guided reading, reflective engagement with new experiences, or something completely different.

9. Are you satisfied that you are receiving appropriate medical support (for example, by asking your GP for advice about blood pressure, weight etc) **and that you are doing what you can towards your physical well-being?**

10. Are you satisfied that you have the financial support and advice that you need (for example, in relation to pension and retirement housing or any other issues)?

11. Do you have a 'spiritual director' or 'spiritual accompanier' or 'confessor'? What is your practice regarding an annual retreat/conference? Do you have a mentor or work consultant?

12. Is there anything about your contract or professional role which you wish to bring to the attention of the Bishop?

13. Is there anything else you wish to raise in your MDR conversation? *[There might be practical issues or personal circumstances, for example, which are very relevant to your ministerial development, though they may require another conversation where they could be the main focus of attention.]*

Looking to the Future

14. Are there changes to the current context of your ministry (e.g. major re-organisation) which the Bishop needs to know about, or which may be impending?

15. To what extent do you envisage significant changes in your own circumstances over the next year or two?

16. Are there dreams or intuitions about your future and future ministry which you would like to share? Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

17. Are there charisms or areas of expertise which might be of benefit to the wider Church which you would like to share?

18. Please note here any provisional ideas about Ministerial Development Objectives which can be discussed and clarified during the review conversation. Please group these under these new headings:

- Missional Leadership (a new area of missional/evangelistic work or significant consolidation of such work)
- Ministerial Enrichment (spiritual or theological resourcing of your public ministry)
- Ministerial Effectiveness (a new or consolidating area of ministerial training)
- Personal Development (something about how you as a person, and a person in relationship, might develop)
- Other (this is over to you...)

Category	Development Objective

19. What support might you benefit from as you address your development objectives?

Appendix 2 The Ordinal and MDR - Chaplains

This purpose of this list of questions is to provide a foundation for our work of ministerial review by taking us back to our common calling and authorisation in ordination. It draws on the questions, promises and prayers in the Ordination Service of Deacons and Priests. It is designed to help you, and so the reviewer, keep a deep and spiritual as well as ministerial focus in this review. Please use it as a stimulus to responding to the MDR form itself.

Affirming and developing your discipleship and ministry, with the Ordinal

1. 'Will you be diligent in prayer...

You might reflect on your relationship with God, your prayer life, how you are using the Daily Office, other ways of praying, time on retreat or at a conference, work with a spiritual director or mentor...

2. ... in reading Holy Scripture, and in all studies that will deepen your faith and fit you to bear witness to the truth of the gospel?' 'Do you believe the doctrine of the Christian faith as the Church of England has received it, and in your ministry will you expound and teach it?'

You might reflect on how study has sustained you as a disciple and minister in the recent past? Within the constraints of chaplaincy in a secular institution, where and how do you find opportunity to teach and explain the faith? Where might there be potential for development?

3. 'Priests are ordained to lead God's people in the offering of praise and the proclamation of the gospel.'

You might reflect on how you are leading God's people? How have you been helped by your training, diocesan provision or other CMD? How would you describe your charism in leadership? What kinds of leadership role do you exercise within your organisation?

4. 'Will you lead Christ's people in proclaiming his glorious gospel, so that the good news of salvation may be heard in every place?'

In a setting where it is often not permitted to be overtly evangelistic, how and where are you able to share good news?

5. 'Will you strive to make the love of Christ known through word and example, and have a particular care for those in need?'

What is 'poverty' in your context? You might reflect on how you and your chaplaincy team have engaged with the diocesan priority of helping our communities to tackle poverty?

How does your ministry bring you into contact with children and young people? How does this ministry enable the children and young people to flourish?

6. **'Will you faithfully minister the doctrine and sacraments of Christ as the Church of England has received them, so that the people committed to your charge may be defended against error and flourish in the faith?'**

What part do the sacraments play in your ministry?

7. **'Will you, knowing yourself to be reconciled with God in Christ, strive to be an instrument of God's peace in the Church and in the world?'**

What has been your experience of ministering 'as an instrument of God's peace' in the wider public context, as well as among people who are already involved in the church?

8. **'Will you work with your fellow servants in the Gospel for the sake of the kingdom of God?'**

How are relationships with your ordained and lay colleagues? In what ways do you collaborate with colleagues of different professional disciplines within your organisation? What examples of partnership working are there in your wider context and what challenges and opportunities do these present?

9. **'Will you accept and minister the discipline of this Church and respect authority duly exercised within it?'**

What has gone well in your relationship with 'diocesan support structures' [senior staff, Mission and Ministry Support Team, other staff in Cuthbert House] this year? What might have worked better?

10. **'Will you endeavour to fashion your own life and that of your household according to the way of Christ, that you may be a pattern and example to Christ's people?'**

How is the balance between your ministry, work and family life? To what extent do you receive the ministerial and personal support which you need? Do you have any particular concerns?

11. **'Will you then, in the strength of the Holy Spirit, continually stir up the gift of God that is in you, to make Christ known among all whom you serve?'**

What have you experienced recently as affirming your calling? How have you felt the gifts of God's Spirit developing in you? How might you offer your gifts in the service of the wider Church?

Appendix 3 Agreed Record Form**Chaplains MDR**

Date of meeting

Priest

Reviewer

1. Key points which the chaplain wished to discuss.

1
2
3
4
5

2 Any matters to be highlighted for the Bishop's attention

3. Review of Development Objectives

Development Objective	Other comments eg: How fruitful has this been? Who has benefited. Is this genuinely work in progress? Is a boost needed?

4. Any actions to be taken by the Reviewer

6. Ministerial Development Objectives and first steps for the next 2 years. (In order of priority.)

1.	Objective
	First Step

2.	Objective
	First Step

3.	Objective
	First Step

4.	Objective
	First Step

Signed (Chaplain)
Signed (Reviewer)

Date
Date