

Thank you for considering leading a course for Lay Pastoral Assistants. The success of any course is committed, flexible, imaginative teaching and we could not sustain the level of LPA ministry in the diocese without you. These notes explain the course and offer some suggestions about the different ways in which the material (which we offer you without charge) could be used. From time to time we offer a Zoom session on 'How to lead an LPA course' which will be advertised in the CMD brochure, or on our website, but if you cannot see one soon and would like to hear from someone about their experience of running the course, please do get in touch with parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org

Shape of the course

The course handbook offers eight core sessions, with four additional options from which it is recommended that two are chosen, to meet the specific needs of the group in question. So the resulting course usually consists of ten sessions, each intended to last around two hours. It is designed to have space of at least two weeks between sessions in order to allow for some active learning and reflection time, but it is very much up to you how you structure the training for your group. Some courses have run on a weekly basis – others have used a combination of Saturdays and midweek sessions to be able to cover more material over a shorter timescale. In addition, there is a Taster Session to enable people to reflect on whether Lay Pastoral Assistant training is right for them before beginning the course, and a Concluding Session for those who have completed the course to assist them in discerning whether ministry as a Lay Pastoral Assistant is for them at this time.

Session 1: **Who are we?**

Session 2: **Who am I?**

Session 3: **Journey of life**

Session 4: **Learning to listen (or Developing Listening Skills 4a)**

Session 5: **Engaging with families**

Session 6: **Coming alongside those with acute and chronic illness**

Session 7: **Valuing later life**

Session 8: **Why and when we visit**

SUPPLEMENTARY SESSIONS – choose at least two of the following:

Session 3a: **Our role at a time of loss**

Session 4a: **Developing listening skills**

Session 5a: **Nurturing the spirituality of children and young people**

Session 8a: **Knowing our limits***

FOLLOWED BY: **Concluding session**

*Two health warnings

1. Be aware that some of the sessions could bring to the surface sensitive issues that the participants may need to work through with someone they trust. Please mention this at the start of the course so that participants are prepared.
2. Course material goes out of date almost as soon as it is written, and the links within the handbook are unlikely to work now. In addition, we have recognized that the section 'Knowing our Limits' is not constructed in a pastorally helpful way, and we would recommend that this material be used with great care, if at all. It is probably better to ignore session 8a and to include a discussion on boundaries in an earlier session – possibly session 8.

Please do not feel that you have to work through everything that is in the handbook. You are encouraged to make the material your own by substituting your own exercises and examples. It will be important to offer opportunities for participants to reflect on the experience that is in the room rather than listen to a lecture, so feel free to improvise and draw on your own pastoral experience.

Preparing to lead a course – some questions to ponder

Who?

- Benefice-wide or deanery-wide or even beyond?
- Include your Rural Dean and Lay Chair in the conversation.
- Maximum number of candidates?
- Advertise or invite? (Taster session is important too as a discernment tool.)

When & Where?

- One location or mixed? Who pays cost of any hired premises/refreshments etc?
- Online or onsite?
- How long and at what frequency?
- Establish dates of taster session, course dates, concluding session.

How?

- Who is going to lead the sessions?
- Who is going to coordinate the course (administration!)?
- Who is going to have pastoral oversight?
- AV equipment and other practical considerations (for example diverse ability access?)

Get in touch with [Parish Support](#) at an early stage – they may be able to help you work through some of these questions.

Step by Step Guide to running an LPA course

<p>Step 1</p>	<p>Establish the date of the Taster Session, course start date and structure (and if possible the details and date of the Commissioning service with your Area Office)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leave at least 2 weeks' notice for the taster session after informing Parish Support Team, to allow for it to be advertised. ○ Leave at least 6 weeks between concluding session and commissioning service date to allow for discernment and for any outstanding DBS/safeguarding training to be completed.
<p>Step 2</p>	<p>Email parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org with the relevant information and dates using the form on the website "<u>Notify the Diocese that you intend to run an LPA course</u>"</p>
<p>Step 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publicise the taster session and course dates either by advertising or by invitation to selected candidates. ● Download and print sufficient Registration Forms from the website for the taster session, together with taster outlines if you plan to give out copies. ● Book venues for all course sessions
<p>Step 4</p>	<p>Run the initial Taster Session and give out Registration forms, emphasising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incumbent's signature is needed. ● Forms must be returned either to you or to Parish Support before the course start date, preferably by e mail to parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org
<p>Step 5</p>	<p>Registration forms are emailed to parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org as soon as possible, with a copy to course leader.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is very important as this triggers the process to get the applicant's DBS* processed. ● During the course remind participants that they will need to complete Basic awareness (C0). Foundation (C1) and Awareness of Domestic Abuse online as soon as possible. This must take place well before commissioning. ● Parish Support team is there to provide administrative support to you and participants. <p>Once the diocese have the registration forms they will commence DBS checks (if necessary) and send a welcome e mail to course participants. In this e mail, the Lay Ministry team will further explain the requirements for DBS checks and for candidates to undergo the required safeguarding training. The Lay Ministry team will continue to monitor course participants progress through these processes, and if necessary remind them of any outstanding training.</p>

Step 6	Run the course!
Step 7	<p>Having completed the concluding session all participants to be commissioned will need to undertake a period of reflection with their incumbent concerning potential LPA Ministry. A written reflection 'Why I believe God is calling me to the ministry of a Lay Pastoral Assistant' <i>may</i> be helpful, but is not compulsory. For those who have literacy difficulties, their reflection could happen in any format that the participant feels comfortable with, such as video or audio recording. The important thing is that they are engaged in a period of reflection with their incumbent concerning their potential ministry.</p>
Step 8	<p>The Commissioning Service details need to be arranged directly with the relevant Area Office and confirmed to the Parish Support team. The Commissioning will be undertaken by either the suffragan bishop or an archdeacon.</p> <p>Please confirm the names of those going forward for Commissioning. Parish Support will check that they have the necessary DBS clearance and have undertaken the appropriate safeguarding training.</p> <p>The incumbent is responsible for ensuring the person has been safely recruited in all other respects.</p>
Step 9	<p>The participant and incumbent agree the Ministry Specification prior to commissioning.</p> <p>Participants complete the checklist and feedback prior to commissioning.</p> <p>Course leaders are encouraged to share any feedback with the Parish Support team for future reference and improvements.</p>

Course materials

The handbook is currently out of print, and a significant revision is underway. Printed copies are not therefore available for dispatching to participants, but all are welcome to download a pdf from the [diocesan website](#). However, if you are using substantial amounts of your own material, you may prefer participants not to have a handbook until you have finished the course, when they may want to return to it for reference. It is therefore up to you to decide at what stage to point the participants to the course handbook on the website.

The Taster session and Concluding session are available as separate downloads from the website, and you are welcome to use these or make up your own. Most course leaders seem to find the Taster session helpful, but many adopt a simpler and more reflective Concluding session rather than giving too much information at that point. It is each incumbent's responsibility to work with the participant on discerning the shape of their ministry from that point on, and to recommend them for commissioning if that is appropriate.

Safeguarding

1 DBS - Disclosure and Barring Service clearance

1. Make sure a registration form for each participants has been sent to parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org so that participants can complete a DBS **Enhanced Child and Adult workforce with a check against the Child and Adult Barring Lists** application online.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *If the applicant is on the Update Service, or has an existing DBS at the correct level with Salisbury Diocese with at least a 6 months until renewal at date of commissioning (DBS lasts for 3 years), OR will be processing their application locally with their Parish Safeguarding Representative, please let Parish Support know.*

2. If people do not have access to a computer, then they will need to ask someone from their parish to assist them in the application such as the Parish Safeguarding Representative or Parish Secretary.
3. Commissioning cannot take place until DBS clearance is in place and safeguarding training has been undertaken (see below).
4. Some people may ask if their current clearance from either the diocese or another organisation will be OK. Sadly the answer is 'No'. For any queries relating to DBS/Safeguarding please contact the safeguarding.admin@salisbury.anglican.org

2 Safeguarding Training

LPA's must do the **Basic awareness** (C0) and **Foundation** (C1) and **Awareness of Domestic Abuse** online at <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org> before commissioning.

Once a person has been commissioned, the responsibility for the renewal of DBS and safeguarding training lies in the parish with the PCC and the incumbent.

Safer Recruitment requirement

Please be aware of the House of Bishops' and Diocesan requirements in relation to the Safer Recruitment of volunteers and that every person must be safely recruited if going forward for commissioning. This is the responsibility of their incumbent- see <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-andpeople-management-guidance> for further information.