



Selection Procedure for Licenced Lay Ministers (Lay Reader) Training in the Diocese of Guildford

Welcoming Incumbents to the LLM (Reader) Selection Process

The procedure for selection begins in your parish. It progresses to a selection panel conducted by the Board of **Licenced Lay Ministers under** the authority of the Bishop of Dorking, who then recommends the candidate for training.

The Ministry Division policy paper on Bishops' Regulations for LLM Reader Ministry states: 'LLM Readers bear considerable responsibility in the church as lay ministers authorised by Canon with a teaching and preaching ministry in a pastoral context.'

Another Ministry Division Paper states: 'We stress the need for a common understanding and standard of selection since LLM Readers are nationally accredited and deployed throughout the Church of England.' The selection of candidates for LLM selection, therefore, operates within a national framework.

The Diocese of Guildford welcomes applications for LLM training, and the candidate's Incumbent will need to satisfy the Diocese about the prospective role for the candidate.

The Incumbent has an important role in nurturing candidates, and due weight will be given by the selectors to the Incumbent's detailed written reference, together with the references received from others. Prospective candidates will need the full support of their Incumbent and their PCC approval to proceed with the application.

The first step for potential candidates is to pray and reflect with their Incumbent, which will help the Incumbent to be clear about the reference that they supply later. The Incumbent will explore the nature of the candidate's call to public ministry and Licensed Lay ministry in particular, their spiritual development over a period of time and the demands of the training course.

It should be noted by all concerned that the training is currently a three-year commitment that will require a significant amount of the candidate's time. The Parish and Incumbent must be prepared to release the candidate from other parish obligations as necessary and support them in their vocational training.

Application Requirements

You are most welcome to make contact for further information or a visit to the course using these addresses:

Warden of LLM Readers wardenofllms@cofeguildford.org.uk

Dean of Local ministry Programme John.valentine@cofeguildford.org.uk

Candidate Secretary llmreader@cofeguildford.org.uk

Please get in touch with the Candidates Secretary for application forms and guidelines. They can dispatch the forms to you and to the candidate. They will then allocate a place at a selection meeting. Selection days are usually held at Diocesan House in Guildford on Saturdays in the Spring or Summer term.

The deadline for all paperwork will be three weeks before the selection meeting. Applications for the following September received later than this will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances. The PCC resolution will need to be passed and supplied to the candidate secretary prior to the interview.

The candidate must have completed the Diocesan Basic Awareness and Foundation Safeguarding Training before application and must hold a satisfactory, current DBS check with barring information for working with Adults and Children, held in the parish.

The application for selection includes basic personal details and a statement from the candidate of 250 - 500 words. This needs to include confirmation that the candidate has considered with the Incumbent other possible forms of ministry and explain in some detail, giving any relevant background information, why the candidate feels it is right to offer themselves now for the specific training of a Licensed Lay Minister.

LLM Reader ministry welcomes people of all genders, sexualities and ethnicity.

LLMs are initially licensed for 5 years which is renewed by the Diocese in agreement with the parish. At the age of 70, LLMs are given annual Permission to Officiate (PTO) which is agreed by the Parish and Incumbent. So that LLMs may be trained and licensed before PTO, the current guidelines suggest that candidates must be of a suitable age to complete the selection process and training programme before reaching PTO age.

The initial training course normally lasts for three years, commencing each September, on Monday evenings in Guildford, home study and essays and other written work, two annual residential weekends and a parish placement in the third year. New LLMs then attend the IME course following licensing.

Further enquiries about the course should be addressed to the Dean of the Local Ministry Programme John.valentine@cofeguildford.org.uk

References

The Incumbent is required to give a full and frank reference, which will be confidential to the Candidate Secretary, the Warden, Selectors, LMP Dean and Year Tutor. In particular, the Incumbent is required to comment on the anticipated future role of the candidate as an LLM in the Parish. The Incumbent should also comment on:

- how long the candidate has been known and how well,
- how firm they feel the candidate's Christian faith is, illustrated by examples,
- how emotionally equipped the candidate is for ministry,
- how, in practice, the candidate currently lives out their faith and reveals it to others within the parish and in other settings, e.g. at work
- how well the candidate is likely to cope with the discipline of continuing study, which is expected of all LLMs,
- how well the candidate works alongside others,
- one area in which the candidate might grow.

Confidential written references are required from three referees nominated by the candidate.

These references will be confidential to the Candidate Secretary, the Warden/Registrar and the Selectors. These are to be submitted by email and are held in confidence until 3 years after application and are then deleted.

The referees should know the candidate well enough to provide a full and frank written reference of approx. 250-500 words. The permission of the prospective referees must have been obtained before their nomination. The referees should include 2 lay members of the parish, at least one of them being in a leadership role, such as, a churchwarden or PCC member. The third referee should be a person who knows the candidate personally in another context. At least one referee should be a person of the opposite gender to the candidate. The candidate secretary contacts the referees directly and requests their references to be supplied by email at least three weeks before the interview date.

Support from the PCC and Parish

Along with your Incumbent reference for the candidate, your PCC will need to affirm that the candidature has been discussed and agreed. The PCC Secretary's record should include the minute of the meeting which carried the following resolution:

This PCC supports N spiritually, prayerfully and financially as its candidate for Licensed Lay Minister training selection on the understanding:

- **that it will be required to fund the candidate to the value of around £1000 per annum during three years of training and to a lesser extent thereafter in expenses incurred in service within the parish,**
- **that N will be released from all obligations in the parish during the three years of training, and**
- **that it agrees that on completion of training N will be accepted and regularly used as a full member of the Parish Staff or Ministry Team.**

This resolution must be carried in full and in one sitting. Decisions on funding and deployment must be agreed upon at the same meeting and may not be deferred. Where a PCC believes that candidacy

and support should be treated as separate issues, then support should be considered to be other than wholehearted and the resolution not be carried.

The Selection Meeting

Candidates are welcomed to the selection panel day at Church House or by zoom during pandemic conditions. The candidate secretary is responsible for the interview invitations and arrangements on this day. There will be group conversation and an opportunity for a relaxed conversation alongside the more rigorous interviews.

The candidates enjoy a carousel of interviews covering the core criteria laid out by Ministry Division for all Dioceses.

The selection panel will cover each of the specified areas:

- Love for God
- Call to Ministry
- Love for People
- Wisdom
- Fruitfulness
- Potential

The chair of selectors is a senior selector nominated by the Warden of LLMs with the approval of the Bishop. Three other selectors will normally include the Dean of LMP or a year tutor, a member of the Diocesan Board of LLMs and a Licensed Lay Minister. All are supplied with copies of application forms and references in advance and meet to make prayerful preparations for the individual interviews in consultation with the chair.

Follow up and the Future

After the selection meeting, the selectors assess the suitability of each candidate by reference to all available information. There is no competitive element. The selectors may approve as many candidates as are appropriate.

Within seven days, each candidate and Incumbent will receive an email indicating whether they are being recommended to the Bishop for acceptance for LLM training in the current year.

The names of selected candidates will be passed on to the Principal of the Local Ministry Programme, who will contact them directly.

Those candidates for whom this is not considered a suitable ministry or for whom there are other recommendations will be informed directly with a full explanation and have to follow up meetings with their Incumbent to discuss the next steps in their ministry within the parish. It is hoped that whatever the panel's outcome, the interview day will be a supportive experience as candidates explore their callings from God.

Each candidate and Incumbent is held firmly in prayer.

Application forms are available from and should be returned to:

Candidate Secretary llmreader@cofeguildford.org.uk