

Paper A5

Terms of Reference for Ministries Committee

Business Committee

Basic information

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| Contact name and email address | The Revd Mary Thomas dso-s@urcwessex.org.uk Nicola Furley-Smith nicola.furley-smith@urc.org.uk |
| Action required | Decision. |
| Draft resolution(s) | Resolution 2 General Assembly adopts the Terms of Reference for the Ministries Committee. |

Summary of content

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| Subject and aim(s) | The Terms of Reference for the Ministries Committee was last updated in 1984. This paper updates those Terms to current work. |
| Main points | The paper explains the updated responsibilities and duties of the Ministries Committee. |
| Previous relevant documents | General Assembly 1984 Resolution 12. |
| Consultation has taken place with... | |

Summary of impact

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| Financial | |
| External (eg ecumenical) | |

Ministries Committee Terms of Reference

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| Committee | Ministries. |
| Convenor | Appointed by General Assembly. |
| Secretary | Secretary for Ministries. |
| Ex Officio members | General Secretary Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship) Past Moderator of General Assembly Moderator of General Assembly Moderator-Elect of General Assembly. |
| General Assembly appointed members | Four members with experience of the ministries of the Church (two lay and two ordained); a Synod Moderator; convenor of the Accreditations (CRCW & SCM) sub-committee; convenor of the Assessment Board; the Advocate for Leadership in Worship; convenor Maintenance of the Ministries sub-committee; convenor of Retired Ministers' Housing sub-committee. |
| Length of term | Initial terms of four years, which may be extended for a further term. |
| In attendance when required (to cover their areas of expertise) | Secretary for Education and Learning Secretary for Children's and Youth Work Committee Development Worker for CRCW & SCM. |
| Minute Secretary | PA to the Secretary for Ministries. |
| Meeting frequency | Four times per year (36 hours), in February, April, July, November. |
| Sub-groups / sub-committees | Assessment Board; Accreditations (CRCW & SCM) sub-committee; Leadership in Worship sub-committee; Maintenance of the Ministries sub-committee; Retired Ministers' Housing sub-Committee. |
| Quoracy | Six. |
| Accountability and reporting duties | General Assembly. |
| Terms of Reference review | Every four years. |

Responsibilities

- The Ministries Committee (the Committee) carries the General Assembly's responsibility and care for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments, Church Related Community Work, lay preaching, worship leading, lay pioneering and eldership.
- It is concerned with central care and conditions of service of chaplaincies in industry, healthcare, higher and further education, prisons, and in the armed forces and 'special category' ministry.
- Along with Synods, it has concern for the wellbeing of Ministers of the Word and Sacraments, Church Related Community Workers, Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers, Locally Recognised Worship Leaders, Assembly Accredited Lay Pioneers and Elders, including supervision where appropriate, appraisal, self-evaluation and counselling.
- Oversight of five sub-committees:
- Its particular responsibilities are:
 - Advocacy, recruitment, selection and training of candidates for Ministry of the Word and Sacraments (MWS) and Church Related Community Worker (CRCWs) in co-operation with the Synods
 - Relations with Education and Learning Committee, Resources Centres for Learning, and external bodies that train MWS and CRCWs, both stipendiary and non-stipendiary, Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers, Locally Recognised Worship Leaders, Assembly Accredited Lay Pioneers and Elders
 - Development and revision of policies and processes to support the ministries of the Church
 - Development and revision of policies and processes about ministers of the Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Work strategy, including deployment numbers appropriate to the life and mission of the Church
 - Development of new ministries to support the life and mission of the Church
 - To work with other committees in the Discipleship Department to ensure best practice in relation to ministries of the Church
 - To work with the Mission Department to ensure best practice in relation to Ministries of the Church
 - Any other pieces of work deemed necessary by the Church
 - Oversight of five sub-committees.

Accreditations (CRCW & SCM) sub-committee

Functions of the sub-committee:

- the approval and subsequent monitoring of CRCW projects
- the approval and subsequent monitoring of SCM projects
- the approval and subsequent monitoring of new pioneering projects
- the consideration and management of Certificates of Eligibility (acting under delegated authority of General Assembly function xxi and xxiii as set out in the *Structures of the United Reformed Church in The Manual*)
- the consideration and management of Certificates for Limited Service
- the maintenance of the Roll of Ministers
- the advocacy of CRCW ministry

- such other matters as may, from time to time, be allocated by the Ministries Committee.

It meets four times per year: January (Residential), March, June and October.

It reports to Ministries Committee four times a year.

Assessment Board

Functions of the Board:

The Assessment Board has delegated authority from General Assembly for assessing candidates for ministry under function xxix of the General Assembly, as set out in the *Structure* of the United Reformed Church as found in *The Manual*. As such, it has its own Appeals Process.

- The Board oversees the candidating process for ministry of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers on behalf of the United Reformed Church
- Oversees Assessment Conferences each year normally in March and November
- Hears any appeals to the Assessment Conference discernment decisions using the Assessment Board Appeals Process
- Oversees Education for Ministry Phase 1 training through the Secretary for Education and Learning and the RCLs
- Hears concerns from the RCLs concerning students and, where necessary, implements the Amber Light Policy Stage 2 process to make decisions about the continuation of training for students who are underperforming
- Instigates any Occupational Health Assessments for students in EM, as advised by the RCL
- Administers Assessment Board Training, which all new assessors must attend before they can begin as an assessor, including ASD awareness training
- Continually reviews processes to ensure best practice at all stages of candidating, including Synod and Assessment Conferences, advising Synods of changes to the process as necessary
- Advises Ministries of the accreditation of students in training through the Accreditation (CRCW and SCM) sub-committee
- It meets on an annual basis via Zoom for the Assessment Board AGM
- It oversees two Assessment Conferences, normally in March and November
- It oversees the annual meeting with Candidating Secretaries or equivalent, and the Annual assessor training in October
- It reports to Ministries Committee four times a year.

Leadership in worship sub-committee

Functions of the sub-committee:

- to be responsible for the advocacy of Assembly Accredited Lay Preaching and Locally Recognised Worship Leading within the United Reformed Church
- to support those who lead worship in the United Reformed Church
- to promote the recognition and value of lay preachers/worship leaders, and encourage others to answer the call to this ministry whenever and wherever possible
- to raise issues and concerns in relation to Lay Preaching and Worship Leading to the Ministries Committee
- to act as a reference point on procedures and good practice

- to encourage and enable the production or updating of guidelines, where appropriate
- to arrange an annual Consultation for Advocates in cooperation with the Ministries Office
- to encourage and enable networking between Advocates
- developing an e-newsletter regarding training and development opportunities, ideas for events, resources, etc.

It meets twice a year, in January and June, including the annual retreat / gathering of the Assembly Accredited Lay Preaching Advocates.

It reports to Ministries Committee four times a year.

Maintenance of the Ministries sub-committee

Functions of the sub-committee:

- advising on, and recommending the annual revisions to the stipend to, the Finance Committee using the agreed formula: the average of the Consumer Price Index for the latest month available (September) and the Average Weekly Earnings increase over the latest three months (June-August), for regular pay
- advising on, and recommending, the annual revisions to associated allowances for ministers to Finance Committee
- recommending amendments to ministerial conditions of service, The Plan for Partnership, in the light of experience, legislation and recommendations from Church House staff
- resolving questions where the circumstances do not exactly fit the Plan for Partnership, or where it may be appropriate to make an exception
- making decisions about the stipends of ministers who have been unable to work for some time through ill health
- receiving a report on pension matters and ill health retirements that is made to each meeting by the Pensions Convenor to keep members up to date.

The Committee meets twice a year, normally in April and September, but may conduct urgent business via email.

It reports to Ministries Committee four times a year.

Retired Ministers' Housing sub-committee

Functions of the Committee:

- be the point of liaison between Ministries and RMHS on behalf of the URC and tenants, ensuring that all eligible members are adequately housed and supported in retirement
- raise matters with the RMHS directors in relation to the needs of retired ministers and/or spouses
- be responsible for gathering data for projecting future housing requirements for RMHS (URC Minister's Data Privacy Policy 2019)
- determine each applicant's eligibility for RMHS housing provision
- promote good practice among ministers in making provision for retirement, including:
 - a) a seminar ten years before the expected date of retirement, and
 - b) a pre-retirement course
- seek additional funding support from URC synods and Synod Trust companies through URC General Assembly resolutions

- appeal for donations and legacies from URC local churches and church members, through appeals based on resolutions to the URC General Assembly
- appeal for RMHS Volunteer Overseers from the URC membership through General Assembly or Synod meetings
- undertake anything else General Assembly instructs it to do.

Risk management

The Committee will review the Risk Register as it relates to its key responsibilities at least once per year, but will add additional risks as and when they arise.

Conducting business

Additional meetings can be scheduled, with reasonable notice, if business requires it.

Decisions can be taken via email with the same rules of quoracy applying. Such decisions will be recorded by the Convenor / Secretary and noted at the next meeting, with updates on progress as needed.

Expertise from outside its membership can be utilised for projects, and it can instruct task groups from beyond its membership to develop specific pieces of work.