



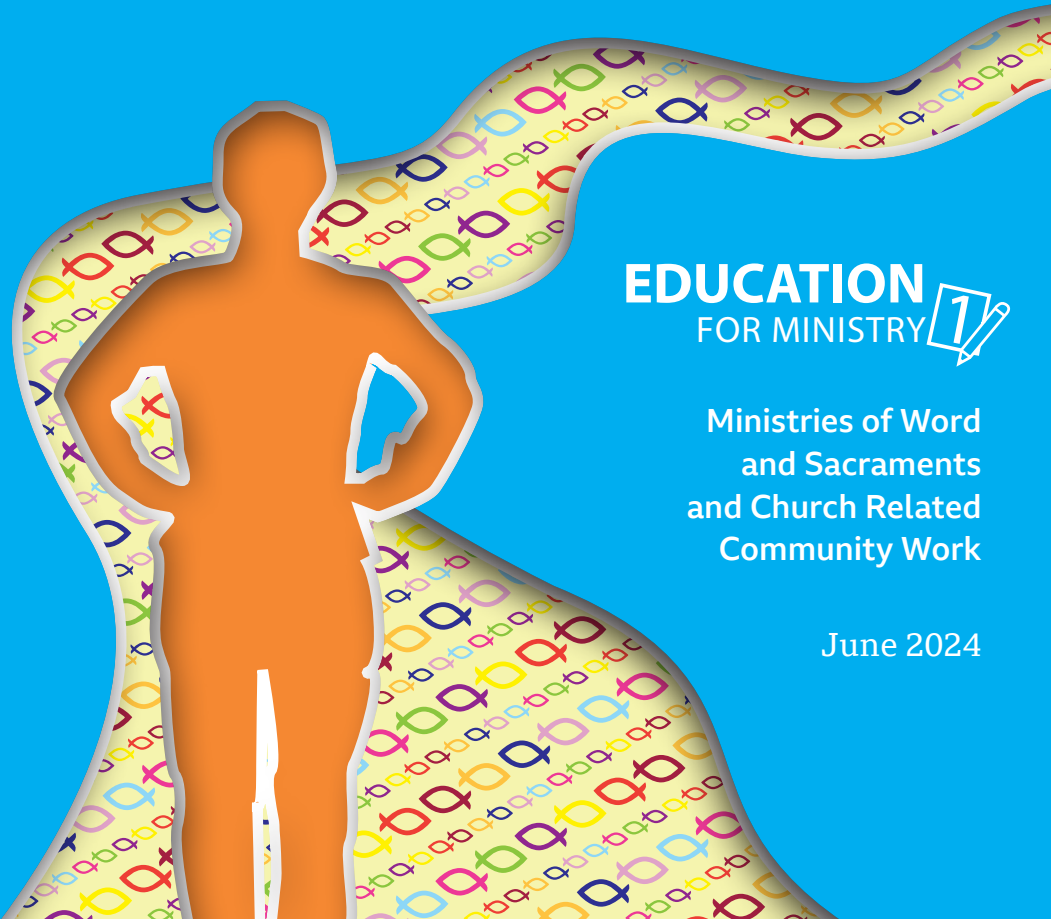
The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

# Candidating for NSM Model 4 ministry

**EDUCATION**  
FOR MINISTRY 

Ministries of Word  
and Sacraments  
and Church Related  
Community Work

June 2024



# Candidating for NSM Model 4 ministry

## Introduction

You may be reading this because you have been to an Enquirers' Event or had a chat with your local Minister or Synod Moderator, in which case you have already begun to test that sense that God is calling you to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. That conversation will also consider where you sense that God might be calling you to serve – in your local church or in another church in your locality.

On the other hand, you may have picked up this leaflet at a synod event because you have already heard the call but have yet to share that with anyone else.

Whatever your situation, now is a good time to think about the series of conversations and interviews in which you will share if you decide to test your call, and to think about the differences between Non-Stipendiary Models 1-3 and Non-Stipendiary Model 4.

*'... you will not exist in isolation from other Church members.'*

You will talk to your local Minister or Interim Moderator, Synod Moderator and/or Synod Candidating Secretary (where no Synod Moderator is in

place). It is at this point you will need to ensure you meet the pre-assessment criteria (see page 10).

Your candidacy will need to be approved by your local church and synod then you will attend an Assessment Conference where the decision will be taken on whether you will be selected for training or not.



The different Councils of the Church are all represented in the process. The whole Church is involved for, as a Minister, you will not exist in isolation from other Church members. This is a testing time, in more ways than one. The purpose of the conversations and interviews is to seek God's will and calling in your life, not merely to interview you for a job.

The objects of the assessment of candidates are:

- To explore the sense of call
- To recognise individual qualities
- To identify the potential to acquire further skills and knowledge through training.

*[General Assembly 1996]*

## Calling

The journey from the exploration of a call to ministry, through selection, training and introduction, and then to ordination or commissioning is one of the most significant journeys that any

Christian can make. It involves a willingness to open your life and vocation as the candidate to the testing and discernment of the Church. It demands a great deal in terms of commitment, vulnerability and openness. It is a journey that, at every point, has no assured outcome and no pre-determined end. In itself, the process is a test of a person's readiness to be shaped by the disciplines of the Church community and to engage in significant processes of discernment and searching.

At every step of the journey, both Church and candidate are engaged in testing a call and at every stage it may become apparent that a different path is the next step. At every point, both Church and candidate are seeking to work out what is right. The Church is committed to making any judgements about vocation with care and rigour in a spirit of prayer and discernment, recognising that discernment is a two-way process. Such decisions will need to be made at the Assembly Assessment Conference as they consider entry to training, by Resource Centres for Learning as candidates take and progress through courses, and by local congregations or communities as they ask whether someone is called to a particular post or pastorate.

As decisions are made, and oversight is exercised, the greatest care will be taken to act with justice and wisdom. Those who engage in this journey are asked to be continually open to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, acting through the councils, people and processes of the Church, as God's people seek to listen for God's will and to act in God's name.



So... what is the difference between Non-Stipendiary Models 1-3 and Non-Stipendiary Model 4? Like all ministries, Non-Stipendiary Ministry of Word and Sacraments (NSM) is both a gift and a calling. Much valuable ministry has been undertaken within the United Reformed Church by non-stipendiary Ministers (NSMs). In many cases this could equally have been undertaken by stipendiary ministers. It is an important principle that there is parity within the ordained Ministry of the Word and Sacraments. It is also an important principle that we sometimes respond to God's call to new, emerging and pioneering ministries, as well as ministry in particular sectors, often referred to as chaplaincy. NSM has often been an important component of such initiatives.

The original vision for NSM within the URC was established by resolutions passed in 1979 and 1980 and was incorporated into Section M of the Manual as follows:

There are three models of non-stipendiary ministry:

- **Model 1** – service in a congregation as part of a team. The pattern is taken from the former Eldership of the Churches of Christ and is limited in scope and local in nature
- **Model 2** – pastoral charge of a small congregation, or service as part of a team of ministers caring for a group of churches
- **Model 3** – ministers in secular employment. Service set apart to be a focus for mission in the place of work or leisure. It is related to a local church or synod.

In 2018 General Assembly authorised a new model NSM, Model 4, a non-stipendiary form of the ministry of Word and Sacraments. This is aimed at engaging those with an appropriately tested sense of call to ministry, but who wish to train locally and to serve primarily in a localised ministry.

The call to ministry for NSM Model 4 should be determined in the same way as other calls to Ministry of Word and Sacraments,

through both the synod candidating process and the Assembly Assessment Conference. It shall be for the Assessment Board, with the guidance of the Education and Learning Panel, to determine what training needs to be undertaken.

There are four major differences between NSM Model 4 and Models 1-3: Ministry Vision, Portfolio Approach, Length of training and non-transferability to another local setting.

## **a) Ministry Vision**

One major difference between NSM Model 4 and NSM Models 1-3 is that for Model 4 ministry the local church with the Synod Pastoral Committee (or its equivalent) needs to produce a ministry vision:

- What is the Mission Context? (eg inner city/urban/suburban/market town/rural/coastal town; population size and composition, ecumenical scene etc)
- What is the Church Context? (eg size of congregation, existing and recent ministries, expectations, theology etc)
- How is this ministry consistent with the synod's deployment strategy?
- What is the Ministry Vision and Priorities? (What are the issues to be tackled and the core work that you have identified?)
- What do you see as the Minister's Role Priorities and how do these relate to the Marks of Ministry?

In response you will need to reflect on what you read about the mission context and ministry vision, and write a response upon that reflection as well as about your personal vision for the local church and its setting. You will need to think about how these priorities relate to the URC's Marks of Ministry (Mission Council 2019): To what extent are you already, and how can you grow as:

- A faithful disciple of Jesus Christ
- A person of integrity and resilience
- A contextual theologian

- A worship leader and preacher
- A pastor
- A missionary and evangelist
- A public figure
- A communicator
- A committed participant in the councils of the Church
- A reformer?

You may not understand all these terms at this stage, but you will be given a copy of the Marks of Ministry as you candidate. This document gives more detail about each

of the Marks of Ministry. The ministry vision for your candidacy, which needs to be formulated at an early stage in the assessment process, and your response to it, becomes a formal document, to be used and developed as a key tool in the discernment process at the Assessment Conference stage, and during your training.

*‘Development of your portfolio of evidence is a learning tool in itself’*

## **b) Portfolio approach**

Another way NSM Model 4 differs from the other NSM models is that you will not necessarily be required to study for a diploma or a degree. Instead, you will be required to build a portfolio. The portfolio is your selection of material, presented in a format agreed with the Resource Centre for Learning responsible for your training. This will evidence your learning and growth through your training.

Ministerial formation changes you. You may choose to include things to show that you have gained or developed particular skills, experiences, attitudes and understanding. You can also use the portfolio to save resources or materials that you think will be useful in your continuing discipleship journey.

It is important to understand that the portfolio should be built up throughout your training, not filled with appropriate material at



the end for the final marking process. This development of your portfolio of evidence is a learning tool in itself, so that both you and the Resource Centre for Learning, can see the journey your training has supported.

### **c) Length of training**

The pattern for training will have been determined by the Education and Learning panel at the Assessment Conference. Training will be a minimum of two years. It is noted that not all students have the aptitude to learn in the same way and to the same level. Should you enter training, NSM 4 will have been discerned, by the Church, to be the call of God upon your life and at the same time a discernment process will consider how best your training will support the outworking of that call.

The Assessment Board in 2021 determined that, as with other training for ministry, the training shall be primarily in person (no less than 80%) but with some components delivered online.

You might consider that two years is insufficient training in comparison to other students in Education for Ministry, Phase 1 (EM1). However, you should remember that this is two years'





minimum and you will be training for a particular ministry that is set out in the ministry vision that has accompanied you throughout the assessment process.

On the other hand, you may think that, because you have been involved and active in your local church for a long time, you do not need two years' training. It is important that every candidate for ministry in the United

*‘It is important that every candidate for ministry... should be open to learning and growing through continued training’*

Reformed Church, and every serving minister too, should be open to learning and growing through continued training. An unwillingness to learn will not be helpful during the assessment process or during EM1. Training for NSM4 is not a “rubber stamping” exercise that ordains you into the work you have already been undertaking. All training begins where a student is and supports their further development against the ministry vision and Marks of Ministry.

You may find a conversation with your synod candidating or training officer will help you to reconsider your initial responses to the training that is set out for you if you have any doubts about it.

#### **d) Not transferable**

You are training for a model of ministry which is not transferable. In other words, you will not be able to change churches after your first ministry is complete. You will need to go back to the Assessment Board who will determine whether you require further training for a new ministry.

Similarly, if you wish to change to any of the NSM Models 1-3 you will need to return to the Assessment Board to discern a new call.

## What do I do next?

The process for candidating falls broadly into two stages: the informal enquiry stage and the formal assessment stage.

### Stage 1 The enquiry stage

The enquiry stage is informal and has two parts:

- Meeting with your Minister or the Interim Moderator (where there is no minister) to explore your call
- Meeting with the Synod Moderator or Moderator's deputy to give you further information about the process and to check your eligibility for candidating. The Moderator has a responsibility to check that you fulfil the basic age, membership and educational criteria agreed by General Assembly as well as to hear about, and support you in discerning, your sense of vocation. If you do not meet any or all of the criteria, the Moderator should discuss what steps could be taken in order for you to satisfy the criteria or to help you discern what other forms of service you might be encouraged to offer to the Church. You can contact the Synod Moderator via your Synod Office.

At any point during this stage of the process, you are encouraged to attend **an Enquirers Event**. These are held twice a year and will give you, the enquirer, the opportunity to meet with those exercising ministry as well as to ask questions of the Secretary for Ministries and also Education and Learning ([ministries@urc.org.uk](mailto:ministries@urc.org.uk)).

The prospective enquirer needs to:

- have been in membership of the United Reformed Church for at least two years prior to candidating;
- conform to the age criteria applied in 2006 following the General Assembly resolution 1997 (the lower age criteria relate to training – 18 for Ministry of Word and Sacraments. Candidates may begin the process before this lower age and young candidates should not be discouraged. There is no upper age criteria for non-stipendiary service);

- provide evidence of having conducted at least one service and preached one sermon, to submit with your application. At the Assessment Conference the candidate will be asked to make a 10-minute presentation on their understanding of Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, answering the question ‘In what ways can our faith produce the actions that make a positive difference to people and their communities?’
- understand, accept and be committed to the Basis of Union of the United Reformed Church, in particular the ordination promises and the statement of the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church;
- have attended Church Meeting and Synod;
- supply a reflective account of Church Meeting and Synod attended;
- satisfy the required medical examination indicating fitness for training and ordained ministry;
- complete the form relating to disclosure of criminal convictions and court orders.

*‘Enquirers Event ... the opportunity to meet with those exercising ministry as well as to ask questions’*

In addition, you must show you are able to undertake the academic aspects of ministerial training. The minimum requirements will be those agreed from time to time by General Assembly on the advice of the Education for Learning Committee. In order to be accepted as a candidate for training for Non-Stipendiary ministry, you will need to have reached the following educational standard:

- GCSE (Grade 9-4) or Scottish National 5 certificate (Grades A-C) in English Language or the equivalent (IELTS 6.5) as an essential prerequisite;

plus one of the following:

- 2 'A' Level's
- 2 Scottish Highers
- A degree from a UK University, or equivalent
- 120 first degree credits from the Open University or other UK University working on a modular system
- An advanced GNVQ, involving a substantial quantity of discursive work (Level 3 and above)
- A successful completion of the two years Assembly Accredited Lay Preaching Course, including the successful completion of the portfolio of evidence. Details of all the requirements can be found in the Handbook, available from [ministries@urc.org.uk](mailto:ministries@urc.org.uk)
- A successful completion of the Foundation Award in Theology, Mission and Ministry, with the University of Durham through Luther King House. Please speak with the Secretary for Education and Learning for further information if you wish to undertake this Award
- Such professional qualifications or experience of life and work as, in the opinion of the Education and Learning Training Board, is of equivalent standard and provides a suitable foundation for training.

**This pre-assessment phase needs to be undertaken carefully and unhurriedly and may take two or more years.** The need to fulfil the pre-assessment criteria should not prevent you from enquiring about the Non-Stipendiary Ministry of Word and Sacrament Model 4 and begin to explore their sense of calling.

Support and cooperation from the local church, and synod should begin from the time of the initial enquiry. The pre-assessment phase is a time of growth which can be encouraged in several ways eg synods can arrange opportunities for you to “shadow” one or more ministers.

Remember, the Synod Moderator or their deputy is responsible for checking and confirming that the pre-assessment criteria have been satisfied before the formal assessment process begins with the Church Meeting commendation and report.

Once the pre-assessment criteria have been met the Synod Moderator or Moderator's deputy will pass your name to the Synod Candidating

Secretary. The Candidating Secretary will then send you the application form and other paperwork. It is at this point that the formal candidating process begins.

## Stage 2

### The formal assessment stage

The formal assessment process is made up of three decisions made by the three councils of the Church:

- **Church Meeting commendation.** If the Church Meeting recommends you for the next stage of the assessment process, it will be asked to write a reference, which is passed to the synod. If the decision is not to recommend, then you will not proceed to the next stage.
- **Synod interviews.** The structures of each synod will doubtless determine how the synod interviews are to be conducted (some synods will conduct ‘District’ interviews as well as a final synod interview). This means that the synods will need to oversee arrangements for an assessed service and any appropriate placement work or ‘shadowing’ for you. It will also have begun to prepare, in agreement with the Church Meeting, the ministry vision statement, on which you will be able to comment. You will also be expected to attend both a Church Meeting and a synod meeting and to write a reflection on both. Guidelines will be provided for how this should be done.

If the synod recommends, it will pass your application and associated papers to the Secretary for Ministries for the next available Assessment Conference. If the decision is not to recommend, then you will not proceed to the next stage.

Therefore, you go to the Assessment Conference with the recommendation of the synod with its specific ministry vision in mind.

After the synod interview, the synod should ensure that if you have not been accepted for training you receive appropriate support. This may include an element of mentoring if you have been advised to reapply after completing some further, wider exploration of the United Reformed Church.

- **The Assessment Board** makes the final decisions about accepting you for training and the method of training taken after Assessment Conference interviews.

## What kinds of questions will I be asked?

*‘The emphasis should be ... on self-awareness and the desire and potential to learn more’*

We don’t provide a list of questions but what might be helpful is to know the areas you will be assessed on. This is a long list but everything in it is important in a life of ministry. These criteria should be kept in mind by everyone involved in the assessment process

and explored in depth at the Church Meeting, synod and Assessment Board interviews. The emphasis should be not on what is already known but on self-awareness and the desire and potential to learn more. If you are candidating for Ministry of Word and Sacraments, reading the Marks of Ministry (Mission Council 2018) will be helpful. This paper can be obtained from your Candidating Secretary.

The areas are:

### **Faith**

- Your Christian journey
- Your devotional life
- Your sense of call to the ministry of Word and Sacraments
- How your understanding of the Bible and the Christian faith is developing
- Your awareness of your own doctrinal position
- Your acceptance of the diversity of positions held within the United Reformed Church.

## **Ministry of Word and Sacraments**

- Your acceptance of the importance of worship (including all-age worship) preaching and the sacraments
- Your understanding of ministry and of the promises to be made at ordination
- Your awareness of the variety of ministerial situations and your willingness to serve in any of these
- Your understanding of, and response to, the expectations placed on ministers
- Your awareness of the attitudes and skills needed in pastoral care.

## **Personal development and character**

- Your concern for all creation
- Your sense of the Gospel of God's grace in Jesus Christ and your experience of the Spirit's enabling and sanctifying power
- How you reflect on the implications of ministry in the context of all their significant relationships
- Your personal history and your ability to reflect on the way your experiences have influenced you
- Your response to any situation in which you have faced risk or difficulty
- How you handle conflict
- Your level of self-awareness, desire to grow towards human wholeness and your ability to learn from your own and others' beliefs and experience
- How you value people, including those from whom you perceive you are different
- Your potential to become competent in written and spoken communication
- Your awareness of your own training and development needs
- Your ability and willingness to respond positively to ministerial education and training
- How you organise and prioritise your present work and leisure time and your ability to relax
- Your understanding of different styles of leadership and where each is most suitable.



## The community of the Church

- Your reflective account of the church, and synod meetings you have attended
- Your understanding and knowledge of the wider Reformed tradition
- Your awareness of local ecumenical relationships and regional/national ecumenical initiatives
- Your understanding of the ministry and mission of the whole people of God, with particular reference to your present church community.

## The Church in the world

- Your understanding of the mission of the Church and how your ministry could contribute to it
- Your understanding of issues in society and how the Church might respond to them
- Your understanding of the relationship between Church, local and wider, and society.

All of these aspects of Ministry and suitability will be tested alongside the ministry vision statement.

Once your application form has been passed on to the Secretary for Ministries for the Assessment Board by the Synod Candidating Secretary you will hear from the Ministries Office with details of the Assessment Conference and advising you that you will need to undergo psychometric testing with the Ministries' preferred provider.

## What happens at an Assessment Conference?

The **objective** is to reach a decision on behalf of the Church as to whether to send a candidate for training for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Work. This is achieved by reaching a careful and balanced view of a candidate's potential for ministry in the United Reformed Church and advice about appropriate training. Reaching such a decision is easier said than done, because subjective and personal elements in any

assessment or person cannot be eradicated and should in fact find their place. The question ‘Can I see this person as my minister or CRCW?’ is a valid one. However, it is important that a judgement on a person’s suitability for ministry is more than just intuitive and is determined by an appraisal of a candidate’s potential to display and develop qualities and skills deemed necessary for ministry.

The **criteria** for ministry have been a matter for continuing debate for the Assessment Board. Assembly 1996 agreed *Criteria for Assessment* but the fundamental qualifications identified in *Preparing Today for Tomorrow’s Ministry 1982* are still valid. Although originally written in relation to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments these fundamental qualifications apply equally to Church Related Community Work:

- i) A total commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and a growing experience of shared life in the Spirit so that the worship and service of God becomes the minister’s central and controlling passion. We need radical dissenters from the false worship of our society, whose dissent does not drive them (timidly or defiantly) into a ghetto but out into the world.
- ii) A growing familiarity with an understanding of the Bible and the Christian tradition, especially – but not exclusively – in its Reformed development, constantly extended and enriched by wide reading and by a study that neither evades the critical questions, nor allows them to silence the central message. We need men and women whose ears are accustomed to listening to the word of God in the scripture and who know how to nourish others with that same word.



- iii) An informed and passionate involvement in the issues of the contemporary world. Clearly this is not to ask for a pretended omniscience. It is to ask for men and women who are aware of the world they live in and committed to doing the will of God in its affairs.
- iv) Because we live in a society which is mobile and pluriform, the church must be as varied and open as the human situations to which it must minister. We need, therefore, not one style of ministry, but many, exercised by women and men, white and black, conservative and radical, working class and middle class, paid and unpaid. We need to look for and encourage very varied gifts, temperaments and abilities.
- v) It follows that one minister cannot fulfil all roles. Collaboration and teamwork will be the marks of a relevant ministry, not omniscience. The gifts for animating and enabling groups and teams of colleagues, and for evoking the skills of others and the readiness to take a subordinate place – these are the marks of a genuine leader and are more to be desired than the gifts which attract attention to an outstanding individual.
- vi) The church is a community of persons of very different ages and in different stages in their discipleship, seeking to share good news with others. The arts of interpersonal communication are fundamental to its life. We need ministers skilled in these arts, aware of the many different levels at which communication takes place, able to exercise and help others to exercise the arts of preaching, of teaching adults and children, of listening and counselling, and having enough sensitivity to be able to encourage the use of music, drama, dance and visual symbol in worship and in the communication of the gospel.
- vii) We need ministers who know that they must be learners all through life, who recognise that their initial training can be only a small beginning, who remain to the end eager to reach out for fuller understanding, greater competence, deeper discipleship.

The **Assessment Panel** at an Assessment Conference is drawn from the Assessment Board appointed by the General Assembly. It includes experienced ordained, commissioned and lay members, those with particular gifts in counselling, personnel management, theological perception, those with personal knowledge of various styles of ministry, community development work and from differing theological stances. A panel will normally consist of 4 members, balanced as far as possible in the various categories. Each candidate will have 2 in-depth interviews with members of the panel working in pairs. The task is demanding, searching and at times deeply moving, and assessors are all too well aware of the responsibility laid upon them.

*‘Assessment Conference  
... The task is demanding,  
searching and at times  
deeply moving’*

The panel receives all the paperwork in the candidate’s application. Interviewers read these papers before meeting the candidate so that the interview can be conducted in the light of the individual’s concerns and personal statement.

**Interviews** take account of previous experience in the church and the community, the circumstances of a call, a candidate’s devotional life, expectation of future ministry and views about the training they feel they need. The application form and various references, including a report from the synod form the basis of discussion, but the conference provides the opportunity to go much deeper. Often the candidates are faced with questions about their faith or themselves which have never occurred to them before, and it is clearly a learning process for them, let alone the assessors. For all candidates the interviews will include a 10 minute presentation on their understanding of faith producing actions which make a positive difference to people and their communities.

All candidates will undergo:

- **Psychometric testing**, which evaluates their Personal Development. A professionally-trained person in the field of Personal Development assists the Assessment Conference through appropriate tests and conversation in order to help evaluate potential and identify particular issues.
- **Participation in Group Exercises**. All candidates take part in two group exercises which help to demonstrate their awareness of current issues, pastoral sensitivity and the ability to work collaboratively.

All candidates will also have an educational interview with **the Education and Learning Board**. The Education and Learning Board at an Assessment Conferences consists of representatives of the



Resource Centres for Learning and the Education and Learning Committee, normally the Secretary for Education and Learning. Board members meet with each candidate to discuss the training programme appropriate for the ministry for which the candidate is applying. The following Code of Practice has been agreed by the General Assembly:

- i) The Assessment Conferences shall take careful account of any wishes expressed by a candidate.

Factors to be taken into account will include: -

- a) The Resource Centre for Learning (RCL) milieu which will best enable the student to develop personally and spiritually
- b) The kind of course most suitable
- c) The size and balance of the student body at any particular time
- d) The final choice is without prejudice to the admission procedures of the college.

A subsequent change of Resource Centre at the request of the candidate will only be recommended if good reasons can be clearly stated to all concerned.

- ii) In the interest of all concerned, a candidate may contact or visit any of the three RCLs before the Assessment Conference.

**Pastoral care** is exercised by a chaplain, who is not part of the assessment process. The chaplain's role is to lead worship and be available to candidates for support and debriefing. The assessors are very much aware of the role of synods both before and after the Assessment Conference in ensuring that pastoral support is offered to all candidates, whether or not they are commended for training.

**Worship** is an important part of the Assessment Conference and is led by the chaplain.

## What happens after the Assessment Conference? When will I hear whether I have been accepted?

At the end of this Conference two decisions will have been made on behalf of the United Reformed Church, recognising that the Assessment Board has a mandate to do its work from General Assembly

1. The first decision taken by the Assessment Board will be whether you may or may not go forward for training.
2. If there is a positive recommendation, this will be accompanied by a second decision taken by the Assessment Board on the advice of the Education and Learning Panel as to the RCL through which you (now a student) will be trained. The Education and Learning Panel will also outline the nature of that training. The advice of synod arising from the Ministry Vision statement will also be sought. The Education and Learning Panel will also outline the nature and length of that training.

No candidate will be informed immediately of the decisions of the Assessment and Education and Learning Boards. Arrangements need to be made with the Secretary for Ministries for a meeting between representatives of your Synod Ministries Committee (or equivalent) and the Assessment Board to discuss any implications of the decision reached about you. This will take place within two weeks after the Assessment Conference and you will be informed of the decision as soon as possible after that meeting, preferably on the same day.

Any offer of training is subject to satisfactory completion of the necessary medical screening (as agreed by Mission Council in May 2011), attendance at the You're Welcome: An Introduction to the Ethos and History of the United Reformed Church Course, and a satisfactory DBS/PVG.



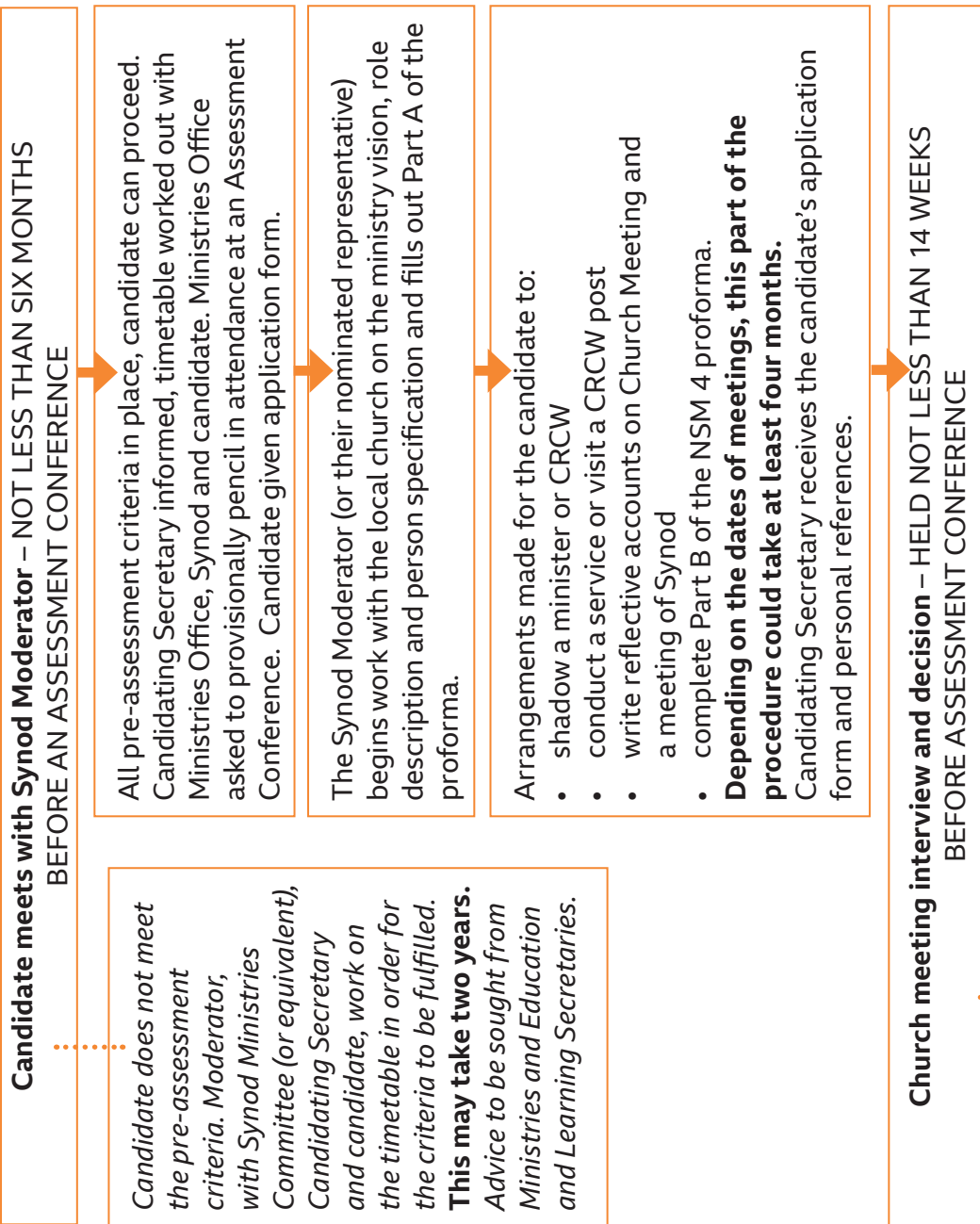
Once a student, you will be sent to an RCL where all the processes of that RCL will apply to the student, whose continued assessment is held by the college under the overall care of the United Reformed Church. Students are referred to the *Oversight and Care* paper which will be provided to all students before they enter their Resource Centre for Learning.

Any appeal against the Assessment Board decision can be made by the candidate using the Assessment Board Appeal process within 14 days on hearing the decision and on the basis that the approved procedure has not been followed.

Candidates are normally free to reapply after two years.



# Flow chart for the candidating process for NSM 4



## TAKES AT LEAST SIX MONTHS WITHOUT COMPLICATIONS

*Decision not to proceed. Minister or Interim Moderator and Elders need to debrief and help candidate explore vocation in a different way.*

Decision to recommend. Send decision next day or ASAP to the Candidating Secretary, who will share with the Local Interview panel.

**Local interview on behalf of Synod** (where held) – HELD NOT LESS THAN 13 WEEKS BEFORE THE ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE AND NOT SOONER THAN ONE WEEK AFTER CHURCH MEETING IN ORDER FOR ALL PAPERWORK TO BE SENT TO INTERVIEWERS. Send report to the Synod next day or ASAP.

**Synod interview** – requires application form, references, note of decisions, assessed service and reflective accounts. ALLOW ONE WEEK TO DISTRIBUTE PAPERS AFTER RECEIVING REPORT FROM LOCAL INTERVIEW AND HOLD THE INTERVIEW NOT LATER THAN 12 WEEKS BEFORE ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE.

*Decision not to recommend. Candidate needs to be debriefed and helped to explore vocation in a different way. Ministries office informed that the candidature has come to an end.*

Papers now include vocational report to Assessors following the Synod interview. Decision to recommend. Synod Candidating Secretary notifies Ministries office immediately so that candidates can be given at least **one month** notice of attendance at Assessment Conference with travel details etc. Candidate papers sent to Ministries office at least **10 weeks** before Conference.

**Assessment Conference.** After the conference, members of the Assessment Board will meet the candidate at the relevant synod office on a date previously agreed with Synod and Candidate, **within 8-14 days** after the Conference.

## **A prayer for those exploring God's call**

**Loving God**

**guide me as I seek your way for me;**

**When I am overwhelmed by the thought of my future**

**help me to search openly**

**and listen for your call.**

**Set before me the example of Jesus Christ;**

**Fill me with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit**

**that I may respond generously in loving service**

**with the special gifts you have given me trusting in**

**your grace.**

**Amen.**

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This is one in a series of booklets about the United Reformed Church's programme for Education for Ministry Phase 1 (EM1).

The booklets can be read and downloaded at:  
[www.bit.ly/EM1-info](http://www.bit.ly/EM1-info)



© United Reformed Church 2024  
Produced by the Communications Team of  
the United Reformed Church on behalf of its  
Education and Learning Committee.  
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