

Learning, Training and Assessment

Our aim for the whole of IME2 Programme is to equip you for ministry in the 21st Century, both now and in the future, which we already know is different from the past. You have already been working with the Qualities Framework in discernment and IME1, and we continue to develop these qualities and your personal disposition towards them in IME2.

Our IME 2 programme encourages curacy to be a time where a curate takes increasing responsibility for their own learning, this is a chance to develop good practice for the future and to (re)invigorate life-long learning as an excellent habit. The principles of character, context, reflection, self-awareness and mutuality all help towards underpinning this.



There are lots of opportunities being prepared for you; courses; specific gatherings of your curacy cohort to share learning experiences as well as encourage and pray for each other; Bishops' Study Day's and retreat opportunities.

Please note that when there is training of any kind for a curate preparing for Incumbent Level ministry – as mentioned in this booklet – attendance **must** take priority over any parish or other duties. For those preparing for Assistant Level ministry there are some specific courses that are required, but you are welcome at any courses if you

are able to be present. Each year during the summer you will be sent an Essential Training Information sheet which will detail courses for you over the following 12 months, giving date, times and places as well as the booking information you will need to follow for that course. We suggest that you book on and put the dates in your diary at the beginning of the year and ensure that your TI knows them all too. If something clashes with your rest time, please arrange to take an alternative day for rest. As far as possible please arrange any annual leave so that it does not clash with IME2 study.

Please note that stipendiary curates are expected, and self-supporting curates encouraged, to attend the two annual (usually May and November) Bishops' Study Days (unless in secular employment) and are welcome to attend other Continuing Ministerial Development opportunities as they wish.

How do we prepare to learn?

All curates begin by creating a new *Curate Learning Development Plan* (CLDP) for each following 12 months. This plan mirrors the Learning Development Plan (LDP) that our clergy already use as part of the Ministry Development Review (MDR) process. Each year, alongside the curacy cohort meetings (see below), you must plan for, and take, some specific compulsory courses, offered by the diocese and some external organisations (subject to funding availability). Your annual plans will be made in conjunction with your training incumbent. All proposed courses should be entered onto the CLDP each year and sent to the Vocations and Training Administrator (along with the new or revised Working Agreement) each September for approval by the IME2 Officer.

Safeguarding Training

Before we go any further it is important to note that perhaps the most important training you will need to undertake and keep up to date is Safeguarding Training. The following Safeguarding training is required to be up to date for **all clergy**, and it is **your responsibility** to know when you need to update your training. Please make sure you diarise when you need to update these modules bearing in mind that the Safeguarding Leadership Training (VSLT) takes up to 3 months to complete.

Modules Required for Clergy	How to access it
Basic Awareness Core module Portal	National Portal Face to face training is available as needed via the SG Team
Foundation	National Portal Face to face training is available as needed via the SG team
Safeguarding Leadership Pathway (VSLT) Core module <i>(Basic Awareness and Foundation required prior to this)</i>	Usually Zoom
Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse	National Portal Face to face training is available as needed via the SG Team
Safer Recruitment and People Management	National Portal Face to face training is available as needed via the SG Team

To access the National Portal visit [Home | Safeguarding: Training Portal](#) To view available training dates via the Diocesan Safeguarding Team visit [Training and Events - Diocese of Leicester](#)

For all other Safeguarding Training queries please contact the team via SGB bookings@LeicesterCofE.org

Curacy Cohorts

All curates, whether deacon or priest, stipendiary or self-supporting, are members of a cohort that meets about 6 times a year. Each cohort is facilitated by an experienced incumbent who will ensure everyone can participate when arranging the times for meetings. Your sessions together create a safe and confidential space for shared reflection and support using a variety of methods. There is deliberately no evaluation or assessment involved in these sessions and while some sessions may have a predetermined focus, others should be negotiated by the group with their facilitator according to need or interests.

These groups are integral to the IME2 programme for curacy for stipendiary and self-supporting curates alike. It is essential that all training incumbents and curates have the dates of these sessions in their diaries, and that they take priority over any other parish activity. Training incumbents in particular are asked to make sure that their curate is free and available for all these sessions. Any absence should only be for illness and notified to the facilitator prior to the meeting.

Each meeting may contain a combination of worship, prayer, reflection on ministerial experiences or theological/pastoral issues, study of a book, contributions from outside speakers – and hopefully refreshments of some sort! Incumbents are not involved in these days unless explicitly stated.

One of the main purposes of these groups is to provide support for the members. To this end, the discussion within the groups needs a degree of mutual trust and confidentiality. Each group seeks to be a safe place where both the joys and frustrations of ministry can be openly shared. This is a very important function: there are issues to be addressed which may appear awkward in any other forum! As stated above assessment is emphatically not part of the purpose: the facilitator is there to facilitate!

Common issues do arise from time to time and one of the tasks of the facilitator, with the consent of the group, is to liaise with others involved in the programme, particularly the IME2 Officer if necessary. General issues around supervision in the parishes, the handling of stress and tiredness, time-management, and pressures on family are all issues which often come up, of which many can best be addressed strategically rather than parish-by-parish.

Although facilitators aim to respect the group's confidentiality, it is to be noted that they also have a responsibility to the greater benefit of all present and future curates, and so if there are matters of concern or safeguarding that need to be aired at diocesan level, they have the responsibility to bring them to the attention of the relevant officer or, if appropriate, an archdeacon. This needs to be done sensitively, without betraying individual confidences and with the good will of the group whenever possible.

The group facilitators also have a vital role in the process of the group's developing life. Without imposing their own agenda, they are able to encourage a sense of freedom in discussion as well as judiciously offering their own experience as a resource. Group members are encouraged to pray for each other regularly, and the facilitator to pray for the members of the group.

Learning Together

You will be given a Curate's Training Log to help you, and your TI, keep track of things, but below is an outline of some specific occasions to help you plan in the first instance:

Early September – Year Group Cohort Day 1

By mid to end of September: All curates should send their Learning Development Plan for the new year to the Vocations and Training Administrator. First year curates should also send in their new

Working Agreement as well, and others, their reviewed/revised Working Agreement.

October – Year Group Cohort Day 2

By end of November: All curates should submit a Reflection Practice document.

December – Year Group Cohort Day 3

November/December/January: Potential End of Curacy Reviews for third year curates

February – Year Group Cohort Day 4

By end of February: All first and second year curates should submit a further Reflective Practice document.

March – Year Group Cohort Day 5

April/May: First year reviews take place.

May – Year Group Cohort Day 6

By end of May: All first and second year curates should submit a further Reflective Practice document.

May/June: Second year reviews take place.

Compulsory Training

There are a number of courses that are considered absolutely **compulsory** for all curates, and it is important to make sure these are attended to in the first or second year of your curacy. These are identified in the Essential Training Information sheet for each year and include courses like: Making Conflict Creative, Unconscious Bias, Anti-Racism, and Preparing to Preside, as well as Diocesan Leadership Programme and Legalities and Responsibilities.

In addition to the cohort meetings, there are a number of other courses that are required to be undertaken and noted in your Training Log. All curates should sign up for these courses via the Learning Hub. If curates have some relevant prior experience, alternatives may be negotiated with the IME2 Officer. Courses will be available in person and online wherever possible to allow for people's differing circumstances. Please note that most of these courses are currently being offered on a two-year rolling programme.

Year 1

- Firo-b (This is done alongside TIs and is essential at the beginning of your Deacon year)
- Reflecting on Baptism Ministry
- Growing Faith
- Reflecting on Funeral Ministry
- Reflecting on Wedding Ministry
- Preparing for Priesting (This is essential for Deacons before Priesting and is undertaken shortly before Michaelmas)

Year 2

- Meetings and APCMs
- Generous Giving and Parish Finance
- Contemporary Issues in Theology
- Legal Responsibilities (for Incumbent Status ministry)
- Working with Change

Year 3

- Mock Interviews (date to be confirmed)
- Plus, a further three courses as agreed on the Curates Learning Development Plan

Annual information will be given about all our courses and how to book onto them by the Vocations and Training Administrator.

Individual Study

It is the training incumbent's responsibility to ensure that study forms part of the continuing ministerial formation of their curate. To this end an agreement needs to be made about the amount of time that will be made available to you for theological study and reflection. For stipendiary curates it is suggested that one session (a morning or an afternoon) per week be set aside for this purpose. This study period is to be distinguished from sermon or teaching preparation.

As the curacy progresses you may wish to attend other learning programmes, training events or conferences. Equally your incumbent may recommend such attendance. Attendance at such events should be negotiated between the incumbent and curate and not simply assumed.

Curates may have access to a personal CMD fund which can be used towards paying for courses and conferences. Details can be found in the [CMD Policy document](#).

Training incumbents and curates should address and note the following as they work on the Learning Development Plan:

- Any particular areas of expertise that the curate brings from their prior experience and whether these should, for example, be developed further, and/or offered as a resource to the Diocese
- Any continuing courses of study that the curate is engaged in at the time of their appointment and the implications of these for the parish
- Any new formal courses of academic study the curate may wish to engage in during the term of the curacy. Such courses are not undertaken in the diaconal year, and in subsequent years only after consultation with the IME2 Officer/DDO

- Extra-parochial interests and commitments (including regular diocesan and national church commitments) that the incumbent agrees can properly be regarded as part of the curate's professional or personal development.
- Any particular areas of ministry that the curate may wish to develop expertise in and how this will be done.

Assessment of Curacy

Curacy will be assessed against the Qualities Framework (Appendix 1) approved by the House of Bishops. The aspiration is that these qualities are helpful and not restricting to a person's learning and can be evidenced as they are being met.

There are several ways that evidence can be collected, through reflective practice, review meetings and reports. The process to do this is below:

Reflection and Review Meetings and Reports

All curates and training incumbents are required to timetable three reflection meetings per year (one each term) at which the curate's abilities are assessed against the Qualities Framework which can be found on The Hub. A written report is submitted on completion.

Although similar in shape to a general supervision meeting these reflection meetings are more formal in that Reflective Practice forms an explicit part of the conversation and subsequent written report.

The curate is invited to make a personal assessment of their competence in the particular area defined by that session, based on prior experience, experience in ministry to date and theological reflection with colleagues and others. Some time should therefore be set aside prior to the meeting for the preparation for this.

The training incumbent offers their own observations and reflections, having regard to the curate's previous experience, opportunities for this competence to have been developed and examination of progress to date.

In all cases any assessment is far more than simply judging a person's functional competence, but much more about how their disposition towards the Qualities is developing. It should enquire into the curate's ability to reflect on what they are doing, using insights from theology and other disciplines to inform their practice, and be able to identify directions for future development.

Copies of the written Reflective Practice report should be kept by the training incumbent and curate, with a copy sent to the Vocations and Training Administrator for review by the IME2 Officer. Copies will help all concerned to reflect subsequently on development in the areas covered. A Reflection template and report proforma are available for you to use. Other creative ways to record these reflections are acceptable by prior agreement with the IME2 Officer.

Please ensure that all the Qualities from the Framework are covered at some point during the curacy. Each Reflective Practice conversation may either look at one particular aspect of a Quality or the whole of it, depending on what is appropriate.

The Qualities Framework considers a curate's disposition to their:

Love for God – Call to Ministry – Love for People

Wisdom – Fruitfulness – Potential – Trustworthiness

These sessions are there to reflect on, and measure, your developing competence in particular areas. To do this it is important to have frank and constructive conversations. Although consensus in writing up the reflection is desirable, if there are grounds for disagreement these can be recorded in the report. In the case of a

divergence of opinion, which is considered by either training incumbent or curate to be substantial, a conversation with the IME2 Officer involving both parties, is strongly recommended.

Training incumbents are asked to consider which other people in the parish may share in the ministerial formation of the curate, to the extent of taking part in some of the evaluations. This is particularly useful (and necessary) for evaluation of preaching and liturgical competence in parishes where after priesting the curate may be in different places regularly on a Sunday (appropriate forms for this are available on the Hub).

The Timetable for the submission of Reflective Practice Reports to the Administrator is by the last day of November, February and May.

How might you meet the Qualities?

As we move into ministry there are some core skills to be learnt in very practical terms, but alongside this will be your own way of being that will enhance different aspects of ministry as we explore your disposition to the qualities. Below are some suggestions of ways you might evidence this – but there will be many more:

Love for God:

- Morning and/or Evening Prayer
- Retreat
- Regular Spiritual Direction
- Preaching and leading services
- Ecumenical Prayer events

Call to Ministry

- Preparing candidates for Baptism/Confirmation
- Preaching and Teaching

Love for people

- Pastoral visiting
- Funerals, weddings and baptisms
- Care Home and School visits

Wisdom

- PCC involvement
- Understanding Canon Law

Fruitfulness

- Leading courses/home groups
- Schools work
- Civic services
- Encouraging others in vocation

Potential

- Initiating a new course or other project
- Church planting

Trustworthiness

- Safeguarding
- Deanery and Diocesan involvement

In the Core Skills Checklist you will find suggestions of skills that will be useful for you for the future, some essential and some desirable just like any job description. But remember this is not a 'job' as society might describe it, this is your vocation – your way of 'being' rather than just the things you can 'do'. So, although this skills list seems to be focused on doing, it is endeavouring to ensure that you have the opportunity to develop your character, knowledge and

practice for effective Christ-like leadership in the future as you do 'do' things, then reflect on them with others in order to ponder whether things might be done differently in the future, how doing them made you feel and what other skills you might need to learn. In each different context there will be some things that you may not be able to cover, these will perhaps help you to contemplate an appropriate placement in your second year (see the leaflet called 'Time to experience something else!'). At the end of each year the IME2 Officer will meet with you and your TI for a review meeting. These meetings are to ensure and celebrate progress and encourage you for the year ahead, they follow the pattern below:

Year 1 – Light Touch

In November the IME2 Officer will make contact with you to check your curacy has got off to a good start.

Year 1 – Progress Review

At the end of the spring term the IME2 Officer will visit you and your TI together. This visit is to support and encourage good working practice in your TI-curate relationship and to ensure training is being appropriately provided. This will also include discussion as to whether you are ready for Ordination to the Priesthood and afterwards a recommendation will be made by the Training Incumbent and IME2 Officer to the Bishop.

Year 2 – Mid-curacy Review

Early in the summer term the IME2 Officer will visit you and your TI together again. This time the visit is a more structured review looking at whether your curacy is on track to enable you to be signed off as ready to take on a post of greater responsibility in an appropriate timescale, or whether additional specific actions such as extra experience, more time for formation or extra training/mentoring in an

area is needed. At this meeting a proposed timescale will be agreed for sign-off of curacy (subject to ratification by the Sponsoring Bishop).

Year 3 – End of Curacy Review

The End of Curacy Review is normally undertaken about 12 months before your Common Tenure ends, but the timing is always tailored to an individual curates needs to ensure they can complete their curacy well and be ready for a post of greater responsibility. The process for sign off is:

- Curate and training incumbent are asked to meet together to discuss the training experience, particularly in relation to the Qualities Framework – Appendix 1, and to agree a written report of that conversation. In preparation for your conversation you will be asked to write a summative statement of no more than 4 pages while the TI writes their own 2 page summative report too and makes an explicit recommendation for readiness of sign-off. When you are both happy with these reports they are sent to the Vocations Lead Administrator.
- The IME2 Officer and/or the DDO, acting on the bishop's behalf, will make arrangements to see you and review your entire learning journey of IME1 and IME2. They will then write a report with their recommendation concerning sign-off. This report may also include recommendations for further learning and areas to pay attention to as you move on. It will also link you with an Archdeacon to help you explore possible posts.
- The assessment paperwork then goes to the Sponsoring Bishop and is tabled at a meeting of the Bishops and Archdeacons. If accepted, the Sponsoring Bishop will write

to you to confirm sign-off and giving approval for you to begin seeking your next post.

Please note that it is the policy of this diocese that all curates should have received their confirmation letter of sign-off from the Sponsoring Bishop before seeking any new post.

Vocational Coaching

The Parish Transition and Ministry Development team offer a vocational coaching session for third year curates. The purpose of this is to give space to explore future direction and call, in a safe, yet honest environment. If you would like to take up this offer, please contact Stuart.Burns@LeicesterCofE.org who will arrange a coach with you. The PTMD team have a 'bank' of trained coaches, and Stuart will liaise with you over the coach offered.

This session stands outside the normal reflection / supervision / review meetings and would not be conducted by the regular team who would conduct your end of curacy assessment.

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Appendix 1: The Qualities Framework

Priest	Christ	Church	World	Self
Love for God <i>The candidate...</i>	Is reliant on God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - and lives out an infectious, life transforming faith	Is rooted in Scripture, the worship of the Church and the living traditions of faith	Whole-heartedly, generously and attractively engages with God's world	Is prayerful and studies the Bible
Call to Ministry <i>The candidate...</i>	Responds to the call of Christ to be a disciple	Understands the distinctive nature of ordained priestly ministry	Is committed to being a public and representative person	Articulates an inner sense of call grounded in priestly service
Love for People <i>The candidate...</i>	Welcomes Christ in others, listens, values and respects; cares for those in poverty and the marginalised	Builds relationships which are collaborative and enabling	Shows God's compassion for the world	Has empathy and is aware of how others receive them
Wisdom <i>The candidate...</i>	Is inquisitive, curious and open to new and lifelong learning	Shows leadership that enables thriving and healthy churches, handles conflict, and can lead in mission	Is robust and courageous and prepared to take risks	Is a mature and integrated person of stability and integrity
Fruitfulness <i>The candidate...</i>	Embraces the different and enables others to be witnesses and servants	Shows the capacity to exercise sacramental, liturgical and an effective and enabling teaching ministry	Shares faith in Christ and can accompany others in their faith	Has resilience and stamina
Potential <i>The candidate has potential to...</i>	Grow in faith and be open to navigating the future in the company of Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit	Manage change, and see the big picture	See where God is working in the world and respond with missionary imagination	Be adaptable and agile
Trustworthiness <i>The candidate...</i>	Follows Christ in every part of their life	Leads maturely which promotes safe and harmonious Christian communities	Lives out their life as a representative of God's people	Has a <u>high-degree of self awareness</u>