

# Working Agreement

Our IME 2 programme encourages curacy to be a time where a curate takes increasing responsibility for their own learning, a chance to develop good practice for the future and to (re)invigorate life-long learning as an excellent habit. There are lots of opportunities for you to undertake some of which are compulsory; courses, study days, and specific gatherings of your curacy cohort in order for you to share learning experiences as well as encourage and pray for each other.

However, the very first document that needs to be created, with your Training Incumbent, is a *Working Agreement* that determines the practical arrangements for your working together, in order to facilitate your learning and development. It is not intended to be a legally binding agreement, but it ensures that you have both discussed, understood, and accepted the expectations of your training post. A template can be found here on the website. This document should be sent to the Vocations and Training Administrator by the September in the first year. This document should then be reviewed in each subsequent September and a revised copy sent in.



This document will stand alongside the legal Statement of Particulars which is similar to a working contract and will come to you from the Diocesan HR Officer.

The Working agreement sets out expectations like, when is your regular day-off / rest day / sabbath; it is interesting to think about what you will call this time for yourself and therefore how you will approach it – a good first reflection with your TI perhaps? It will also ask you to consider things like, when and how often you will pray together, rather than just meet for ‘staff’ meetings, making holiday arrangements, expenses, even things like dress codes, phoning each other on day’s off or whatever you call them, how quickly emails etc. should be responded to, as well as the process for good organisation and administration.

The template for the agreement has lots of other suggestions too for you to consider.

## Reviewing the Agreement

It is to be noted that there might be some potentially trickier things to cover that really are worth discussing early on, for instance, just how much does the Training Incumbent need to know about what the Curate is doing and vice versa, or under which circumstances the authority of the Training Incumbent needs to be acknowledged.

Lack of clarity about these practical things can cause difficulties later so please do take time to complete the Working Agreement thoroughly. It is also important therefore to review the agreement regularly, perhaps every six months, circumstances can change and as experience develops things can change.

We ask that the first completed agreement is sent to the Vocations and Training Administrator by September of the first year. We also ask that a reviewed and potentially revised agreement is then sent in each following September to the end of the curacy.

Some of the things you will need to decide are as follows:

### *Mutual Expectations*

- General expectations the incumbent has of the curate as trainee
- General expectations the curate has of the incumbent as trainer
- Ideas of authority and its exercise i.e. delegation
- Confidentiality
- Expectations regarding use of housing (Diocesan or your own)

### *Use of Time*

- Time at work
- Time off: daily, weekly, annually, periodically
- Care of family
- Being single

### *Prayer and Worship*

- Attendance (daily/weekly)
- Role in design and leadership
- Preaching (frequency/evaluation)

### *Personal Growth and Development*

- Pattern of private prayer
- Spiritual direction/companionship
- Retreat/quiet days
- Reading

### *Enabling your Learning Plan*

- IME Phase 2 cohort and training sessions
- Theological study
- Additional academic qualifications

- Conferences
- Extra-parochial interests and responsibilities

### *Staff Support*

- Staff meetings
- Supervision sessions (frequency of)
- Other necessary meetings/times together
- Chapter meetings/Deanery Synod/Minster Communities
- Review of progress

### *Pastoral Responsibilities*

- For example: visiting, occasional offices, schools, hospitals, youth club, parish organisations, sick communions, etc
- Commitments beyond the parish e.g. chaplaincy and community roles, teaching in the diocese, etc

### *Wider Relationships*

- Relationships with the Deanery, Chapter and Minster Community
- Relationships with other churches
- Relationships with other faith communities

### *Administration and Finance*

- Time/diary management
- Organising the office i.e. handling correspondence, filing, Data Protection, Confidentiality and security, etc
- Expenses – how often to submit for example and what can be reasonably claimed
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding – ensuring a briefing from the Parish Safeguarding Coordinator