

## CONSULTANCY SUPPORT FOR CURATES

### NOTES

1. Consultancy is “a creative act, based on the insights of Christianity and the behavioural sciences, which engages with all that is involved in the work of God and people in all the glory and messiness of human and spiritual life in the church and the world.”<sup>1</sup>
2. According to George Lovell, consultancy requires “genuine interest, single minded concentration and professional curiosity.”<sup>2</sup> E.R. Ackerley wrote in a personal memoir to E.M Forster “When I was alone with him and his unselfconscious listening attention was turned upon me - attention which I felt was hearing not only the things said but the motive in saying it - I experienced a sense of strain, as though more and more were expected of me than I believed myself to contain. To be listened to is a really serious matter.”<sup>3</sup>
3. The Diocese supports people in curacy by making it possible for them to consult with an experienced minister (usually from a different deanery). This relationship is intended to compliment the roles of coach, mentor and supervisor exercised by the curate’s Training Incumbent (or Supervising Minister).
4. Consultancy is offered so that:
  - a. Curates have the benefit of relating to another experienced minister in an intentional way
  - b. Curates have the opportunity to reflect on ministry and context, and gain greater insight and clarity.
  - c. Curates have a wider experience of supervision to help them in their future ministry.
5. According to the Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy, “It is good practice for the clergy to meet regularly with a work consultant to review their ongoing ministry.” It is hoped that the practice developed in curacy may become a continuing feature of an effective and fruitful ministry.
6. Curacy, as with all ministry, is a developmental process. Those going on to posts of incumbent status need to be ready “to exercise oversight and leadership in their ordained ministry”, be “able to show sophisticated skills as an effective reflective practitioner”<sup>4</sup>. They will need to supervise others to enable collaborative leadership. Consultancy will resource this development.

### GUIDELINES

1. Curates will be assigned a consultant in their diaconate.
2. Consultants will need to be aware whether the curate is a MSE (minister in secular employment), or whether ministering part-time or full-time in a parish.
3. Curates take on the responsibility to arrange an initial meeting and subsequent meetings.
4. Consultations should last no more than an hour and a half, and arrangements need to be made to prevent interruptions.

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<sup>1</sup> Lovell, G. 2000. *Consultancy, Ministry and Mission*. London: Burns & Oates.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* p38

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid* p39

<sup>4</sup> Ministry Division Learning Outcomes for Curacy

5. IME Phase 2 is a four year process of which curacy is a part. There are obvious advantages for the consultancy agreement lasting for the four years, so that it also encompasses the period of transition from curacy.
6. There should be five meetings in the four years (these could be more frequent if both agree):
  - a. In IME Phase 2 Year 1 (diaconate) – one meeting
  - b. IME Phase 2 Year 2 – two meetings
  - c. IME Phase 2 Year 3 – one meeting
  - d. IME Phase 2 Year 4 – one meeting
7. The main objectives of the meetings are:
  - a. To help the curate to reflect theologically on mission and ministry in their context
  - b. To reflect upon their role as an ordained person in the context of that mission and ministry
  - c. To reflect upon their own personal experience of operating in the public role of an ordained person.
8. Consultancy meetings should be safeguarded by rules of confidentiality. The meetings don't form part of the assessment and reports do not need to be submitted (though some will prefer to keep a report for their own personal use).
9. Curates may choose to raise problems of their relationship with their Training Incumbent, or problems with their parish or church community. Where this is the case, the role of the consultant is to help the curate work through them, wherever possible, encouraging the curate to talk the issues through with his/her training incumbent. Alternatively the curate could be encouraged to seek support from the [Diocesan Mediation Service](#).
10. Either consultant or curate can end the relationship, but would need to inform the IME Officer as soon as possible so alternative arrangements can be made.
11. Alternatively, both could negotiate to continue the consultancy beyond IME Phase 2.

DH. Dec 20<sup>th</sup> 2010 (revised 30 June 2014).