

Licensed Lay Ministry Discernment and Selection Process

Discernment varies enormously between people. Some may be sure of a calling to Licensed Lay Ministry – others may take time to explore all the possibilities before coming to a conclusion. Conversations with the incumbent are usually ongoing over a period of time, either before or concurrently with the discussions with Vocations Advisers. It is typical for an enquirer to see a Vocations Adviser for around six months before moving into the formal selection process, but this is not a hard and fast time limit – the main determining factor is when Adviser and enquirer feel that the time is right to proceed.

Advisers and enquirers may find it helpful to visit the diocesan website for more information on the vision for licensed lay ministry and the qualities we would be seeking:

<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/churches/licensed-lay-ministers/becoming/>

<https://youtu.be/JqYC20Dtgwo>

The following is a summary of the steps needed in the vocational discernment process from initial enquiry through to the start of training.

Vocations Adviser

1. Enquirer contacts Vocations Advisor for discussions over a period of months.
2. During this time they also contact the PA to the Licensed Lay Ministry Training Coordinator to arrange to attend the next Training Exploration Evening.
3. Once the enquirer is ready to test a vocation by making a formal application as a candidate for lay ministry selection, **this is initiated by the Vocations Adviser**, who emails the candidate's Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge (with a copy to the Warden of Readers and to the candidate), confirming the length of time they have been seeing the candidate, any reading or written work the candidate has done under supervision, and whether they have any concerns about the candidate entering the formal selection process at that time.

Note: for a candidate to be considered for training to begin in September, step 3 must have been completed **no later than 21st February** in that year.

Incumbent

4. If the Incumbent endorses the candidate's call to licensed lay ministry, they confirm this by email to the Warden of Readers **no later than 28th February in each year for a September start**, and complete the Incumbent's Nomination Form and Reference as soon as is feasible thereafter and send them to the Warden's Office. (If the deadlines are looming, it is possible for the Nomination Form to be submitted with details of the PCC motions to follow, provided these have taken place before the candidate's selection conference.)
5. The Incumbent arranges for all of the PCC's in the benefice to vote by secret ballot on the following motion

'This PCC supports N spiritually, prayerfully and financially as its candidate for Licensed Lay Ministry Training Selection on the understanding: a) that N will be released from all obligations in the parish during the two years of training, b) that N will be entitled to claim and be paid the expenses of office once licensed and c) agrees that on completion of training N will be accepted and regularly used as a full member of the Parish Staff or Ministry Team.'

6. On receipt of the Incumbent's Nomination, the Warden's Office sends a copy to the Licensed Lay Ministry Training Coordinator and to the Selection Secretary.

Candidate

7. On receipt of the Incumbent's confirmation in (4) above, the Warden's Office sends the candidate an Application Form for completion and return as soon as possible (Closing date in

each year is **15th March** for a September start). The form includes a request for baptism and confirmation certificates, so candidates would be wise to start the process of getting hold of these as early as possible, as getting formal copies of missing certificates can take time. The candidate will also have to supply details of three referees. Dates to keep free for training and selection will also be supplied by the Warden's office.

8. The candidate will need to attend the 'Introduction to Licensed Lay Ministry Training' evening in early March.
9. The Warden's office will also notify the relevant Sub-Warden and pass to them a copy of the incumbent's nomination.

Sub-Warden

10. The candidate and area Sub-Warden will meet and the Sub-Warden will send a short report to the Warden's Office no later than **30th March**

Referees

11. On receipt of the candidate's application, the Warden will write to their referees requesting a formal reference. These must be returned by the **30th March** in each year for a September start. The Warden will also check with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser where there is any safeguarding history to be taken into account.

Selection Conference

12. Once all the papers have been received by the Warden's Office, they are sent to the Selection Secretary, who then calls candidates to a day-long selection conference, usually held between April and June.
13. Candidates are usually contacted by the Warden of Readers within 48 hours of the end of their selection conference to be told the recommendation.
14. If successful, the candidate will then need to liaise with the LLM Training Coordinator regarding the start of training, and will be required to complete the necessary documents to obtain a DBS clearance.

Those recommended for training must attend a Summer School at the end of August. This forms part of their induction to the course as well as providing initial teaching for their first 2 modules. The dates of the Summer School are usually the week leading up to the Bank holiday at the end of August. It would help potential candidates to be aware of this as early as possible.

At the end of the training period, reports are written by members of the Training Team, and the Warden of Readers makes the final decision on whether or not a trainee is admitted as a Licensed Lay Minister. Admission takes place usually on the third Saturday in September of each year, and it is one of the regulations that new ministers must be aged 69 or less on that date.

Warden of Readers and Archdeacon of Norwich

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