

# The Incumbent's Role in Training a Licensed Lay Minister

During initial training the supervisor is the most significant person for the student LLM. They provide a model for ministry and the first point of care for the student and their family. They help the student learn practical aspects of ministry and develop a relationship from student to ministerial colleague. The supervisor assesses the student's progress and liaises with diocesan authorities (Warden and Sub-Warden of Readers) and the staff of the Course. Although it is generally the incumbent who acts as supervisor, in some cases (e.g during an interregnum) it is necessary to appoint an alternative person – hence the terminology 'supervisor' which is used in many places in this and other documents.

## **Model for ministry**

Each student has their particular gifts and experience and should not become a clone of their supervisor, but the supervisor should be a model for Christian life and ministry.

This is firstly a matter of lifestyle and character, the balance of work and leisure, the place of prayer and continuing learning.

Secondly it is a matter of professionalism in ministry, standards of leading worship, preaching and teaching, of management and pastoral care.

Thirdly it is about collaboration in ministry, working with others and developing the gifts of others.

## **Care for the student**

Care for the student and family includes the management of time. The annual *Training Agreement* is designed to help with this, and the *Bishop's Statement on Training and Ministry* should be taken to heart. It is important that supervisor and student should meet regularly - perhaps once a month for an hour - when the sole business is to review the progress of training and check the welfare of the student and family. Sometimes encouragement and help to get time out of the parish is important. Any concerns about the student should be communicated to the Deputy Warden.

## **Practical Training**

Here the supervisor has the key role. Some modules of the course have specific requirements for ministry in the parish or on placement. Other ministry will be planned with the student to enable them gain necessary experience. The needs of the student must take priority over the needs of the parish and sufficient time must be allowed for the student's employment, leisure and study. Supervisors must let themselves be observed and talk through with the student the business of preparation, performance and subsequent reflection and the feelings all this generates. They must allow students sufficient time for their own preparation and reflection, observe them in action and provide feedback. In some parishes there may be other experienced clergy or lay ministers who can give help with some training. Sometimes retired clergy may be able to cover for the incumbent of a multi parish benefice so that they can more easily observe the student in action.

## **Supervisor - student relationship**

It is vital that once a student is licensed or ordained they have a positive working relationship with the supervisor where they can trust and respect each other and be open about their different strengths and weaknesses. To reach this goal time and work must be put into the student - supervisor relationship from the beginning. Student and supervisor need to be praying together and learning together. If there are difficulties they need to be talked through at an early stage.

## **Assessment**

Few people with any sensitivity find giving feedback and making assessments easy but it is an essential part of the learning process. As far as accredited modules are concerned it is vital that, when the supervisor is required to provide assessment, that the necessary forms are completed accurately and returned in time. It is important to note when the deadlines are and to plan ahead so that you are not caught out.

## **Checklist for Supervisors** **Or: “How to be the perfect supervisor”!**

### **General**

- Establish regular (monthly) meetings for Reflection, Supervision, Coaching and Feedback  
....in addition to the ‘business’ of the benefice.
- Be prepared to reflect on your own practice as well as what the student is doing.
- Regularly ask to see student’s ‘log’ of activity and monthly theological reflection on practice.
- Provide opportunities for student to keep wider church aware of how training is going
  - Magazine
  - Interviews
  - Ministry Team
  - AGM
- Ensure you (or others) regularly see the student ‘up front’ in leading worship/preaching.
- Encourage more than criticise!
- Keep a watching brief as to student’s work/family/church/study/....life balance!

Further information will be provided following selection for Licensed Lay Ministry Training.