



**A Handbook for Curates
&
Training Incumbents
2023-24**

IME Phase 2

Welcome to ordained ministry in partnership with all God's people in Lichfield Diocese



'Will you be diligent in prayer, in reading Holy Scripture, and in all studies that will deepen your faith and fit you to bear witness to the truth of the gospel?' That is the question which you will be asked at your ordination whether as deacon or as priest, and your answer will be: 'By the help of God, I will'. The question and promise are a powerful reminder of the lifelong learning and formation that must underpin our ministry as deacons and priests. That commitment to education is particularly crucial in the years immediately following ordination, when the habits of a lifetime of service of God and God's people are being formed in us.

In the Diocese of Lichfield, we take that commitment very seriously. My expectation is that you in turn will make a correspondingly strong commitment, prioritising IME meetings and events, and entering fully into the shared learning which lies at their heart. The guidance we receive from the Holy Scriptures speaks to us with a fresh vigour and directness when we prayerfully integrate our studies with the everyday realities we are encountering in our ministerial service, and when we are opened up to insights from one another too. I am glad that IME phase 2 in this diocese is delivered through a framework that is biblical, contextual and ecclesial; my hope is that through your whole-hearted participation in this programme you will find your excitement is constantly in learning more and more of the mysteries of God's loving purposes in Christ. May what was said of the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe be said of the curates of Lichfield: 'They get drunk with the love of learning in the way that other people get drunk with the love of wine'.

+ Michael Lichfield

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Welcome to IME Phase 2 Training in the Diocese of Lichfield



I am delighted to welcome you as you begin to engage with the Diocese of Lichfield's Initial Ministerial Education Phase 2 programme (IME 2). This Handbook provides practical information for you and your Training Incumbent.

During IME 2 you will undertake training and assessment within the Diocese as you engage in ministry under the supervision of your Training Incumbent and as part of a group of curates. The majority of your formation and learning will take place in the local church as you gain everyday ministerial experience. I very much hope that this will be a rich and rewarding experience both for yourself and for those you are called to serve. Alongside this is the more formal training that the diocese provides, and for which I have overall responsibility.

Supporting me in the delivery of IME2 training is Mrs Angela Bruno. Angela gives administrative support to the team and will often be communicating with you about the programme and diocesan matters. In addition, we liaise closely with the Revd Dr Catrin Harland-Davies, Co-Director of the Centre for Continuing Ministerial Development at the Queen's Foundation with whom the diocese has worked closely in recent years. It is Catrin's responsibility to ensure that planning and evaluation meets Quality Assurance and Enhancement processes and she acts as Director of Studies for all curates continuing with accredited study through the Queen's Foundation.

IME 2 is a continuation of the formation and learning that took place in your ordination training (IME 1) and is part of an ongoing process that continues beyond completion of your curacy. Understandably there are formational criteria set by the Church of England to which to aspire in order that at the end of your curacy your Area Bishop might have confidence in recommending you for the next stage of your ministry. Our role over the next few years alongside your Training Incumbent and Parish is to provide the opportunities for ministry, learning and reflection that will prepare you well for moving into Assistant or Incumbent ministry posts in the future. In order to do that we ask all curates to complete a number of assignments and to maintain a learning portfolio in order to enable us all to have confidence that you meet the relevant formational criteria. Some of you may also wish to consider further accredited study alongside your IME 2 training.

We appreciate that you are taking up your new responsibilities at a time of great uncertainty and concern for the future of the Church of England and this Diocese. Over the past couple of years, we have all had to respond in sometimes new and both challenging and exciting ways to ministry and mission in our local contexts. However, we see God working in new ways through the church and we continue to be a people of hope witnessing to the Good News of Jesus Christ. Holding together traditional patterns of church life and exploring the

new is exciting and, at times, a struggle. Enabling the culture of the church to change so that the ministry of all God's people is recognised and supported is at times a joy, at others hard work and sometimes both. We aim to support you as you engage in your curacy working towards taking your place as ordained ministers in the mission and ministry of the whole people of God.

*The Revd Preb Dr Jeanette Hartwell
Director of Ministry
April 2023*

Key Contacts

<https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/vocations-and-training/>

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Safeguarding and DBS

All curates in the Diocese of Lichfield are expected to be attentive to the legal and diocesan requirements concerning the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Within the current guidelines for best practice ordinands are required to have completed the Safeguarding Leadership, Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse, and Safer Recruitment and People Management modules prior to ordination as a deacon and to renew their training prior to completion of their curacy within the diocese of Lichfield.

Curacy in the Diocese of Lichfield

The Diocese of Lichfield is committed to training curates to be effective, reflective ministers serving this region and prioritising Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism (DVE). It is based on the following priorities:

- 1) Curacy training is shaped around a journey of DVE, with attention to the formation of the curate and the development of discipleship, vocation, evangelism. Each year has a particular focus:

Year 1 **Discipleship** What does it mean to be a disciple in a leadership role in the church?
(Putting roots down and developing resilience)

Year 2 **Vocation** In the call to ordained ministry how are we open to the potential within ourselves and others?
(Looking out and embracing 'other')

Year 3 **Evangelism** What is the Good News that I am sharing and how am I sharing this?
(Looking forward and growing the kingdom)

- 2) Curacy training offers a high degree of flexibility to encourage sixth day ministries and engagement with pioneering and fresh expressions of church. Evidence of meeting formational criteria need not be solely parish based; curacy competence may also be demonstrated through other areas of work such as chaplaincy.
- 3) The Diocese is interested in developing curates who have an appetite to continue learning and for theological reflection. Written work and accreditation is valued in as far as they support this aim, but are not sought as ends in themselves.
- 4) Gifts and skills of individuals should be integrated into the formation process and peer learning encouraged. The curacy period looks to build on learning at IME1 but offers a distinctively different feel.

In addition to these priorities, overall pastoral responsibility for curates lies with the bishops and archdeacons of the Diocese. The bishops and archdeacons, as means of drawing on their own interests and skills, and as a way to get to know curates better endeavour to be involved in some teaching and training of curates where appropriate.

IME 2 General Timetable

Year 1 2023- 24	
Deacon Induction Day (with TIs)	Thursday 6 th July 2023 10am – 4pm Telford Minster
Deacon Retreat	Thursday 29 th June - Saturday 1 st /Sunday 2 nd July
Pastoral Visit 1 from Jeanette Hartwell	July – September 2023
Residential 1 – Who do you say I am?	8 th – 10 th September 2023
Compulsory Study Day 1 – Canon Law	Wednesday 8 th November 2023 10am – 4pm Telford Minster
Priesting Report	February 2024
Pastoral Visit 2	March – April 2024
Compulsory Study Day 2 – Preparing for Priesthood	Thursday 21 st March 2024 10am – 4pm Shallowford House
The Bishop's Clergy Conference	Monday 22 nd – Thursday 25 th April 2024 Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick
Compulsory Study Day 3 – Legalities of Weddings	Thursday 16 th May 2024 3pm – 5pm (Zoom)
Pre-priesting Interviews with the Area Bishop	May 2024
Optional Study Days 1 & 2	

Year 2 2024-25	
Priest Retreat	Thursday 20 th – Saturday 22 nd /Sunday 23 rd June 2024
Compulsory Study Day 4 - Unconscious Bias	November 2024
Pastoral Visit 3	November – December 2024
Residential 2 – Mission and Apologetics	January 2025
Compulsory Study Day 5 – Effective Conversations	March 2025
Mid Term Review	May - June 2025
Optional Study Day 3, 4 and 5	

Year 3 2025-26	
Residential 3 (including Moving On Day)	November 2025
Compulsory Study Day 6 – Mental Health and Well-Being	October 2025
Pastoral Visit 4	October – November 2025
Final Reports	December 2025
Compulsory Study Day 7- Working with Difficult People	March 2026
Residential 4 (including How to be a Vicar)	March 2026
Final Sign Off	January – March 2026
Compulsory Study Day 8 – Renewal of Safeguarding Training (Leadership module)	March 2026
Optional Study Days 6, 7 and 8	

Please note dates from July 2024 onwards are approximate and may be moved.

Pastoral Supervision

The diocese takes seriously clergy wellbeing and the joys and tensions that inhabiting the ordained life can bring. To that end we wish to support you as fully as possible in these early stages of your ordained ministry. All curates (Incumbent and Assistant) joining the diocese in IME 2 in 2023 are expected to participate in Pastoral Supervision throughout their curacy. Pastoral supervision provides the opportunity to meet regularly with an independent third party to reflect on your ministry. It offers a confidential one-to-one conversation and is completely outside of any diocesan reporting process.

Curate Cell Groups

Curate Cell groups are created for mutual support and encouragement. The groups consist of a maximum of four curates (usually within an episcopal area). Facilitation of the group is the responsibility of the members. You are encouraged to establish a regular pattern of meetings and to establish appropriate mutual commitment and accountability.

Creating an effective training framework

A successful curacy is not only about the formal learning that takes place but of primary importance is the relationship between the curate and training incumbent. In establishing and developing a professional and mutually supportive working relationship the following points are given high priority.

Working Agreement. Curates and training incumbents should be open and honest in exploring together their expectations. When a new curate arrives priority attention should be given to formalising the Working Agreement to the satisfaction of both parties. This can be started before the curate arrives but should be completed within the first three months after ordination.

Learning Agreement. Curates and TIs are expected to work together to identify the priorities for the curate's learning for each year of curacy.

Regular worship and prayer together. Patterns of prayer will vary within local teams and traditions but there is an expectation that the curate and TI will meet together for regular worship and prayer.

Supervision. Regular time for the supervision of ministry must be allocated. This is a distinct process separate from the staff meeting agenda. Its purpose is training and its focus will be on reflecting theologically on ministry within the parish, reviewing aspects of the curate's ministry, and exploring areas of concern in his/her ministerial development. Some of this will be framed by an advance agreed agenda (e.g. check through the Formation Criteria or review the Learning Agreement). Space should be given for the curate to come with their own questions and reflections.

A weekly supervision session is essential for those in full time ministry within the parish, particularly in the first year, reducing, in a manner appropriate to the local situation, to monthly by the end of the curacy. For those offering less than fulltime ministry supervision sessions should be at least monthly. Where there is more than one curate it is important to provide individual supervision.

Entering ordained ministry demands considerable adjustments to home, family and social life. Establishing healthy working patterns should be discussed regularly at supervision.

Staff Meetings. A regular staff meeting is essential and cannot be satisfactorily replaced by a short chat after the daily office. This should be weekly with fulltime staff and at convenient intervals for others, but never less than once per month. The meeting will include a review of the past week, forward planning for next week, exchange of pastoral information and detailed arrangements for coming events or responsibilities.

One area where the curate may especially appreciate help is in realistic planning of the daily and weekly programme. The training incumbent should be prepared to share his or her

experience (warts and all!) and enable their colleague to divide time realistically with reasonable space for reading, prayer and single/family life issues - as well as parish commitments.

Personal Reflection and Study Day. A regular study day should be agreed. This will be essential for successful completion of the requirements of IME Phase 2. It should not be used for matters such as preparing sermons or housegroup material. For some parishes and curates a 5 day study week every 5 weeks serves this purpose better than individual study days. This is a matter for local agreement. Where study days are lost at times of pressure, these must be allocated to a later date (e.g. study days lost in Advent could form a study week early in the new year). In total the curates should receive 46 study days per year. Curates' residential weekends are in addition to this.

Both training incumbent and curate will receive at the time of ordination a list of dates for IME 2 events. They should plan these together in their diaries. All these activities are regarded by the diocese as mandatory in the first three years. Absence for illness should be reported to Jeanette Hartwell.

The curate will arrive having received a Final Report from the theological college or course. The training incumbent will be sent a copy of this report by the BDO, and should use it, in consultation with the curate, to look at training needs.

Support for the training relationship. Even when it is good, the training relationship can be demanding and complex. Early support is essential when the relationship is facing difficulties, and Jeanette Hartwell should be contacted by either curate or incumbent.

Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection and Professional conduct of ministry. It is essential that the curate is fully introduced to church policy and understanding of Child Protection legislation. A specialist advisor is available in the diocese. Curates are required to have completed the Safeguarding Leadership module prior to ordination as a deacon and are expected to have renewed their training prior to completion of their curacy. It is also important to share understanding of professional conduct and boundary in ministry. All clergy holding the Bishop's licence are expected to be familiar with the **Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy.**

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/Clergy%20Guidelines%202015.pdf>

Assessment of Curacy

Jeanette Hartwell oversees the development and support of curates within the diocese. Curacy is assessed against the formation criteria approved by the House of Bishops and can be found here: https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/formation_criteria_for_ordained_ministry.pdf

These are not meant to be restrictive; rather they provide a framework for which evidence can be gathered to satisfy all parties. It is the responsibility of the curate, with the help of the Training Incumbent, to ensure that they have met each of the criteria by the end of their curacy: careful planning at the outset and during the curacy is very strongly encouraged.

Assistant or Incumbent Status Ministry?

Curates will have originally been selected for training as either an Assistant or Incumbent status minister and the assessment of curacy reflects this. The curate should be aware of which criteria they are working towards. If there is any doubt then they should seek clarification from the BDO or Jeanette Hartwell.

Occasionally, an Assistant minister curate may feel prompted to explore a change in category of ministry from the one for which they were originally sponsored at BAP (e.g. to Incumbent status ministry). This should be discussed with Jeanette Hartwell in the first instance. It should be noted that **the diocese will not normally agree to such a change during curacy** as it is expected that the original commitment should be fulfilled. However, in exceptional circumstances, the option may be explored in the latter stages of a curacy and the process involves the candidate attending a national or diocesan candidate's panel and requires the approval of the Diocesan Bishop.

Any subsequent change in category usually requires the curate to serve an additional curacy.

Meeting the Formation Criteria: Annual Portfolios

It is the curate's responsibility to provide sufficient evidence that the formation criteria have been met. In order to facilitate the careful and consistent gathering of the required evidence each year the curate is expected to submit a portfolio of evidence, as follows:

Year 1

- Log of supervision meetings with Training Incumbent
- Log of attendance at IME 2 and CMD events
- Six Supervision Records (about 500 words each including meeting notes and reflections)
- Short Piece 1: Beginning ordained ministry (1,000 words by end of September)
- Short Piece 2: Place and people (1,000 words by end of January)
- Short Piece 3: On being a priest (1,000 words by end of April)
- Completed Annual Report: Pre-Priesting (April); Distinctive Diaconate (May)
- Learning Agreement

Year 2

Log of supervision meetings with Training Incumbent
Log of attendance at IME 2 and CMD events
Six Supervision Records (about 500 words each including meeting notes and reflections)
Reflection on Pastoral Supervision (about 1,000 words)
Short Case Study: Reflection on an Occasional office (1,500 words by end of November)
Long Piece: Reflection on Cross-cultural experience (2,500 words by end of April)
Completed Mid Term Assessment (May/June)
Learning Agreement

Year 3

Log of supervision meetings with Training Incumbent
Log of attendance at IME 2 and CMD events
Four Supervision Records (about 500 words including meeting notes and reflections)
Reflection on Pastoral Supervision (about 1,000 words)
Completed Additional Training requirements
Long Case Study – Independent topic with facilitated conversation (by end of March)
Final Grids of Evidence for Incumbent or Assistant Ministry (Learning Agreement)

The Portfolio is required to be submitted each year of curacy and will be reviewed by Jeanette Hartwell who will identify key areas for learning.

All reports and documents are available on the diocesan website here:

<https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/vocations-and-training/curates/curates-training/>

Further details and guidance for each of the elements of the portfolio will be provided, but please do ask if you have any questions.

The key point for assessment against the formation criteria is the Mid-Term Assessment and occurs towards the end of Year 2 of curacy. Those serving part-time curacies (Incumbent or Assistant ministry) may choose in consultation with their TI to postpone the process until Year 3. The Mid-Term Assessment process incorporates 360-degree review and the portfolio (including feedback from diocesan officers on assignments) is submitted to a Bishop's Assessor, who is one of a panel of assessors chosen by the Area Bishops. The purpose of this assessment is fourfold:

- to enable discernment to be made about the curate's fitness to move beyond IME 2 to a position of further responsibility as an assistant or incumbent status minister.
- to discern continuing and emerging gifts/ministries – including areas of potential for ministry.
- to determine priorities for issues of further training and experience in the curacy that remains.
- to offer guidance as to where future ministry might lie.

Curates and Training Incumbents are expected to pay particular attention to the training requirements identified in the Mid Term Assessment Report in order to meet the formation criteria before the end of the curacy.

Completion of curacy

All Curates are required to evidence that they satisfy national Church of England standards of ministry for Common Tenure, in such a way that their Diocesan Bishop is confident to commend them. Suitability of any Curate for Common Tenure Primary Responsibility/Assistant Ministry/Pioneer Ministry is the decision of the Diocesan Bishop. In the Diocese of Lichfield, the Area Bishop, advised by the Director of Ministry, will assess whether a Curate has met the required standards. Where appropriate, the Area Bishop may consult with the bishop with responsibility for extended pastoral and sacramental oversight. The formation and assessment process is designed to evidence and advise Bishops of the Curate's suitability. The final decision on Common Tenure suitability rests in all cases with the Diocesan Bishop.

Following successful completion of the Mid-term Assessment and Final Year reports curates are invited to meet with their Area Bishop in the spring term of the 3rd year of curacy (the following year if the Mid-term Assessment has been postponed). The Area Bishop should **always** be informed and consulted about any personal initiatives or approaches from others regarding moving on. It is not expected that curates will be licensed to a new post before the end of three years of curacy (July of year 3) at the earliest. Moves are permitted from the May Spring bank holiday week onwards.

Curates trained for Incumbent status ministry can apply for Primary Posts of Responsibility or Assistant posts (parish, chaplaincy etc).

Curates trained for Assistant Minister posts may consider the following options:

- Remaining in the present post as Associate Minister or Priest.
- Moving to a new parish as Associate Minister or Priest.
- Applying for a 'house for duty' or other stipendiary post of Assistant capacity.
- Changing category to stipendiary or incumbent status NSM ministry. This will only happen after a due process of discernment (which will probably require the candidate to undertake further training), the recommendation of a Candidates Panel and the Bishop of Lichfield's approval.

Non-completion of curacy

Curates who do not satisfy criteria for Common Tenure, will receive notification from their Area Bishop identifying the areas where they have failed to meet the criteria. In such circumstances the training post will come to an end at the expiry of the license because of the time-limited nature of the post. The responsibility for the next step for such Curates will be with the person themselves, although the Area Bishop, supported by Bishop's Officers, will want to give the Curate appropriate support as they look for other types of employment or training and/or other avenues for service.

A Curate for whom the Area Bishop is not willing to write a recommendation for Common Tenure has the option to request the Diocesan Bishop to reconsider the decision through an appeal process. *The Formation and Assessment in Curacy: Appeals Procedure* can be found here -

<https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/5f3ffdd147bb3/content/pages/documents/formation-and-assessment-in-curacy-appeals-procedure-.pdf>

Moving on

When the curate has accepted an offer of a post a date for licensing/institution is usually agreed mutually with the curate and the receiving bishop (whether in the Diocese of Lichfield or elsewhere). Ordinarily a period of 2-3 weeks is granted for moving and the curate should negotiate a suitable leaving date with the TI (taking account of any outstanding annual leave entitlement). The curate should write to the Diocesan Bishop (with a copy to the Area Bishop) effectively resigning from the training post and advising them of the date of licensing and intended date of departure. The Bishop's office raises internal documentation (the 'chit') which notifies the relevant diocesan departments of the impending move.

Incumbent Status curates entering their fourth year of curacy who have not secured a First Post of Responsibility will receive a letter from their Archdeacon in the autumn of their fourth year advising the date (the end of the license) when their stipend and entitlement to live in housing provided by the diocese will cease. In cases where there are school-age children living in the property the entitlement to housing may be extended to accommodate the end of the academic year.

Undertaking further studies

Alongside completion of the IME 2 programme curates are welcome to consider completing further study during their curacy. If a curate wishes to complete a BA Hons under Common Awards through the Queen's Foundation this is encouraged by the diocese as a means of strengthening confidence and knowledge in core disciplines and as an encouragement to lifelong learning. As part of its commitment to this priority the diocese is willing to fund this route of additional learning. Curates are also welcome to consider building on prior learning in a specialist subject by undertaking post graduate studies with Queen's or elsewhere. All curates wishing to undertake further studies at whatever level should have an initial discussion with Jeanette Hartwell.

Help if things go awry

While every effort is made to ensure that curacies are successful, it is not unusual for curates and Training Incumbents to experience difficulties of one kind or another during curacy.

Clear expectations, along with regular supervision sessions, are key to providing opportunities for issues to be discussed in an open, honest and respectful manner. Matters of concern should be raised at the earliest opportunity and each party should take responsibility for what they find difficult and challenging and offer a potential way forward for discussion.

If a serious issue or difficulty presents itself, then in the first instance either party are asked to contact Jeanette Hartwell. Depending on the nature of the concern an appropriate course of action will be determined which may involve other senior members of diocesan staff being informed of the situation.

And finally...

The diocesan vision statement undergirds our priorities of Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism:

"As we follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad, we pray that the two million people in our diocese encounter a church that is confident in the gospel, knows and loves its communities, and is excited to find God already at work in the world. We pray for a church that reflects the richness and variety of those communities. We pray for a church that partners with others in seeking the common good, working for justice as a people of hope."

In autumn 2020 the Diocese of Lichfield began its *Shaping for Mission* process (www.lichfield.anglican.org/shaping-for-mission) to strengthen our life of discipleship, vocation and evangelism while facing a significant reduction in financial income as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. We are working together as people of hope to make our mission sustainable in helping fulfil our diocesan vision.

The years immediately following your ordination are of great importance as you settle into and develop your life as an ordained minister. The Diocese of Lichfield is rich in diversity, and we endeavour to reflect and honour that at parish, deanery and diocesan level. Our focus on the breadth of ministry in our parishes, chaplaincies, Fresh Expressions, schools and the Cathedral, and the ways in which they live out the diocesan vision provides a rich and varied diet with which to engage. We trust that this provides a context in which curates will flourish.

The call to ministry cannot be borne alone and we look forward to accompanying you in this next stage of your ministry.