

**Reader Ministry Handbook**

**Using this Handbook**

This handbook is designed to meet the needs of anyone connected to Reader ministry. It should therefore be relevant for:

* Readers and prospective Readers
* Incumbents
* Churchwardens and other PCC members
* Deanery Sub-Wardens
* Deanery Representative Readers
* Director of Studies for Readers
* All those involved in Reader training.

The master copy of this handbook is on the Diocese of Chester website:

https://www.chester.anglican.org/ministry/reader-ministry/reader-ministry.php

It is recommended that the website should be consulted for updates. Hard copies of this handbook are no longer issued. Please print the latest version of the parts that needed from the website.

Notification of updates and amendments will be posted on the Diocesan e-bulletin.

Chester Diocesan Board of Finance, Church House, 5500 Daresbury Park,

Daresbury, Warrington WA4 4GE

**Comments and suggestions for improvement are welcomed, and should be sent to** **vivien.gisby@chester.anglican.org**



**Lay licensing service 2021**

On Saturday 9th October Bishop Mark admitted and licensed twelve lay people at Chester Cathedral. There were nine Readers (Helen Byrne, Elizabeth Cooper-Clark, Simon Eardley, Stephen Eccleston, Alison Hunter Johnston, Lindsey Lawrence, Richard Lewis, Graham Morris and Edward Newman), one Pastoral Worker (Jane Fisher) and two Lay Pioneers (Caroline Bishop and Alice Price).

Seven Readers and one pastoral worker were also there so that their licences could be transferred to new parishes, and eighteen Readers and four Pastoral Workers became emeritus.

The day began with a rehearsal, led by Canon Jeremy who is the cathedral’s precentor. This was followed by a service of Holy Communion at which Bishop Sam presided after which there was lunch at Bishop’s House. It was then back to the cathedral for the candidates to make their declarations before the Bishop before the service itself where Bishop Julie preached the sermon. It was good to see the cathedral so full with those who had come to support the candidates including a number of licensed Pastoral Workers and Readers. The day ended with a reception in Bishop’s House for those becoming emeritus where they were presented with their PTO certificates by Bishop Mark.

It was a really super day of celebration. We give thanks for all those who have answered God’s call to a licensed lay ministry and we pray for God’s richest blessings on all of them as they minister in His name and to His glory.

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# Section 1: What is Reader Ministry?

A Reader is a lay person – someone from the congregation – who is called first and foremost to be a herald of “the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints” (Jude 3), and who is theologically trained to minister as a preacher, teacher and service leader. In addition, Readers work in a variety of other roles, in mission, training and education and much more. Although not primarily pastoral, Readers may engage in pastoral work resulting from their preaching and teaching roles. That might include taking funerals or even working as a chaplain in a hospital, hospice or other setting.

The office of Reader is a very ancient one being derived from the Lector in the Early Church and revived in England by the House of Bishops in 1866. Reader ministry has grown into a vital element in the communication of the Gospel of Christ not only in this country (where there are now approximately 10,000 Readers) but also in every province of the Anglican Communion.

Reader ministry is voluntary, nationally accredited and governed by canon. Readers are licensed by the bishop to a specific benefice to work principally there within the deanery of which they are a part. They work with the incumbent and other members of parish staff within the terms of their licence and the accountability structures of their parish and diocese. At the time of Admission to their ministry by the Bishop, each Reader makes the declaration of assent and obedience set out in paragraph 4 of Canon E5 (Appendix A). These declarations are also made at the time of renewal of licences. The provisions governing Reader ministry are laid down in Canons E4, E5 and E6 (see Appendix A).

Reader training in this diocese is validated by the University of Chester to meet a certain standard which is accepted throughout the Church of England and beyond for more information on training see:

<https://www.chester.anglican.org/ministry/reader-ministry/reader-ministry.php>

As theologically informed Readers coming from a wide diversity of backgrounds and occupations where they live out their faith, Readers are an important and skilled resource for the Church, and provide a vital link between everyday life and the Church.

Key websites are:

<https://www.chester.anglican.org/ministry/reader-ministry/reader-ministry.php>

<https://www.transformingministry.co.uk/>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/about-general-synod>

There are over 230 Readers and around120 Emeriti in the Diocese of Chester. Reader ministry as a whole in this diocese is under the care of the Warden of Readers, who works with a team of people to offer support. There is a Sub-Warden of Readers (DSW) for each deanery, whose task is to offer support at the local level.

Reader ministry in the diocese is under the overall care of the Warden of Readers who works with Church House staff to offer support, and also deanery sub-wardens who offer local support at deanery level. The current Warden is Revd Canon Vivien Gisby who is also Warden of Pastoral Workers and Vicar of St John’s, Weston, Runcorn.

## 1.1 Distinctiveness of Reader Ministry

Reader ministry is distinctive because it includes:

**A Substantive Exacting Theological Training**

* To equip for the primary role, to preach and to teach the Word of God;
* To connect Christian faith and theology with the experiences of daily working life.

**A Training for Public Ministry**

* To lead worship well, to understand the liturgy and to lead prayers sensitively and well;
* With potential for diversification as a publicly authorized lay ministry.

**A Transferable Authorization**

* The Order of Readers offers coherence across the Church of England and some other parts of the Anglican Communion;
* Readers are licensed to the Bishop and may serve, with permission, across all the parishes in the diocese.

## 1.2 Reader Ministry Bibliography

For further information on Reader ministry, the following books are helpful:

* *Bridging The Gap: Reader Ministry Today.* Kuhrt, Gordon & Nappin, Pat (Ed). London: Church House Publishing. 2002.
* *Instruments of Christ’s Love: the Ministry of Readers.* Buck, Sally, Dodds, Graham and Tovey, Phillip. London: SCM Press. 2016.
* *The Liturgical Ministry of a Reader.* Tovey, Phillip. Cambridge: Grove Books. 2017.
* *Reader Ministry Explored.* Rowling, Cathy and Gooder, Paula*.* London: SPCK. 2009.
* *Reader Ministry Today.* Reade,Charles and Tovey, Philip. Cambridge: Grove Books. 2010.
* *Exploring Mission Reader Ministry: A Personal Vision with Suggestions and Questions.* Shercliff, Liz. Cambridge: Grove Books. 2018.

# Section 2: Calling and Selection

## 2.1 Calling

A prospective Reader might feel a strong sense of call (say) during worship or prayer or through actually doing something in church or in conversation with someone such as their vicar, a vocations adviser, another Reader or a motivational visiting preacher, but there are many other ways.

## 2.2 Discernment

How can someone be sure that God is calling them though? Praying about it is essential first of all, but also discussions with others who will be able to offer useful insights. These might include a trusted Christian friend or spiritual director. It’s particularly important for a prospective Reader to talk to their incumbent whose support is vital and who needs to agree with them that they are being called. Indeed the vicar might have suggested it first. Attending the annual Called to Serve event will also be a very helpful thing to do.

The year-long course Foundations for Ministry (which is the first year of Reader and Pastoral Worker training) includes a strong element on calling, discernment, gifting and vocations. Vocations advisers are available to help you in the discernment process.

## 2.3 Formal Approval by the Parish

An incumbent will have alerted the PCC and churchwardens informally to the possibility of the prospective Reader seeking approval. As part of the approval process, the PCC will formally have to pass a resolution approving the nomination. In addition, the PCC must consider what expenses (travel and other) and book allowances are to be offered to the prospective Reader.

Amongst the things the PCC should consider are:

* The stated Selection Criteria (Section 2.5);
* Guidelines for PCCs (Section 2.7);
* How the PCC will support the prospective Reader in prayer.

##

## 2.4 Role of Referees

The prospective Reader asks two referees to make a testimonial on their behalf in writing. They should consider the Selection Criteria (Section 2.5), and Guidelines for PCCs (Section 2.7) particularly in the light of their knowledge of the candidate, both within, and outside of, the church context.

## 2.5 Selection Criteria

Ministry in the Church of England

Candidates must be baptized and episcopally confirmed and regular communicants of the Church of England, who are familiar with its traditions and practices.

Before starting training, candidates must have obtained an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) specifically for Reader training (even if one is already held for another role). The process is organized by Church House staff, acting for the Director of Ministry, who will contact each candidate and deal with all the necessary paperwork. Candidates will then need to go through the process again, via the Director Ministry, prior to licensing.

##

## 2.6 The Selection Process

* The incumbent contacts Church House for an application pack, arranges for PCC formal approval and meets with the prospective Reader to discuss his or her future ministry;
* The application pack consists of an application form and a set of ‘background to application’ questions (for the prospective Reader); an incumbent’s testimonial form, and two referee forms. The prospective Reader will need to select two referees who are mature Christians, one of whom must know them in a context outside church;
* All paperwork must be received by 30 April of the appropriate year;
* Since training is regarded as part of an ongoing discernment, every candidate with meet with tutors at the end of both years of Reader or Pastoral Worker specific training for further discernment work and to monitor progress.

## 2.7 Guidelines for PCCs

Before an Incumbent can present a possible Reader candidate for selection, the PCC of the church where they are to serve must give its approval. Quite often it is not easy for a Church Council to do this in an objective manner. It could be that they do not know the candidate sufficiently well to make an informed decision. On the other hand, they may know the person very well indeed, and therefore perhaps feel uncomfortable about rejecting them. The following guidelines may be helpful in resolving these dilemmas for the PCC members.

A potential Reader should have the following qualities:

* They must be a committed disciple of Jesus Christ, who is able to articulate that they are responding to God’s call;
* They must have been a faithful communicant member of the Church of England for some time, and also the church in which they hope to serve. If they have recently moved areas and are new to the church they must have attended services and got to know people over at period of at least six months. They must also have been a faithful, committed member of their previous church;
* A person who has already proved their worth in other areas of the church’s ministry;
* A wise and mature Christian, able to maintain healthy relationships with others in the church and function as a member of a team;
* A good communicator;
* A person who knows the Bible well, seeks to live its truth in their daily life, and has a rich prayer life;
* Someone who is known and trusted by the congregation in general;
* A person you believe will be able to keep up with a fairly demanding three-year training course.

It is important that the PCC should be free to say “No” if most members believe that Reader ministry is not God’s will for the potential candidate. There are other areas of ministry open, such as Pastoral Worker, or maybe some other task as part of the ministry team in the parish. There is a wide range of other training opportunities available too. This means that a “No” will never be an absolute “No” as our task always is to place people in that role in the church where God can best use their gifts. A “No” to a Reader ministry may well be the means of opening the door to a ministry of great blessing in some other area. It is important to help the potential candidate to understand this.

The opinion of the PCC will also be asked for in determining the precise role of the Reader as a member of the parish staff team. It is important that, after prayer for the Spirit’s guidance, the PCC is as clear as possible in making its views known. The Apostle Paul wrote: “Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ” (Ephesians 4:15). Those are the principles that should guide as us we consider God’s will for our brothers and sisters in the ministry of the church.

Follow this link for The Church of England’s Reader discernment framework which is used by the diocese.

[LLM Reader discernment framework toplevel grid\_1.pdf (churchofengland.org)](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/LLM%20Reader%20discernment%20framework%20toplevel%20grid_1.pdf)

# Section 3: Reader Training

The Church of England’s recent report [Kingdom Calling](file://C:\Users\ChesterDBF3\Downloads\In%20recent%20years%20there%20have%20been%20some%20questions%20around%20the%20role%20of%20a%20Reader,%20particularly%20in%20light%20of%20the%20changing%20context%20in%20which%20the%20Church%20of%20England%20finds%20itself,%20the%20growing%20number%20of%20people%20involved%20in%20ministry%20in%20diverse%20ways%20both%20inside%20and%20outside%20of%20the%20church%20and,%20in%20some%20cases,%20exercising%20authorised%20ministries%20such%20as%20occasional%20preaching,%20leading%20worship,%20and%20taking%20funerals.%20All%20these%20have%20traditionally%20been%20understood%20as%20being%20in%20the%20domain%20of%20Readers.%20%20We%20believe%20that%20all%20are%20called%20to%20ministry%20and%20that%20Readers%20exercise%20their%20calling%20as%20Lay%20Theologians%20within%20their%20local%20communities.%20Within%20this%20there%20are%20three%20areas%20of%20specific%20interest%20for%20Readers:%20to%20be%20encouraging%20enablers%20of%20mission;%20to%20be%20inspirational%20teachers%20of%20the%20faith;%20and%20to%20be%20influential%20leaders%20in%20church%20and%20society.%20These%20three%20areas%20are%20at%20the%20heart%20of%20the%20Reader%20Training%20Programme.) recognises a wide range of lay ministries, from roles within the local church to those licensed and authorised by a Bishop. Reader ministry is one of these, and therefore requires rigorous training and careful discernment. For this reason, in the Diocese of Chester, Readers are trained by a combined process of academic study validated by the University of Chester, and ministerial discernment carried out by a team led by the Director of Studies and Warden of Readers. Because of the formational element of the programme, training is regarded as ongoing discernment. At the end of each academic year those involved in training meet to discern whether progress toward licensing is the right step for each individual. Even if someone is not selected for licensing, they are able to continue academic study where this is appropriate.

In line with national priorities, and influenced by the sudden and profound changes brought about by the pandemic crisis, one of key aims is to develop flexible, reflexive ministers able to function as the church’s lay theologians. Assessment involves much more than essay writing, and potential Readers will be involved in preaching and worship-leading online and blog writing among other activities. Learning is a combination of preparatory work and online sessions. Modules cover aspects of liturgical ministry, such as leading and preaching; biblical understanding; mission and personal discipleship.

Revd Canon Liz Shercliff is Director of Studies for Readers and Programme Leader for the Foundation and Bachelor of Theology degrees. She is author of *Preaching Women* (2019), *Exploring Missional Reader Ministry* (2018) and co-author of *Straw for the Bricks* (2018). She is a trustee of WATCH (Women and the Church), and on the editorial board of *The Preacher*, the journal of the College of Preachers.

## 3.1 Outline Training Plan

The first year of the course for Diocese of Chester trainee Readers is the Foundations for Ministry (FfM) course. This open access course is designed to be practical as well as theoretical, and will give a good grounding for later learning. More information about FfM can be found at

<https://www.chester.anglican.org/ministry/foundations-for-ministry/>

Those selected for Reader training will undertake the university validated route through FfM to gain 60 academic credits before moving to the two years of Reader Specific Training. These initial credits enable learners to fulfil the university requirements for level of study (level 5), which is the usual standard for the second year of Reader Specific Training (i.e. the third year of the Initial Reader Training course).

Reader Specific Training is provided by the Diocese of Chester and validated by the University of Chester. You will usually be available during term time on a Wednesday evening and some weekends. Details of the programme change regularly in order to keep pace with the national church, and current circumstances. Assignments are tailored to be realistic and to fit within the guidelines of Reader ministry. It is likely that you will be asked to make podcasts or vlogs and blog posts, as well as engage in more traditional work. All trainee Readers complete an external placement usually in the second half of year 2 (the first year of specific Reader training).

The course will be as flexible as possible to assist those with attendance difficulties relating to work or family, but Reader trainees are expected to reduce their commitment to their home church during the course.

The role of the incumbent is to offer regular supervision, to write at least one formal report per year and to support the trainee in ways required by the course.

Members of staff from the Diocese of Chester will also be regularly involved in delivering the training on the course. All queries about Reader training should be directed to the Director of Studies for Readers, or Warden of Readers.

Initial Training isn’t the end. Having completed the first three years of training, and a call to Reader ministry still being discerned, newly licensed Readers continue to two years of post-licensing training. This further study leads to the award of a Foundation Degree in Arts (Mission and Ministry). Subsequently, access to a Bachelor’s degree in Theology is available.

Further details of the training can be found on the Reader pages on the Diocesan website

<https://www.chester.anglican.org/ministry/reader-ministry/reader-training-in-the-diocese-of-chester.php>

## 3.2 Role of Incumbents in Reader Training

Incumbents have an important role in the Reader Training programme, and are actively engaged with their trainee Reader. At the beginning of each year supervising incumbents are provided with a comprehensive handbook, and invited to a meeting at Church House with all other supervising incumbents.

Briefly, an incumbent will be expected to:

* Meet with their candidate every 4-6 weeks for the specific purpose of supervision;
* Allow the candidate opportunity to preach, lead and take part in the ministry of the parish as needed by the course;
* Release the candidate from other parish duties wherever possible;
* Offer the use of their library.

# Section 4: Duties of Readers

## 4.1 Historically a Reader is Authorized to:

* Read Morning and Evening Prayer (using the alternatives to absolution indicated in the authorized form of service);
* Publish the banns of Marriage in accordance with the requirements of statute law;
* Read the Word of God, including the Old Testament, Epistle and Gospel at Holy Communion;
* Preach at any service of the church;
* Catechise (give religious instruction);
* Receiveand present the offerings of the people.

A Reader is also permitted by Canon:

* To visit the sick, to read the Scriptures and pray with them;
* To teach in Sunday School and elsewhere;
* Generally, to undertake such pastoral and educational work and to give any ministry as the Bishop may direct.

See Appendix A: (Canons E4, E5 and E6)

## 4.2 The Diocese of Chester and Readers

A Reader is also permitted by right of their licence to distribute the elements at Holy Communion. In the Diocese of Chester this includes to the sick and housebound immediately after a celebration of the Holy Communion in the local church, at a later time or from the sacrament reserved in church.

With the specific and written agreement of the Bishop, Readers may be authorized to lead Public Worship with Communion by Extension. Such a service will normally have been planned by the incumbent concerned who will have asked for the Bishop’s authorization. For more information see:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-in-daily-prayer>

A Reader is authorized, after appropriate training, to bury the dead, or read the burial service before, at or after a cremation, but only with the goodwill of the persons responsible and at the invitation of the minister of the parish.

Readers in the Diocese of Chester must attend the post-licensing funerals and bereavement training courses before they are eligible to take funerals.

## 4.3 Current Reader Duties

A Reader today is often involved in a wide range of other ministries. These may include:

* Being the lead preacher and pastor at a daughter church;
* Leading a house group or several house groups;
* Baptism preparation;
* Helping the bereaved;
* Leading a church plant;
* Leading local implementation of “Fresh Expressions”;
* Leading “Messy Church”;
* Youth training;
* More extensive pastoral work;
* Chaplaincy (to care home, hospital, school, uniformed youth organisation, work places and others);
* Teaching.

Some or all of the above require specific training and oversight, and depend on both the needs of the parish and the gifting of the Reader.

The extent to which a Reader undertakes any of the duties outlined, or others, should form the basis of discussion and agreement in the Written Working Agreement (see Section 7).

# Section 5: Central Readers Council (Transforming Ministry)

## 5.1 Reader Ministry in the Diocese of Chester

The pages devoted to Reader ministry on the Diocesan website can be found under Ministry/Reader Ministry; currently

<https://www.chester.anglican.org/ministry/reader-ministry/>

Readers are advised to browse the pages periodically for updates and information on many topics. Changes are sometimes, but not always, announced in the weekly Diocesan e-bulletin. Readers should subscribe to this e-publication. Matters specific to Reader ministry are easily distinguished by the Reader ministry logo.

## 5.2 Central Readers’ Council (Transforming Ministry)

At national level, the Central Readers’ Council (CRC) has as its object that of advancing the religious and other charitable work of the Church of England by supporting the training, education and development of Readers for their ministry.

The Council works to enhance the contribution of Readers to the overall ministry of the Church, particularly to encourage the most effective integration with other forms of ministry, ordained or lay.

As well as administrative co-ordination and services for Diocesan Readers’ Boards, it arranges training conferences; publishes a quarterly magazine (*Transforming Ministry*) and provides a forum for the exchange of ideas between Diocesan Readers’ boards.

Every licensed Reader in the Diocese of Chester automatically receives a copy of *Transforming Ministry*, published quarterly.

The CRC arranges an Annual General Meeting, at which the Diocese of Chester is represented by the Warden of Readers.

The Council works in close association with the Ministry Division of the General Synod of the Church of England.

The Council is a registered charity (number 271916), and its address is: Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3NZ. The website is

<https://transformingministry.co.uk/>

which is a valuable location for resources for Readers, in addition to being an administrative site.

Section 6: Reader Licensing and Relicensing; Reader Emeritus; Redeployment

## 6.1 Admission and Licensing

Before exercising their office, Readers must:

a) Be admitted to the office by a Bishop; and

b) Hold a current licence or written permission to officiate from the Bishop in the diocese in which they intend to minister.

Candidates for admission must be baptized and episcopally confirmed and be regular communicants of the Church of England. The Bishop, in consultation with the Warden and those responsible for Diocesan selection and training, should be satisfied that those to be admitted , in accordance with Canon E5 are suitable in faith, learning and personal life as described in Canon E5.2 and 3. Prior to admission candidates must supply to the Director of Ministry documentary evidence of their baptism, episcopal confirmation and citizenship as well as completing all the requirements of the House of Bishops’ Child Protection Policy. At admission a Reader must make the declarations of assent and of obedience as prescribed in Canon E5.4 and receives a certificate of admission and a copy of the New Testament. Admission is not repeated when a Reader moves to a new parish or diocese.

All Readers in active ministry under the age of 75 (in the Diocese of Chester) must hold the Bishop’s licence which should be subject to regular renewal every three years. Readers must seek permission from the Bishop before exceeding the terms of their licence. Before being licensed the Reader is required to make the declarations as prescribed in Canons E5.4 and E6.2.

No one may hold the Bishop’s licence unless the full procedures of the House of Bishops’ child protection policy have been complied with by the person concerned. This procedure requires periodic renewal and the records are held by the Director of Ministry on behalf of the Bishop.

These formalities are performed immediately before or during the licensing service needs to be changed to these formalities are performed before the licensing service.

Readers may only minister in a diocese, other than that in which they are licensed, with permission to officiate from the Bishop of the diocese concerned. Readers invited to conduct a service or to preach outside their own diocese should ask permission from the Bishop of the diocese concerned, normally through the Warden of Readers of that diocese.

During a clergy vacancy it is normally appropriate for the Reader’s ministry to continue with supervision and support from the Rural Dean and the churchwardens. A potential incumbent should be made aware of any existing Readers in the parish and declare acceptance of the principles and practice of Reader ministry.

Readers must surrender their licence or permission to officiate if it is revoked by the Bishop. Sufficient opportunity should be given to the Reader to show reasons to the contrary. Where a licence is revoked summarily, the Reader should be notified in writing of the revocation and of the right to appeal to the Archbishop as laid down in Canon E6.3.

A register of all Readers holding a licence or written permission to officiate should be kept in each diocese by the Bishop, Warden or registrar. It should contain the Reader’s date of birth, full name and address, dates of admission and first and subsequent licensing, and details of the parish or context in which the ministry is exercised.

The licence issued at the licensing service is an important document, and cannot either be replaced or copied. The Reader must therefore take great care of it.

## 6.2 Renewal of a Reader’s Licence

Each Reader’s licence comes up for renewal every three years after their licensing. For those first licensed since 2001 it will occur after the Reader Review and Reflection Process has been completed (see Section 10 for the process).

The requirement to renew the licence every three years also applies to Readers Emeriti with the Bishop’s permission to officiate.

The licence is sent to Church House, Daresbury and is endorsed by the Warden of Readers before being returned to the Reader. The following terms are used:

 “Licence renewed as from ………………..…… (Date)”, and then signed.

## 6.3 Deployment and Transfer

1. It is good practice for Readers who are moving to a new area or diocese to contact the Warden concerned as soon as possible and to discuss where they might most usefully be deployed;
2. When Readers move to another parish or place within the same diocese the following procedure should be adopted:
3. The Reader should inform the Deanery Sub-Wardens concerned or other designated officer;
4. After a sufficient period of time, normally six months, the incumbent of the parish or minister in charge of the place where the Reader worships, in consultation with the Sub-Warden, the Reader and with the agreement of the PCC, should complete a copy of the transfer form available from the Warden;
5. Upon receipt of the completed form (by the end of July) and after completion of the requirements of the House of Bishops’ Child Protection Policy, arrangements will be made for the declarations to be made and the licence presented at the following licensing service (in October);
6. The Reader’s previous licence is regarded as permission to officiate in their new parish until the new licence is issued and after completion of the requirements of the House of Bishops child protection policy;
7. Before the declarations of assent and of obedience can be made, as in all circumstances when there is a change of ministry, a fresh DBS enhanced disclosure is required, and a confidential declaration must be signed. The necessary papers for this will be provided by the Director of Ministry at Church House, where the compliance records are lodged;
8. In exceptional circumstances, it may be possible for the declarations to be made on another occasion, following consultation with the Warden.
9. When Readers move to another diocese, this procedure should be used:
10. The Reader notifies the Warden of the move to another diocese, in advance if possible;
11. On arrival in the new diocese, the Reader should contact the Incumbent or minister in charge of the parish where they intend to worship regularly;
12. After the Reader has worshipped at the new location for a sufficient period, normally six months, the incumbent or minister should apply to the Warden of the diocese, in consultation with the Reader and with the agreement of the PCC to ask that the Reader be licensed;
13. The Warden of the diocese to which the Reader has moved should contact the Warden of the diocese which the Reader has left asking if the Reader is in good standing or if there is any reason why a new licence should not be given.
14. When Readers move into the Diocese of Chester, this procedure should be used:
15. The Reader should inform the incumbent, the Deanery Sub-Warden and the Warden of their arrival and worship at the new location for a period of at least six months;
16. the incumbent should obtain the approval of the PCC before requesting the appropriate forms from the Warden;
17. The completed forms are returned to the Warden;
18. The Warden contacts the Reader’s previous incumbent for their recommendation, or if this is not forthcoming, they contact their opposite number in the diocese concerned;
19. On receipt of a favourable recommendation and, after completion of the requirements of the House of Bishops’ child protection policy the Warden will ask the Bishop for to license the Reader;
20. The transferred Reader is licensed by the Bishop at the next licensing service (in October).
21. When a Reader Emeritus with Permission to Officiate (PTO) permanently moves parish within the diocese:
	* + 1. The Warden should be informed of the move, with confirmation that both incumbents agree to the move. The PTO remains in force for the Reader. The Diocesan year book should be appropriately amended. If the Receiving Incumbent does not agree to the Reader Emeritus exercising ministry then the PTO lapses and should be surrendered.

## 6.4 Strategic Placement

1. In appropriate circumstances Readers may be seconded or asked to serve in new areas of ministry either in a different parish or parishes or to a specialized (sector) ministry;
2. In the Diocese of Chester, each potential Reader is asked to state on their application form whether they would be willing to consider deployment to another parish at any stage during their ministry. The purpose of this would be to enable the diocese to call on their gifts to meet a real need in the ministry and mission of the church in another place;
3. The possibility of this happening is increasing, because it is apparent that parishes in some areas have more licensed Readers than in other areas. . Others may indeed volunteer their services for this purpose in order to forward the mission of the church. Others again might have reached the conviction that they themselves need a change of parish;
4. The DSW, in consultation with the Rural Dean, is the person directly responsible for the outworking of this process, so that the initial approach may well be made by or them. The DSW will seek always to match gifts and resources to the needs of a parish or congregation, and will carefully monitor the process as it develops;
5. In cases where a Reader is partly serving in two parishes, a new Written Working Agreement should be drawn up by both incumbents in consultation with the DSW;
6. Where a Reader is temporarily seconded to another parish, this should be agreed by both incumbents, and the Warden informed.
7. For details of arrangements for a Reader permanently transferring between parishes, (see Section 6.4 paragraph 6);
8. Where the possibility of a Reader transferring permanently to another parish occurs, they should take advantage of a period of six months to make the personal and family adjustments that such a move might require as well as to become acquainted with their new church. They might well take occasional part in public ministry during that period at the invitation of the incumbent. After six months the matter should be placed before the PCC by the incumbent, and should the move be approved, the necessary changes to the Reader’s licence should be introduced by the DSW or the Warden;
9. Canon E4, paragraph 2a envisages the possibility of Readers undertaking “such pastoral and educational work and to give such assistance to any minister as the Bishop may direct”. As Readers are theologically trained laypeople, the canon opens the way for them to go beyond the traditional role of leading services and preaching God’s Word in the public worship of the church. It would be perfectly correct, therefore, for Readers to give leadership in other areas of the ministry within their local church or beyond it in the wider world. They might for example find themselves ministering in lay training, youth outreach, evangelism, industrial mission or chaplaincy work. This could occur either in their own or in some other place, where their gifts, education and training are considered suitable. Where necessary, their written working agreement and even their licences could be altered to reflect any such change.

## 6.5 Reader Emeritus

On reaching the age of 75 a Reader should surrender their licence to the Warden of Readers. In the Diocese of Chester, Readers over the age of 75 are given the title of Reader Emeritus in thanks for previous service and as an indication of their continuing link with the Reader network.

Readers between the ages of 70 and 75 may surrender their licence if they have decided with their incumbent that it is appropriate to step aside from the full responsibilities of ministry.

In all circumstances the Warden of Readers needs to be alerted to the Reader’s intention as early as possible since the conferment of the title of Reader Emeritus can only be made via the warden. Please use the form on the website <https://www.chester.anglican.org/ministry/reader-ministry/reader-ministry.php> for this purpose.

Once a Reader no longer holds the Bishop’s Licence they can no longer officiate as a Reader without the Bishop’s Permission to Officiate (PTO). A Reader Emeritus will also cease to be a member of any committee/body where membership was dependent on being a Reader, etc. Similarly, automatic subscription to *Transforming Ministry* magazine, and support from the Continuing Ministerial Development grant scheme, both cease. Readers Emeriti are encouraged to make use of learning opportunities as they feel appropriate but unfortunately no central funding is available.

***6.6 Permission to Officiate***

Where a Reader Emeritus wishes to continue an active public ministry the Bishop’s Permission to Officiate (PTO) needs to be requested. The application form is on the website as detailed above and needs the agreement of the incumbent and the PCC. The requirements of the House of Bishops’ Safeguarding Policy will have to be met prior to permission being granted. PTO will be presented to the Reader Emeritus at the annual lay licensing service at Chester Cathedral in October. This service is an opportunity to thank the Reader Emeritus for their years of service as well as ask for God’s blessing on their future ministry. Their licence remains in force until this service but must then be returned to the Warden for cancellation.

The Permission to Officiate will indicate the area in which Readers may minister and the duties they are permitted to perform. Ministry with PTO requires the same discussions and agreements for expected activity as earlier ministry with a licence. It is expected that agreement between Reader and incumbent will be an ongoing aspect of mutual ministry. PTO is for a limited period (three years). If, after three years, the Reader wishes to continue to hold PTO and their incumbent agrees the local DSW extends the PTO for a further three years by writing on the back of the PTO document:

PTO renewed for three years from date until date (signature)

A Reader Emeritus can retire from active ministry at any time by returning their PTO to the Warden of Readers.

Please note: in the current edition of the national document, *Bishops’ Regulations for Reader Ministry,* it is stated that Readers should receive the title of Reader Emeritus only when they retire from active ministry and surrender their written permission to officiate. However the practice is not uniform in the Church of England, and it has been decided in the Diocese of Chester that the present practice, outlined above, should continue to be followed.

## 6.7 Surrender of Licence

A Reader should surrender their licence in the following circumstances:

1. On resignation;
2. On reaching the age of 75 and being granted the status of Reader Emeritus;
3. On transferring to another diocese;
4. On transferring from being a Reader to another form of ministry.
5. After it is decided, on the occasion of the review of a Reader’s ministry, or for some other reason (for example, failure to comply with the House of Bishops’ Safeguarding Policy) that the Reader’s ministry as such should be discontinued.

## 6.8 Safeguarding and Child Protection Checks

Like all other ministers holding the Bishop’s licence, whether ordained or lay, every Reader is required to apply periodically for an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service and to submit a renewed signed confidential declaration. Indeed no one may continue to exercise a licensed ministry unless this periodic renewal of checks has been undertaken satisfactorily. This procedure will be initiated from Church House when it is due (generally every five years, or when a significant change of ministry takes place – whichever comes earlier). The record of this procedure is kept centrally by the Bishop since it is under his authority that this ministry is exercised. There is no need to complete any further check in the parish. Any enquiries about this process and its recording should be made to the Director of Ministry at Church House (email: ministry@chester.anglican.org).

# Section 7: Written Working Agreements

The Bishops’ Regulations for Reader Ministry require that a licensed Reader and the incumbent make a Written Working Agreement (WWA) which should be endorsed by the PCC. The agreement should cover, at the least, the following aspects of the Reader’s ministry:

1. The particular ways in which the Reader’s ministry is to be expressed

e.g.: frequency of preaching each month;

frequency of leading services each month;

frequency of leading Bible study/home groups;

other kinds of ministry in which the Reader is involved.

2. The expected time commitment for the ministry;

3. The Reader’s working relationship with other ministers and/or the local ministry team; and recognition of a Reader’s role in other church structures and groups;

4. Arrangements for regular meetings between the Reader, clergy and other staff;

5. Expectations of the Reader’s continual ministerial development (CMD).

As lifelong learners it is particularly important that Readers continue to undertake further training;

6. Arrangement for reimbursement of expenses incurred through performance of the Reader’s ministry and CMD;

1. The date of the Reader’s three-year Review and Reflection (see Section 10 for the Review and Reflection Procedure and rationale).

A sample working agreement can be found here: <https://www.chester.anglican.org/ministry/reader-ministry/>

## 7.1 For New Readers:

Before licensing, the Reader candidate should establish a written working agreement with their incumbent which should then go to the PCC for formal endorsement. The Director of Studies, Deanery sub-warden and mentor can advise if required.

## 7.2 For Licensed Readers:

Should an already licensed Reader not have a written working agreement then one should be drawn up and put into place as soon as possible and this includes taking it to the PCC for endorsement.

Reviewing and updating the working agreement should form part of the three-yearly review process.

In every case, particular attention should be given to opportunities for CMD. The agreement and its outworking in practice will be considered as part of the ministerial review process.

The above principles are expressed in full in the ’Bishops’ Regulations for Reader Ministry’.

## 7.3 The Process

It is assumed that careful thought will already have been given informally to the particular expression the Reader’s ministry will have, and their relationship to other ministers and structures, before the written agreement is actually drawn up.

In practice, there needs to be an informal conversation between the candidate and the incumbent, exploring together the areas listed above. Where a number of lay and ordained ministers (obviously including Readers) work together in ministry as a team, this conversation might usefully include the other team members. The written agreement might well reflect the collaborative context of their ministry.

A draft agreement should be drawn up and the team reach agreement together on a final version in the case of a new Reader, and to the Director of Studies for Readers and then taken to the PCC for endorsement.

The purpose of taking the agreement to the PCC is to clarify the Reader’s role with other leaders in the local church or team ministry, and also to enable and also to enable those who represent the congregation to know the particular shape of the Reader’s ministry so that they can both support and pray appropriately.

Copies of the written working agreement should be kept by the Reader, the incumbent and the Secretary of the PCC to which the Reader is licensed. A copy could be made available for the person undertaking the review of the Reader’s ministry at the appropriate time.

It is emphasized that the process of discussing and agreeing the Written Working Agreement is very important. It is common sense that the discipline of a periodic review (perhaps relatively informally) of the Reader’s ministry, and of all the things the Reader is doing, is both beneficial and motivating.

## 7.4. Checklist

In drafting the agreement, careful attention will, therefore, have to be given to the following items:

1. Expectations – what the parish expects of the Reader and vice versa.
2. Responsibilities;
3. The Reader’s ministry in relation to family and work commitments.
4. Accountability, supervision and support;
5. Relationships with local church structures of leadership and decision-making;

NB Readers may be members of a PCC (ex officio) if the annual general meeting so determines, or as a normally elected member; a Reader’s membership of a Deanery Synod is subject to the Reader being elected as a lay member by the annual meeting of the parish concerned;

1. Ministry beyond the Reader’s own parish and the possibility of redeployment;
2. Reimbursement of expenses, where appropriate;
3. Possibilities of CMD;
4. Periodic review of the Reader’s ministry.

# Section 8: Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) for Readers

As people engaged in lifelong learning Readers are expected to attend training events, courses, quiet days and retreats in order to extend and deepen their spiritual life, knowledge and skills. The diocese has a Continuing Ministerial Officer who organises a number of training events throughout the year most of which are open to Readers. Some CMD events are organised specifically for Readers including a programme for those in the first few years after licensing. All training events are publicised on:

<https://www.chester.anglican.org/events/>

Application forms can be obtained either downloaded from the website, or by contacting Jane Hood. Tel: 01928 718834 ext 257; email: jane.hood@chester.anglican.org

There is no cost for training events. The diocesan retreat house at Foxhill also puts on retreats and quiet days. The cost for these can be met through the CMD grant which is available to all readers and which can also be used for training events outside the diocese. Further details on the grant scheme can be found at:

<https://www.chester.anglican.org/ministry/continuing-ministerial-development/continuing-ministerial-development-8641.php>

Please note that CMD grant cannot be used to buy books, CDs, DVDs or for travel expenses.

Note that:

1. Grants should be applied for prior to the training being started. Retrospective grants will be considered up to only one month after the event;
2. Grants may be applied to reduced rate subscriptions to the College of Preachers, *Theology* magazine and *Expository Times* (see website above) for details.

# Section 9: Reader Finances and Expenses

1. Readers are voluntary and unpaid ministers and do not accept fees for their services;
2. Readers should be reimbursed for travelling and other expenses incurred through the performance of their duties. In the case of expenses relating to duties undertaken in the parish where the Reader is licensed, arrangements for their payment should be clearly indicated in the written working agreement over duties. Mileage should be paid by the parish at the Diocesan rate. In the case of expenses incurred through serving elsewhere, the parish using the services of Readers should ensure that travelling expenses are fully reimbursed;
3. When Readers conduct a funeral, they may not retain the fee. It is normal for Readers to collect the fee payable from the funeral director in respect of the service and to pass this to the incumbent or the PCC Treasurer. Although the Central Readers Council have indicated that reimbursement for loss of earnings might be claimed, the Diocese of Chester has taken the view that, due to the complications of Inland Revenue regulations and arriving at a fair and reasonable rate for reimbursement, within the Diocese of Chester this item cannot be claimed. All other reasonable expenses for travel incurred through conducting the service and providing the related pastoral care for the bereaved family should be claimed from the PCC Treasurer and not deducted from the fee.

# Section 10 Reader Review and Reflection

## 10.1 General Requirements

It is assumed that Readers will meet with their incumbents on a regular basis to review their ministry. However, in addition, all Readers are asked to participate in a three-year Diocesan Review and Reflection process, involving a reviewer from outside their parish. All Readers licensed in or after 2001 are required to do so before their licence is renewed. Readers licensed before 2001 are invited to take part in the process, but it is not obligatory.

## 10.2 Rationale

The three-year review is NOT a performance review. The purpose of the review is to help Readers to reflect on their ministry and to assist in the self-discipline of doing so. The review and reflection is timed just before the three-yearly renewal of licence, and during the process reviewees will have a conversation with their incumbent, as well as with an independent reviewer chosen from a Diocesan list. The review and reflection exists primarily to help Readers think through how things are, where God is in what they are doing, and whether this is the moment for some change or re-focus in their ministry.

## 10.3 Process

Every three years after licensing, the Reader is sent a letter or email from the Warden of Readers (copied to their incumbent), inviting the Reader to choose a reviewer from a list, to notify the Warden of their choice, and to complete the self-reflection and review form. The Reader also sends their licence to the Warden’s office at Church House at this point.

The self-reflection form is designed primarily to help the Reader reflect on their ministry, including continuing ministerial development. Once completed the Reader sends the Review and Reflection form to their chosen independent reviewer, and arranges to meet with them. The form provides the basis for their meeting which is essentially focused on reviewing the Reader’s ministry, and asking whether there should be changes to it. The Reader then meets with their incumbent to discuss the review and any points that have arisen from it. The incumbent will notify the Warden’s office that the review has taken place and that the licence should be renewed, after which it will be endorsed and returned to the Reader. The Reader retains the Review and Reflection form.

# Section 11: Guidelines for Incumbents

These guidelines are not a prescription. The relationship between every incumbent and every Reader will differ – the purpose of this section is to offer ideas of best practice.

## 11.1 Communication

* Try to meet monthly; to listen and to talk; perhaps over a meal;
* Include the Reader in planning sessions;
* Encourage the Reader to lead some activities e.g. Bible reading rota; Baptism preparation;
* Discuss parish issues such as organization and special events;
* Talk over the worship, how it could be improved and the Reader’s role.
* Be aware of work/home/family/health pressures;
* Encourage out-of-parish Reader activities e.g. deanery Reader meetings;
* Ensure the churchwardens and PCC know what is expected of the Reader.

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## 11.2 The Reader in Training

* Be aware of the Training commitment and give space, not more work;
* Give opportunities for preaching and leading worship as required by the course;
* Talk about other aspects of Reader ministry, e.g. leading house groups.
* Offer use of one’s library;
* Enquire about the progress in training; best parts and difficulties;
* Ensure that the DSW is in touch;
* Start discussions on the overall Reader role; outline the WWA (see Section 7);
* Ask how the training is impacting the Reader’s faith;
* Test the Reader’s calling from time to time.

## 11.3 Readers about to Licensed

* Use the statutory occasion of the Declaration of Assent to publicize the licensing service and affirm the candidate. Perhaps they could be interviewed about their call, training and expectations;
* Encourage as many as possible from the parish to be present at the licensing service. Perhaps arrange a coach from the candidate’s church;
* Ask the PCC, wherever possible, to contribute towards the purchase of the Reader’s robes, at least the scarf;
* Finalize the Written Working Agreement and obtain PCC agreement;
* If there is a ministry team already – including stipendiary staff and other Readers, it would be helpful to invite the candidate to its meetings well before licensing takes place;
* Use the Sunday after licensing (or as soon as convenient afterwards) as a welcome celebration – perhaps they could preach on that occasion. A suitable book, or some other appropriate gift, could be presented to mark the occasion.

## 11.4 Continuing Ministerial Development

* Encourage the Reader to attend appropriate courses, and to do some private reading;
* Review the Reader’s training and reading needs every year at the time of WWA updating, and agree an outline programme to address the needs;
* Ensure the Reader knows the amount of the Diocesan annual training grant, and how to apply for it (see Section 8);
* Agree with the PCC their level of support of training costs;
* Discuss other spiritual needs of the Reader, and how they might be met;
* Explore broadening of the ministry after appropriate training – e.g. funerals, local chaplaincy, teaching.

Section 12: Job Descriptions

The following Job Descriptions are not designed to be comprehensive in every detail, and the roles will need to be modified with changing circumstances. However the overall purpose is to give new office holders and others a sense of what the role entails.

## 12.1 Diocesan Warden of Readers

*Principal Duties:*

1. Spokesperson for Readers
* Ensure Reader ministry is recognized in the Diocese;
* Make representation in Committees and Synods as required;
* Advise Director of Ministry (DoM) and senior staff on Reader issues;
* Represent diocese on Central Readers’ Council.
1. Oversight of Reader Structure in the Diocese
* Request funding for the functioning of Reader ministry as a whole, including training;
* Undertake any necessary revision of the Reader Handbook and give consideration with the Council of Regulations as suggested by the Central Readers’ Council and the Diocesan authorities.
1. Oversight of Pastoral Care
* Ensure that pastoral care is adequately exercised for all in the Reader activity of the Diocese;
* Engage personally in this activity in respect of senior colleagues;
* Act as consultant in local difficult cases.
1. Oversight of Reader Deployment
* Ensure that Readers are deployed in the most effective way;
* Engage with the strategic thinking on deployment and re-deployment of Readers.
1. Oversight of Licensing of Readers
* Ensure that Licences of new Readers are issued;
* Ensure that Licences of existing Readers are renewed;
* Ensure that the system of Ministerial Review is carried out.
1. Oversight of Recruitment and Selection
* Ensure that recruitment activity takes place in the diocese at several levels;
* Ensure that the selection activity is taking place successfully.
1. Involvement in Training
* Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of content of initial training (responsibility of Director of Ministry, Director of Studies for Readers) and give comment upon it;
* Involvement in implementation of recommendations in moderation reports;
* Ensure the provision of on-going CMD for licensed Readers within the overall Diocesan CMD programme.

Appointment and Accountability

The Warden of Readers is appointed by the Diocesan Bishop and is accountable through the Director of Ministry to the Bishop for all matters pastoral, administrative and legal. In matters of training, the Warden (together with the Director of Studies for Readers) is accountable to CfM. The appointment could equally well be clergy or lay (and could well be a Reader).

## 12.2 Director of Studies for Readers

The Director of Studies for Readers is the initial point of contact for study-related issues and is also Programme Leader for the Foundation Degree.

## 12.3 Deanery Sub Warden (DSW)

*Principal Duties:*

The DSW is the Warden’s key person in helping them provide an effective Reader ministry in the deanery. The DSW’s duties are primarily pastoral.

General Oversight of Readers

* To keep Reader matters in focus in the Chapter and Synod and to be available to provide information and advice to all in the deanery;
* To arrange for the nomination and election of a Representative Reader from among the Readers in the deanery;
* To work with the Representative Reader to foster the corporate life of Readers in the deanery, by arranging suitable meeting opportunities for study, worship and fellowship;
* To attend the annual licensing service, especially if any of the candidates come from their deanery.

Involvement in Vocations Work

* Be available to talk informally about Reader ministry to anyone who wondering if this is where God is calling them.

Promotion of Ongoing Training

* Publicize opportunities for such training, including short courses offered by the diocese, and the availability of training grants.

Support of Readers and Readers Emeriti in the Deanery

* Keep an up-to-date list of Readers and Readers Emeriti in the deanery;
* Act as the first external reference point for Readers and clergy in the parishes;
* Maintain a list of Readers available for redeployment and also of parishes needing Readers;
* Engage with the process of Reader redeployment when and where it happens, including Readers who move into or out of the deanery;
* Keep in touch with the Readers, organize meetings and events as required, and offer one-to-one pastoral visits. What you do in this area will vary depending on what people want and how much time you have, but please be available to offer particular support for Readers if needed. The Warden is also available to help.

Appointment and Accountability

The Deanery Sub-Wardens (DWSs) are appointed by the Warden on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop, after consultation or suggestion from Rural Deans, Chapters, or retiring Sub-Wardens. They are accountable via the Warden to the Bishop. The DSWs can equally well be lay or clerical appointments.

## 12.4 Deanery Representative Reader

The Deanery Representative Reader (DRR) is elected by the DSW and the Readers of the deanery concerned at a general meeting. They should normally hold office for three years after which time another Reader should, if possible, be elected. In any case, no Reader should hold office for more than five years continuously or continue in office after reaching the status of Reader Emeritus.

*Principal Duties:*

* To initiate, in co-operation with the DSW, the furthering of the corporate life and activities of the Readers in the deanery;
* To act as local secretary (unless another Reader has been appointed for this purpose) in keeping records and in notifying Readers of meetings;
* To keep in touch with Readers Emeriti in the deanery and with members incapacitated through prolonged illness;
* To bring to the attention of the DSW any problems affecting the ministry of Readers in the deanery (other than those confidential to the DRR);
* To notify the Warden of any changes of address, deaths and movements away from the diocese of any Readers.

The work of the DRR is largely one of promoting fellowship between the Readers of the deanery.

# Appendix A Canon Law Concerning Reader Ministry

## Canon E4 “Of Readers”

1. A lay person, whether man or woman, who is baptised and confirmed and who satisfies the bishop that s/he is a regular communicant of the Church of England, may be admitted by the bishop of the diocese to the office of Reader in the Church and licensed by him to perform the duties which may lawfully be performed by a Reader according to the provisions of paragraph 2 of this canon or which may from time to time be so determined by Act of Synod.
2. It shall be lawful for a Reader:
	1. To visit the sick, to read and pray with them, to teach in Sunday School and elsewhere, and generally to undertake such pastoral and educational work and to give such assistance to any minister as the bishop may direct;

b. During the time of divine service to read Morning and Evening Prayer (save for the Absolution), to publish banns of marriage at Morning and Evening Prayer (on occasions on which a layman is permitted by the statute law so to do, and, in accordance with the provisions of that law), to read the Word of God, to preach, to catechise the children, and to receive and present the offerings of the people:

c. To distribute the holy sacrament of the Lord’s Supper to the people.

1. The Bishop may also authorise a Reader to bury the dead or read the burial service before, at or after a cremation but only, in each case, with the goodwill of the persons responsible, and at the invitation of the minister of the parish or an extra-parochial place within the meaning of section 1 of the Deaconesses and Lay Ministry Measure 1972.

When a cure is vacant, the reference in this paragraph to the minister of a parish shall be construed as a reference to the Rural Dean.

1. The Bishop of every diocese shall keep a register wherein shall be entered the names of every person whom he has either admitted to the office of Reader or licensed to exercise that office in any place.

## Canon E5 “Of The Nomination and Admission of Readers”

1. A candidate for the office of Reader in a parish or district shall be nominated to the Bishop by the minister of that parish or district; and a candidate for the said office in a wider area by one of the Rural Deans or Archdeacons after consultation with the minister of his parish or district.
2. The nominator in making such a nomination shall satisfy the bishop that the said person is of good life, sound in faith, a regular communicant and well fitted for the work of a Reader, and provide all such other information about the said person and the duties which it is desired that s/he should perform as the Bishop may require.
3. No person shall be admitted to the office of Reader in the Church except it be found on examination, held by the Bishop or by competent persons appointed by the Bishop for this purpose, that s/he possesses a sufficient knowledge of the Holy Scripture and of the doctrine and worship of the Church of England as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer, that s/he is able to read the services of the Church plainly, distinctly, audibly and reverently, and that s/he is capable both of teaching and preaching.
4. Every person who is admitted to the office of Reader shall first, in the presence of the Bishop by whom s/he is to be so admitted or of the Bishop’s commissary, make the declarations set out below, the preface which preceded the Declaration of Assent in paragraph 1(1) of Canon C15 (with the appropriate adaptations) having first been spoken by the Bishop or commissary.

“I, AB, do so affirm, and accordingly declare my belief in the faith which is revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds and to which the historic formularies of the Church of England bear witness; and in public prayer I will use only the forms of service which are authorised or allowed by Canon.

“I, AB, will give due obedience to the Lord Bishop of C and his successors in all things lawful and honest.”

1. The Bishop shall admit a person to the office of Reader by the delivery of the New Testament but without imposition of hands.
2. The Bishop shall give to the newly-admitted Reader a certificate of his/her admission to office; and the admission shall not be repeated if the Reader shall move to another diocese.

## Canon E6 “Of The Licensing of Readers”

1. No person who has been admitted to the office of Reader shall exercise his/her office in any diocese until s/he has been licensed so to do by the Bishop thereof: Provided that, when any Reader is to exercise his/her office temporarily in any diocese, the written permission of the Bishop shall suffice.

1a. A licence authorising a Reader to serve in a benefice in respect of which a team ministry is established may be in a form which specifies the term of years for which the licence shall have effect.

1. Every Reader who is to be licensed to exercise his/her office in any diocese shall first, in the presence of the Bishop by whom s/he is to be licensed, or of the commissary of such Bishop,
	1. make the declarations of assent and of obedience in the form and manner prescribed by paragraph 4 of Canon E5;
	2. make the declaration following:

“I, AB, about to be licensed to exercise the office of Reader promote peace and unity, and to conduct myself as becomes a worker for Christ, for the good of his Church, and for the spiritual welfare of all people. I will give due obedience to the Bishop of C. and his successors and the minister in whose cure I serve, in all things lawful and honest.”

If the declarations of assent and obedience have been made on the same occasion in pursuance of paragraph 4 of Canon E5, it shall not be necessary to repeat them in pursuance of this paragraph and in the declaration set out above, the words “the Bishop of C. and his successors and” may be omitted.

1. The Bishop of the diocese may by notice in writing revoke summarily, and without further process, any licence granted to a Reader within his diocese for any cause which appears to him to be good and reasonable, after having given the Reader sufficient opportunity of showing reason to the contrary; and the notice shall notify the Reader that s/he may, within twenty-eight days from the date on which s/he receives the notice, appeal to the Archbishop of the province in which the diocese is situated.

On such appeal, the Archbishop may either hear the appeal himself or appoint a person holding the office of diocesan Bishop or suffragan Bishop in his province (otherwise than in the diocese concerned) to hear the appeal in his place; and, after hearing the appeal or, if he has appointed a Bishop to hear the appeal in his place, after receiving a report in writing from that Bishop, the Archbishop may confirm, vary or cancel the revocation of the licence as he considers just and proper, and there shall be no appeal from the decision of the Archbishop.

Where the see of the Archbishop is vacant or the Archbishop is also the Bishop of the diocese concerned, any reference in the preceding provisions of this paragraph to the Archbishop of the province shall be construed as a reference to the Archbishop of the other province, but any Bishop appointed by the Archbishop of the other province by virtue of this paragraph shall be a Bishop serving in the province which contains the diocese concerned.

Any appeal under this paragraph shall be conducted in accordance with rules approved by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York; and any such rules may provide for the appointment of one or more persons to advise the Archbishop or Bishop hearing the appeal on any question of law arising in the course thereof.

3a Where a Bishop has granted a licence to a Reader to serve in his diocese for a term of years specified in the licence, the Bishop may revoke that licence under paragraph 3 of this Canon before the expiration of that term, and where he does so the Reader shall have the like right of appeal as any other Reader whose licence is revoked under that paragraph.

No Bishop shall licence any Reader to be a stipendiary in any place until he has satisfied himself that adequate provision has been made for the stipend of the said Reader, for his/her insurance against sickness or accident, and for a pension on his/her retirement.

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*Registered Office: Church House, 5500 Daresbury Park, Daresbury, Warrington WA4 4GE*

*Email:* *ministry@chester.anglican.org*