

ACCOMPANYING

GUIDANCE FOR ACCOMPANISTS

A.5

Structured conversations in DOV 1

Accompanists will meet with applicants at least two or three times at the beginning of DOV1 before the retreat. See document G.9 for all dates and deadlines. If they have already been accompanying the person as an explorer, two meetings are expected. However, if this is the start of the relationship, a minimum of three meetings would be more helpful.

The final meeting(s) takes the form of a structured conversation, in person where possible, to cover the following points (it will be helpful if these points have been discussed informally in the earlier meetings).

At the end of the conversation, the accompanist and applicant produce an agreed record of the conversation on form D.4. Accompanists are asked to send this in to the candidates' office and the office will send it on to the applicant's Superintendent. This also forms part of the portfolio if the applicant offers as a candidate. D4 is only to indicate that a discussion has been held on each area, not to state detailed information about that discussion.

Areas to cover in structured conversations	Resources to assist accompanists
The costs of candidating, training and ministry – financial	<p>All Guidance documents for candidating can be found here Guidance for candidating (2023-24) (methodist.org.uk)</p> <p>Guidance document G.2 outlines the financial costs for DOV1 and DOV2 and also the grant support available.</p> <p>Guidance document G8 explains the training pathways.</p> <p>Current information on stipends can be found here Stipends and Lay Employment Rates (methodist.org.uk)</p> <p>Please discuss the applicant's personal financial income and outgoings. Can their household manage if they reduce from full time to part time work or give up employment while they train?</p>



<p>The costs of candidating, training and ministry – on family and community</p>	<p>Please consider their family’s situation: children at particular stages of school when the applicant may need to move into training and then into probation, also a partner’s work and whether they are prepared to move, also other responsibilities for elderly relatives.</p> <p>How significant will it be for the applicant to move away from their current community or other support networks. What roles do they hold in their community?</p> <p>Have they considered the impact of living in a manse on them and their families? Please ensure that they understand this is a requirement and the process if (in exceptions) they wish to apply to live in their own home.</p>
<p>The costs of candidating, training and ministry – existing identity in church</p>	<p>Ensure they understand that when candidating, they are recommended to step back from all lay church roles. Discuss how that will feel for them and the impact it will have on their sense of ‘self’. Have they talked about this with their local minister and/or superintendent?</p>
<p>Readiness for learning</p>	<p>Discuss how they feel about learning in a fairly intense way. It is assumed that they begin from level 4 (A level standard). How does that feel for them? If they are fearful, try to unpack what is causing that fear. If they are excited, try to identify what it is that excites them.</p>
<p>Openness to learning</p>	<p>Discuss how they are approaching the possibility of entering training and formation. Are they reading now? Do they need guidance in reading? Do they have an awareness of their need to be formed and trained? How easy do they find it to reflect theologically on all experiences?</p>
<p>Understanding of ‘Our Calling’ and response to it</p>	<p>Explore the central concept that our calling is a response to God, as worked out through the four aspects. Help them to think about the distinctiveness of Methodism. Ask them to think about how these are manifest in their church experience, and look at how the aspects inform each other. Our Calling (methodist.org.uk).</p>
<p>Understanding of ‘A Methodist Way of Life’ and response to it</p>	<p>Explore the elements. You could make use of the resources available here: A Methodist Way of Life</p>
<p>Reflecting on the criteria</p>	<p>The applicant needs to be developing their discernment of their call in terms of the 9 criteria for candidates. These will be used not only in the discernment at candidating but also throughout</p>

	<p>ministry. The specific detail of the criteria for candidates can be found in document G.6</p>
<p>Understanding the Covenant relationship between ordained ministers and the Church</p>	<p>Explore the Covenant Relationship in terms of discipline, responsibility, public representative ministry and being set free from earning a living so you can live a life of ministry and service.</p>
<p>Clarity about presbyteral and diaconal ministry (including what is involved in being part of a Religious Order)</p>	<p>Please help them to think deeply about this and to articulate which order of ministry they are feeling called to. Encourage them to reflect further during the retreat. They do not have to be firm in this decision at this point but they will need to know by the time they start DOV2.</p> <p>Please ensure they understand the different callings in these orders of ministry. They need to know that the diaconal order is a religious order as well as an order of ministry.</p> <p>Part of the calling of a deacon is proclamation and for a presbyter is word and sacrament so please ensure that applicants are clear about this. If they candidate, all will be expected to be able to evidence a call to lead worship, preach and proclaim and if they are not already local preachers or worship leaders, they need to start thinking how they will do this.</p> <p>Details about the orders of ministry can be found in guidance documents G3, G4 and G5.</p>
<p>Reflecting on the meaning, impact and discipline of itinerancy</p>	<p>All people who candidate for diaconal or presbyteral ministry are offering to be itinerant and at the discipline of the church annually for their stationing.</p> <p>Please see G5 'Changing Patterns of Ministry' report where itinerancy is explored in section 5. The following definition from that report was agreed by the Conference:</p> <p><i>Itinerancy is a characteristic of the Methodist Church's ordained ministry. It signifies that Methodist ministers are connexional people who are available to the Conference for deployment for mission according to the needs and priorities of the Methodist Church. It indicates that no appointment is open ended and that a minister will serve in a particular context only for a period of time.</i></p> <p>All deacons are committing to be stationed anywhere in the Connexion. Presbyters can offer for a local or specific context (see the next point), but they are still offering a commitment to the Connexional discipline of stationing. Does the candidate understand and embrace this? How does it feel for them at this stage?</p>

<p>Clarity about the context for their ministry (presbyteral only)</p>	<p>Please help them to consider if their calling is to a local or specific context.</p> <p>Form C.2 is the application form for local or specific contexts which explains how this is considered.</p> <p>These contexts are defined in G.5 so please look at this and the C2 form with the applicant to ensure they understand what they are offering and the process for the application.</p> <p>It is essential that any applicant who is considering applying for a local or specific context has first met with their superintendent and Chair of District so please encourage them to do so.</p>
<p>Well-being and resilience implications</p>	<p>Discuss with them about the other responsibilities they have and where pressures may arise.</p> <p>Ensure that they understand the importance of establishing boundaries, and a balance of rest and activity.</p> <p>Help them to think about the need to structure their own time as a minister and consider how they can manage that.</p> <p>Are there any foreseeable issues that might impact their well-being (such as their health or that of family members, employment of family members, schooling, or any experiences that might trigger past traumas).</p> <p>In all this the accompanist must not act in the role of a counsellor or psychologist. They accompany the applicant in their own consideration of these factors.</p>