

CANDIDATING FOR ORDAINED MINISTRY 2022-2023

G.17 PROTOCOLS FOR MEMBERS OF CANDIDATES' SELECTION COMMITTEES

INTRODUCTION

This document systemises a number of protocols which have developed informally over the years. It applies to candidating committees at circuit, district and connexional levels. No rules can cover every situation, but it is hoped that a wise application of the principles which lie behind these protocols will meet the needs of any situation.

1. CONFIDENTIALITY

For CIRCUIT, DISTRICT and CONNEXIONAL COMMITTEES

Confidentiality should be exercised in terms of papers, people and public spaces.

1.1. Papers

All papers relating to a Candidate are confidential and their contents should not be shared, visually or verbally with anyone outside the committee. At the end of committee meetings papers should be returned to the committee secretary for secure disposal. Documents in electronic form should be deleted at the end of the 24 hour cycle to which they relate.

1.2. People

Information obtained about a Candidate, the very fact that they have been a Candidate, and any comments about their conduct before a committee should not be shared with anyone outside the committee.

1.3. Public spaces

Committee members should be sensitive to the nature of conversations they may have with Candidates during informal times, such as mealtimes and breaks, and be wary of imparting or sharing in inappropriate information relating to the candidature.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

For DISTRICT and CONNEXIONAL COMMITTEES

Methodism can be a small world and it is unlikely that some committee members will not have had some form of contact or relationship with some Candidates. To avoid a conflict of interests (or a possible appeal relating to due process) the following recommendations are made.

2.1. General rules

- 2.1.1. All conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest are to be avoided.
- 2.1.2. If, at any stage in the candidating process, a committee member judges that a conflict of interest might arise, they should inform the secretary or chair at circuit, district or Connexional level so that appropriate steps can be taken.
- 2.1.3. Before a panel begins its work members should be asked if anyone has a conflict of interest. If one arises, the Committee's decision on the appropriate action is final.

2.1.4. Members of District Candidates' Committees are asked not to vote on candidates in their own circuit meetings so that they can then vote on them in the District Committee. There should be no reason to abstain at the District Committee, and, doing so, can count against the candidate when percentages are later calculated.

2.1.5. If a member of Connexional Candidates Selection Committee is asked to speak at a District Candidates' support event, they are asked to:

- Think carefully before accepting whether this could put them in a difficult position
- Seek advice from the Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministry
- If they accept the invitation, take care at the event to speak generally to the group and not to get into detailed conversation regarding support of individual candidates.

2.2. Specific Rules

2.2.1. Members should not sit on a Candidate's panel if:

- They have had a pastoral or close professional involvement with the Candidate.
- They have been involved in any way with the Candidate's discernment process at an earlier stage

2.2.2. Members should not vote in a committee if:

- They have had a pastoral or close professional involvement with the Candidate
- They have been involved in any way with the discernment process at an earlier stage
- If the Candidate is a family / friendship circle member

2.2.3. Members should not attend a committee if a Candidate is a spouse or other close family member

3. DRESS CODE

For CONNEXIONAL COMMITTEES

3.1. It has long been a practice that at the Connexional Candidates' Selection Committee presbyters do not wear a clerical collar or deacons their cross. However, when introducing themselves to a Candidate, it is appropriate to say if they are a deacon or presbyter.

3.2. When attending a committee Candidates may well dress in a way which reflects their sense of the importance the interview has to their life's future. Panel members are invited to bear this in mind when considering how they themselves should dress.

4. LOSS OF EARNINGS

For CONNEXIONAL COMMITTEES

Lay people bring a vital element to the discernment process at the Connexional Committee. The Connexion are asking them to give significant time to this work. If therefore their attendance at CSC training and panels necessitates a loss of earnings, they can make a claim for financial support. Anyone in this position is asked to contact candidates@methodistchurch.org.uk for the claim form.