

Summary of the Invitation and Stationing Process for Appointments Commencing September 2024

Please use this summary as a quick reference as to what is usually done and when for the invitation and stationing of ministers in circuit appointments.

For more information, please look in the publication *Code of Practice: For all Involved in the Invitation and Stationing Process of Deacons and Presbyters 2025* (Section B has a useful timetable). The figures shown below in the ‘Ref’ column indicate the appropriate sections of that document where you will find more details of each stage.

References to the process for presbyteral appointments are in sections E-I.

References to the process for diaconal appointments are in sections J-N.

When the term “minister” is used it can mean either presbyter or deacon.

1 FIRST STAGES

Timing	Action	Who is involved	Ref
March 2024	Appoint Circuit Invitation Committees (which may have delegated powers to offer initial invitations).	Circuit Meeting	C1–7
May	District briefing meeting to explain the process. Code of Practice is distributed. The process must not begin before this meeting or a conversation with the District Chair and the District Lay Stationing Representative or the Warden of the Diaconal Order	District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Ministers involved in reviews/moves and their partners Superintendents Circuit Stewards Church Stewards Warden of the Diaconal Order	D1–2
	Period of reflection on circuit’s policy and future needs.	Circuit Stewards	D4, D6
	Period of reflection and discernment conversations to establish whether minister wishes an extension to be considered. If ‘Yes’, go to 2. If ‘No’, go to 3.	Minister Circuit Stewards	D3, D5–D8

2 NEXT STAGES – if an Extension is considered (*for new appointments see Part 3*)

Timing	Action	Who is involved?	Ref
May–July 2024	Meet to consider any personal or family issues.	Minister and household members, Circuit Stewards	E3, J4
	Meet to plan and agree the consultation process. (District Chair or their representative is invited if a Superintendency is being considered).	Circuit Invitation Committee Circuit Stewards Superintendent Minister (District Chair)	E2, E4, J5
	Briefing on how to conduct the consultation (where appropriate).	Circuit Stewards, Church Stewards	E5, J6
June – Mid-August	Consultation in local churches (max. three (3) weeks).	Circuit Stewards, Church Stewards	E5, E18-25, J6, J18-23
	Consultation in other circuit churches (if for a Superintendent’s extension).	Circuit Stewards, Church Stewards at other churches in the Circuit.	E6
	Consultation in other areas of minister’s work e.g. ecumenical work; chaplaincies; community.	Circuit Stewards	E7, J7
	Gather all responses and prepare written report which is shared with minister; minister decides whether to seek an extension.	Circuit Stewards, Ministers	E8, J8
	Meets (with minister present) to receive circuit stewards’ report; decides its recommendation to September Circuit Meeting; decision conveyed to minister. Minister confirms decision on seeking an extension. If minister decides not to seek an extension following feedback, profiles are prepared as per Part 3). If an extension is sought, meets (with minister present) to receive circuit stewards’ report; decides its recommendation to September Circuit Meeting; decision conveyed to minister. Minister decides whether to seek an extension.	Circuit Invitation Committee Minister	E9, J9
August	Prepares a reasoned statement and sends it to District Chair, Lay Stationing Representative and Warden of the Diaconal Order (if	Circuit Invitation Committee	E9, J9

	appropriate) at least three (3) weeks before the Circuit Meeting.		
	Approve reasoned statement (and amend it if necessary).	District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Warden of the Diaconal Order	E9, J9
	If the minister does not agree the recommendation, they may prepare their own reasoned statement.	Minister	E10, J10
	Distributes reasoned statement(s) to members of Circuit Meeting before the meeting with an explanation of the voting procedure.	Circuit Meeting Secretary	E9, E10, E11, J10, J11
On or before 20 September	Considers the extension.	Chair of the District Circuit Invitation Committee Members of Circuit Meeting	E2, E12-15, J12-15
After the Circuit Meeting	Reports the Circuit Meeting's decision to the Chair of District and Warden of the Diaconal Order if the decision is about a deacon.	Chair of Circuit Meeting	E16, J16
	If an extension is offered and accepted, prepare and issue a Letter of Understanding within six (6) weeks	Circuit stewards Minister	E17, J17
	If decision is against an extension, proceed as for 'New Appointment' – see 3.	Circuit Stewards	F, K

3 NEXT STAGES – New Appointment

Timing	Action	Who is involved	Ref
May 2024	Vacancy is notified to the District Chair and, for diaconal appointments, the Warden of the Diaconal Order.	Circuit Stewards	F1 K1
June/July	Consultation and decisions about the appointment(s) to be filled.	Circuit Invitation Committee Circuit Leadership Team Superintendent District Chair Warden of the Diaconal Order Lay Stationing Representative Ministers	F2, K2, K3
June	Profile forms sent to ministers and circuit stewards; application forms for initial appointments (i.e. probationer presbyters or presbyters taking up first appointments in the British Methodist Church) sent to circuit stewards.	District Chair or Lay Stationing Representative	F3, K4
July	Prepare draft profiles and application forms as above.	Ministers Circuit Stewards	F3, G, K4, L
	Meet to discuss minister's profile.	District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Minister (and family member(s))	F3-5, K4, K5
	Meet to discuss draft circuit profiles and application forms for initial appointments.	District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Circuit Stewards	F4, F5, K4, K5
By 3 September	Application forms for presbyteral probationer appointments, Ministers from Other Churches and Conferences (MOCC) to the District Chair and Lay Stationing Representative.	Circuit Stewards	F2, K6
By 6 Sept	Application forms for above appointments to be sent to stationingadministration@methodistchurch.org.uk	District Chair or Lay Stationing Representative	F2
By 21 Sept	Circuit profiles for ordained presbyters to be with the District Chair and the Lay Stationing Representative.	Circuit Stewards	F5

	Profiles of ordained presbyters and ordained deacons to be with the District Chair and the Lay Stationing Representative.	Ministers	F5, K6
	Profiles of ordained deacons forwarded to the Warden of the Diaconal Order.	District Chair or Lay Stationing representative.	K6
25 September	Forward circuit profiles for presbyters and deacons and profiles of ordained ministers to Stationing Administration: stationingadministration@methodistchurch.org.uk	District Chair or Lay Stationing Representative or, in the case of a deacon, the Warden of the Diaconal Order.	F5, F7, K6

4 FINAL STAGES – Matching of Presbyters, Direct Stationing and Visits

Timing	Action	Who is involved	Ref
By 27 September 2024	Regional Stationing Groups meet to identify smaller appointments and forward to Scrutiny Group (through Stationing Administration).	District Chairs and District Lay Representatives from the Region	H2
During October	Preparation to explain procedure for visits of ministers.	District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Circuit Stewards Other members of the CIC Church stewards involved in visits	I1, N1
4 October	Scrutiny Group meets.	Scrutiny Group	H2
15 October	Circulation of circuit profiles and profiles of ordained presbyters and deacons.	Stationing Administration	F7, K8
Mid-late October	Discuss possible suitable matches and possibly those which should not be matched for serious pastoral reasons.	Circuit Stewards, ministers, District Chair Lay Stationing Representative Warden of the Diaconal Order	F13, K10
October–December	Preparation for possible visits.	Circuit Stewards	I, N
4-7 November	Considers all presbyteral appointments.	Stationing Matching Group 1	H
After SMG	District Chair notifies presbyters and Circuit whether a 'match' has been made.	District Chair Circuit Stewards and Ministers	F15, I3
The day after a match is announced	Circuit stewards contact presbyter to arrange a visit to the Circuit.	Circuit Stewards Minister	I4
8–24 November	Information pack sent to presbyters.	Circuit stewards	I6
	Presbyter's visit to Circuit.	Circuit stewards and presbyter/Superintendent Others in the Circuit, as appropriate.	I
Within two (2) days of visit	Separately: prayer, reflection, consultation, then decision on whether to accept the match. Together: share decisions and agree outcome.	Circuit Invitation Committee Presbyter	F19, I13

	Circuit stewards and presbyters report the outcome (with feedback form if declined) to their own District Chair.	Circuit stewards and presbyter/District Chair	F19, I13
In the next few days	Issues formal invitation to presbyter.	Circuit Invitation Committee	F20
	If accepted, Letter of Understanding agreed with presbyter within 6 weeks or 4 if presbyter is a probationer.	Circuit Stewards	F20
	Reports outcomes to Stationing Administration for circuit appointments in their District.	District Chair	F20
25-30 November	DSSC1 meets to have conversation with deacons	DSSC1	M1

3-5 January 2025	Meets to consider appointments for deacons and diaconal probationers.	Diaconal Stationing Sub-Committee 2	
7-8 January	Deals with as many of the remaining vacancies as possible and notes diaconal appointments	Stationing Matching Group 2	F15, H, M1
	Matching reports and visits (see above steps following SMG 1).	(See above)	(See above)
9-10 January at Queens	Meets to consider appointments for probationer presbyters (ISSC1).	Initial Stationing Sub-Committee	
11–26 Jan	Matching reports and visits (see above steps following SMG 1).	(See above)	(See above)
Following SMG 2	Informs ordained deacons and circuit stewards of diaconal appointments.	Warden (or Deputy Warden) of the Diaconal Order District Chair	K14
	Circuit stewards contact deacons to arrange a visit to the Circuit.	Circuit Stewards Deacon	M1, N4
	Deacons visit Circuits and Letter of Understanding agreed within 6 weeks.	Circuit Stewards Deacons	N
	Probationer presbyters and deacons and identified Circuits informed of their appointments.	Tutors District Chair	I13, M1
	Visits to Circuits planned for probationer ministers followed by Letters of Understanding within 4 weeks.	Circuit Stewards Minister Superintendent /supervisor Others as appropriate	I14, I15, N14
	Informs Stationing Administration of all diaconal appointments after all visits of ordained and probationer deacons have taken place.	Warden of the Diaconal Order	K16
6 February	Stationing of ministers of Other Churches or Conferences (ISSC2).	Initial Stationing Sub Committee	
February to May	Tries to resolve unfilled stations.	Stationing Action Group	H11,M 2
March	Appoints Circuit Invitation Committee.	Circuit Meeting	C1–7
April/May	Recommends the stations to Conference.	Stationing Committee	
June	Stations adopted.	Methodist Conference	