

# **RULES AND REGULATIONS for FAITH & WORSHIP**

## ***The Local Preachers' Training Course***

### **1. Introduction**

Before people can be admitted as local preachers they will need to spend some time on note and on trial and during this period successfully complete the local preachers' training course, Faith & Worship. These regulations set out all the requirements for becoming a local preacher. The basic rules are set out in Standing Orders, the rules of the Methodist Church which govern its affairs. In some cases these are summarised in this document for simplicity.

### **2. Time on Trial**

#### ***i. Length of trial period***

The time on trial shall not be less than one year nor more than five (for extensions see (ii) below). The normal period on trial between two and four years. This period is desirable both for adequate training to be given and to give sufficient opportunities for judging a person's suitability to become a local preacher.

#### ***ii. Extension of trial period***

Those on trial who wish to apply for an extension beyond five years must apply to the District Policy Committee, which grants extensions only in very exceptional circumstances. People on trial and Superintendents have the right to attend and speak at the committee.

### **3. Training Course**

#### ***i. Units***

The Faith & Worship course consists of 17 units. The first three units must be completed while on note before moving to on trial.

The four sections which comprise the remaining units (Units 4 - 17) may be completed in any order although students are recommended to commence at the beginning of Section A (Unit 4) or Section B (Unit 7) or Section C (Unit 11). There is a further unit following accreditation as the first part of Continuing Local Preachers' Development.

#### ***ii. Assignments***

At the end of Units 4 - 17 an assignment must be completed (either an essay or worship material) which is marked by the local tutor, following guidelines in the Student Record Sheet and Handbook for Local Tutors. A mark of at least 40 must be achieved for each assignment. The assignment for Unit 3 is the trial service for the person moving from on note to on trial.

#### ***iii. Assessment***

Those on trial must successfully complete the training course. Each part consists of continuous, local and Connexional assessment. Successful completion means passing all these assessments.

#### ***iv. Assessment Procedures***

Material for Connexional assessment may be submitted in time for 31 March or 30 September. Material received after these dates will be held until the next period of assessment. This means that, for example, material received on 1 April will not be sent for moderation until 30 September.

For each Section, the trainee preacher should complete all assignments and submit these for assessment along with the following:

(a) a short worship portfolio comprising:

- reflections on one act of worship in which they have been present but not had any formal responsibility
- for one service for which they have been responsible, a Service Report Form completed by themselves plus the Summary Form
- an indication of how they have sought to address the issues identified on the Summary Forms
- a transcript of a sermon or its equivalent – this may be from the service reported on above, but if it comes from another service please include an order of service for that act of worship

(b) a completed Student Record Sheet and Connexional Assessment Cover Sheet

(c) the two prescribed exegesis passages

These will be passed to the Connexional Assessors. The tutor or superintendent should then receive the result(s) by either 30 November or 31 May, depending upon the original submission date. No more than two sections of the course can be submitted for moderation at any one time.

#### **4. Cost**

The circuit is responsible for reimbursing, from circuit funds, the cost of basic study material (units and tapes). The circuit is also responsible for the registration fee of £25 when a person moves from on note to on trial.

#### **5. Exemptions Policy**

It is general policy that no exemptions be granted from the course. However, in very exceptional circumstances, another course may be accepted as a substitute for the whole or part of the course. Further details are set out in Standing Order 565B. Before application for acceptance of such a procedure is made to the Local Preachers' Office a detailed reasoned statement must be prepared and approved by the Local Preachers' Meeting. Such applications will be considered by the Local Preachers' Studies Board.

#### **6. Practical Tests in the Circuit**

- Every person on note shall have a mentor, who must be a preacher, to give oversight. The mentor, or another preacher, should be in charge of every service in which the person on note takes part. The mentor should continue oversight during the period on trial.
- Reports shall be submitted to the Local Preachers' Meeting or the training sub-group by the mentor and any other preacher or preachers who have been present at any service in which the person on note has taken part.
- Before persons on note are passed to on trial status by the Local Preachers' Meeting they shall conduct a full service of their own in the presence of two preachers (one of whom may be their mentor). (This is the assignment for Unit 3.) The preachers shall present a report on the service and sermon, on the form provided by the Local Preachers' Office, to the meeting. If that report and the report of the local tutor are satisfactory, persons on note shall then be advanced by the meeting to the next stage of training, during which they are said to be on trial.

- iv. Before persons on trial are recommended for admission as local preachers they must successfully complete two circuit interviews. The first is held after the successful completion of two sections of the Faith & Worship course. The second is held after successful completion of the remaining two sections. These interviews are conducted either by the Superintendent or (at their request) by another preacher at the Local Preachers' Meeting. The local tutor and/or mentor would be appropriate people to conduct the interviews. For each interview a copy of '*Circuit interviews for those on trial*', which sets out full details, is available from the Local Preachers' Office to the person on trial and the Superintendent.
- v. The purpose of the first interview is to assist the Local Preachers' Meeting in reaching a decision on the continuance of on trial status. In order to assist the Local Preachers' Meeting persons on trial:
  - a. shall, during the quarter preceding the interview, conduct a full service in the presence of two preachers and a church steward (who is not a local preacher), who shall together prepare a report for the meeting, written on the form provided by the Local Preachers' Office;
  - b. shall have the opportunity to share the story of their Christian experience; their call to preach; and any insights, challenges or difficulties experienced during the period on trial to date.
- vi. The purpose of the second interview is to assist the Local Preachers' Meeting in reaching a decision on whether the person on trial is ready and suitable for admission as a local preacher. In order to assist the Local Preachers' Meeting the person on trial:
  - a. shall, during the quarter preceding the interview, conduct a full service in the presence of two preachers (one of whom shall normally be a minister) and a church steward (who is not a local preacher), who shall together prepare a report for the meeting, written on the form provided by the Local Preachers' Office;
  - b. shall have the opportunity to speak of his or her growth in knowledge and understanding of the faith and maturing of Christian experience;
  - c. shall be invited to discuss one or more of Wesley's Sermons (the person conducting the interview may agree beforehand with the person on trial which sermon(s) they will discuss);
  - d. must satisfy the meeting that he or she is faithful to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith and to Methodist doctrinal standards;
  - e. must assure the meeting that he or she will accept and observe the duties of a local preacher as described in Standing Order 563 (1) - (4), which may, for this purpose, be read at the meeting.
- vii. If, after this second interview, the meeting is satisfied that the person on trial should be admitted as a Local Preacher it shall so recommend to the Circuit Meeting which if it agrees, shall approve the person on trial for admission as a local preacher at a service of worship arranged by the Circuit Meeting.

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