

RECOGNISED AND REGARDED MINISTERS IN THE BRITISH METHODIST CHURCH (MCB)

THE PROCESS BEFORE NEW APPOINTMENTS

INTRODUCTION

'Recognised and Regarded' (R&R) ministers are stationed for up to 5 years. Their R&R status is only given while they are in their appointment. Therefore they need to update their status before they can enter into any other appointment. This applies even if their appointment is curtailed before the end of 5 years. As they then would be seeking a new appointment, they first need to update their status. This also applies for any appointment not only their first appointment.

UPDATING STATUS – TIMING

R&R ministers need to decide at the end of the 3rd year of their appointment whether they intend to remain in the MCB beyond the end of the 5 year appointment. R&R ministers are advised to discuss this carefully with their Superintendent Minister, Supervisor and Chair of District. The process of updating their status would happen during their 4th year so that their status is clear by the time they need either to start a re-invitation process or to enter stationing in their 5th year, ready to start a new appointment or an extension from the start of their 6th year.

UPDATING STATUS – OPTIONS

R&R ministers have two choices if they wish to apply to update their status:

1. **Apply to extend their R&R status.** They should choose this if they regard their time in the MCB as temporary and they intend, at some point, to return to ministry in their home church.
2. **Apply to be received into Full Connexion.** They should choose this if they discern that they wish to carry out the whole of their future ministry in the MCB. This would mark a permanent transfer from their home church to the MCB. Once they are received into Full Connexion, their home church no longer has any oversight of their ministry.

UPDATING STATUS – PROCESS

For either option 1 or 2 above:

1. **Starting.** Applicants should email ministryoffers@methodistchurch.org.uk **after May 1st** and request the relevant application pack, ensuring that they are requesting the correct pack either for extending R&R status or applying to be received into Full Connexion. They will receive three documents which must be completed **before August 31st** in their 3rd year:
 - a. Application form – there is a different form if they are applying to extend R&R or for Full Connexion.
 - b. Declaration. Applicants will be asked to indicate their wish to extend their position as 'Recognised and Regarded', their willingness to be itinerant, and their fidelity to the doctrine and practice of MCB.
 - c. Their personal statement. They are asked to reflect on their ministry in accordance with the areas outlined in the 'Competencies for Ministry' document. This is to help them and others to discern whether this step is a response to the call of God.
2. **Home Church's consent.** As part of the application process, the Connexional Ministries Team

will write to the officer in the applicant's Church or denomination responsible for oversight of relationships between Churches or Conferences and seek their permission to continue with the application. This permission is required before the application can proceed. They will be asked to confirm that the applicant has held a conversation with this person before they have made the application.

3. **Reports.** The Ministries Team will approach the following people for a report (please note applicants are not required to request these reports themselves). Neither of the people providing these reports may be related to the applicant.
 - a. A report from the Superintendent Minister of the Circuit in which the applicant is stationed. They will be asked to reflect on the applicant's ministry in accordance with the expected competencies.
 - b. A report from the Chair of the District in which the applicant is stationed. They will also be asked to reflect on the applicant's ministry in accordance with the expected competencies.
4. **Review of paperwork by a Scrutiny Group.** The application and accompanying documents will be considered by a scrutiny group who will decide whether the applicant should be invited to a process of discernment at a panel interview or whether they can be recommended straight to the Methodist Conference. Those who are recommended to the Conference will be informed at this point by letter.
[Please note that in the very rare instances when an applicant did not go through a discernment interview process when they became 'Recognised and Regarded' then they will be invited to attend one at this stage.]
5. **Two Assessments.** If an applicant is called to the interview panel, they will be asked first to have two discussions which will be arranged for them:
 - a. With a Connexional Assessor about exercising ministry in the British context, as outlined in the competencies.
 - b. With the Connexional Psychologist who will ask the applicant about their life history, family background and current situation and talk about safeguarding. The Psychologist will write a resilience assessment which the applicant will see and be able to comment on.
6. **Panel interview.** Applicants attending the panel interviews will be invited for a period of 24 hours, from around 2.00pm on one day to 2.30pm the following day. This will be around the third week of March but details of the actual dates, timings, venue and any necessary preparation will be sent to applicants as appropriate. Applicants are responsible for arranging and paying for their own travel and accommodation (if necessary) prior to and following the panel. Accommodation during the panel interview will be arranged for applicants at the venue.
7. **Outcome.** Applicants will receive a letter very soon after the end of the panel interviews informing them of the outcome.
8. **Reception into Full Connexion.** Those who have been recommended to be received into Full Connexion will be expected to attend the Methodist Conference on the Conference Sunday

in the year in which they are applying. This is where the reception will take place. Full details will be sent to them in advance.

UPDATING STATUS – POINTS TO NOTE

- This is a discernment process and that means that not all applications may be successful.
- Should the committee feel that it cannot recommend that the applicant's status as 'Recognised and Regarded' should be extended, their position with the British Methodist Church would be ended at the conclusion of their current appointment.
- Those who have applied to be received into Full Connexion who are not recommended, have the right to appeal this decision. Please see Standing Order 730 (10) for details.
- Stationing. Once the decision has been made by the Conference for R&R status to be extended, the minister may enter stationing or a reinvitation process. It is though important to note that R&R status is related to the appointment in which the minister is stationed. So if for any reason they are not stationed, then they would not be 'Recognised and Regarded'.
- Disclosure Barring Service (DBS/Criminal Record Check) - The Methodist Church's Safeguarding policy states that where a recent or serious offence might mean that an individual presents a risk to children or vulnerable adults, or could cause damage to the reputation of the Methodist Church, then that individual will not be accepted for ordained ministry in the Methodist Church in Britain. If an R&R minister does not already have one, they will be asked for a criminal record check (DBS).