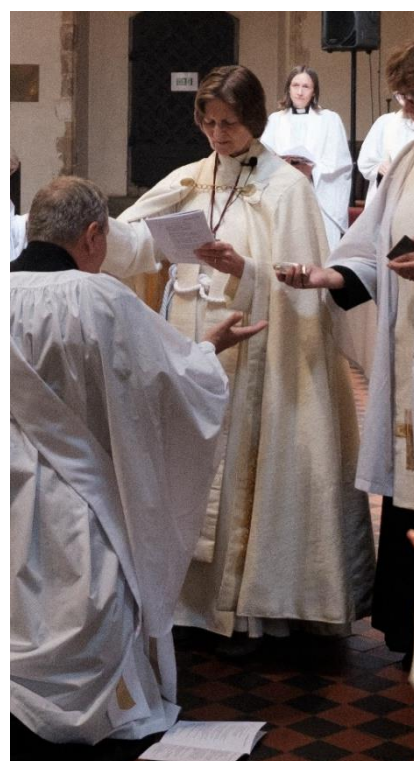




**DIOCESE** of  
**OXFORD**

# Welcome to Curacy 2024



# Called to be Christ-like

## Contemplative, Compassionate, Courageous



“A very warm welcome to ordained ministry in the diocese of Oxford. We look forward to working with you and sharing our common vision to be a more Christ like Church for the sake of God’s world. Please pray for us as we will pray for you.”

+Steven, Bishop of Oxford

“In a fast-changing world and church, it is more important than ever that, as we are formed and grow as Christian ministers, we become more and more rooted in Christ. May this be the soil in which you grow and flourish in your curacy years, and into God’s future for you.”



+Olivia, Bishop of Reading



“As you enter this practical phase of your formation for ministry, I pray that you will enjoy a rich partnership with your Training Incumbent and with the people of your parish, as together you see the Kingdom of God growing in, through, and around you.”

+Gavin, Bishop of Dorchester

## Meet the IME 2 Team



Grant Bayliss  
Head of IME 2

grant.bayliss@oxford.anglican.org  
07557 442554

Grant became Head of IME 2 in 2020 and has previously served as a residentiary canon at Christ Church, director of theological studies at Cuddesdon & chaplain in Cambridge. He is passionate about formation, liturgy, doctrine & the early church. Grant is married to Chris, has two children at university, two cats & a fluffy dog who enjoy barking loudly during zoom calls.



David Pickering  
IME 2 Tutor

david.pickering@oxford.anglican.org

David joined the team in 2022, after 13 years as a vicar in Oxfordshire, and before that a curacy in East London. He is keen to help to make curacy training the best it can be, and is much enjoying working with curates and colleagues to that end. David works part-time Mon-Wed.



Emma Nawrocki  
Curates’ Administrator

emman@oxford.anglican.org

Emma came to this role in 2016. Previous to that she held administrative roles for charities, local government & for a clinical research team. When not working Emma finds herself running her daughter round various clubs and cooking. If she has a moment to herself, she loves to walk, listen to music, and paint. Emma works part-time Mon-Thurs.

Beyond this welcome booklet, most curacy information, programmes and forms are found on:

- [Curates’ pages on Diocesan website](#) – general overviews, information for TIs, reporting forms
- [South Central TEI Moodle](#) (you will need to be enrolled first to access this) – [curates’ information page](#), specific Core Topics course information, study materials, videos and how-to guides
- [Eventbrite](#) – bookings for specific IME 2 training days

# A Training Post

## Growing in Skills, Knowledge, Dispositions

For all that parishes (and sometimes even Training Incumbents!) may forget, you're not being licenced as an associate minister or an extra pair of hands. Curacy is fundamentally a training post and it's critical that this shapes all your and your TI's decisions about how best to spend your time.

That doesn't always mean doing new things or being constantly stretched and challenged, growth can come through consolidation. Repetition and habits are essential for creating character and dispositions. However, always be alert to how you are growing as a deacon, a priest and, above all, as who God is calling you to be.

In IME 2 we will look for this growth in three main areas – skills, knowledge and dispositions – and over time your Ministry Development Folder (MDF) should show evidence of all three. You will work through the core skills list with your TI, being assessed for practical competency. You will build up knowledge in supervisions, on training days and through your study, drawing this together in your theological reflections and assessed work. You will grow in character – we hope especially as a contemplative, compassionate and courageous reflective practitioner – and demonstrate this through references and relationships.



### TI'S TOP TIPS

“Think about your time – holidays, time off, quiet days, work/life balance. Have a day off!

Learn to sit with the unfinished stuff.”

*Skye Denno*



“Book your holiday! Remember Jesus said, ‘I’ve come that you might have life in abundance’.”

*Geoff Bayliss*

## Setting Up Good Habits

The habits you establish in curacy will shape your ministry for years to come, for good or ill. So it's vital to attend closely to them at the start. It's often tempting to get on with doing everything all at once. We hope your curacy will be exciting and life-giving but try to find a good pace with your TI. Ministry is a marathon, not a sprint.

- Days off and holidays to recharge and be recreated are crucial.
- Prayer, Bible reading and time with God in contemplation should be at the heart of all you do and are central to the vows we all make.
- Ensure you have a good spiritual director (or soul-friend) in place and if you need to find a new one, look at the [Spi-Dir Network website](#).
- Make the most of your Ministry Development Group (MDG).
- Invest in long-term support networks, like a cell group or friends from IME 1.
- Above all, remember that your vocation to ordination is just one part of who God is calling you to be. Our relationships as friends, partners, parents, children and family are just as much vocations from God and need time and energy, whether we are married, in a partnership or single.

When it comes to the daily round of ministry, learn where and how you minister to others and where you are ministered to. Ensure that each week and month has a balance of both.

## Clergy Terms of Service

All new clergy (whether stipendiary or self-supporting) are governed by clergy terms of service under 'Common Tenure'. You will be issued with a Statement of Particulars as part of your licence to your parish or benefice and that should be read in conjunction with the national

[Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of Clergy](#) (2015) and the [Diocesan Clergy Handbook](#) with HR and wellbeing materials on our website.



## Transition to IME 2

Before your ordination, your key point of reference should be your DDO. They will help you with getting the paperwork right for the Registry and other key Diocesan bodies, as well as organising vestment grants. For stipendiary curates, the DDO will assist your Training Incumbent in helping you navigate the various departments at Church House for your stipend, housing, pension etc.

The Vocations Team also work with Cathedral and Area Offices to organise your retreat and ordination. As the IME 2 Team, we will be praying for you and will meet you all at the Induction in July.



## Length of Curacy

Most curates are initially issued with a four-year licence and are expected to complete at least three full years of curacy before moving to a first post of responsibility or associate minister role.

Full-time stipendiary curates should aim to complete their training in three years in order to have time to discern what next and apply for jobs. We hope most stipendiary curates will be placed by the Christmas of their fourth year and able to move out by Easter at the latest, in order that the transition to any future curate can be as smooth as possible. It is only rarely possible for a stipendiary curate's licence to be extended and only under particular circumstances.

Some stipendiary part-time curates may have an initial six-year licence. Pioneer and church-planting curacies may also be longer due to the emerging community's needs but this will usually be planned from the start.

Most SSM curates should aim to complete their training in three and a half years but some will be on a longer agreed pathway due to balancing ministry with work and other commitments. We recognise most SSMs do not have the same degree of control over changes in their working life as stipendiary curates and it is often possible to renegotiate the curacy length and agree extensions.

## A Stipendiary Curate's Timeline Might Look Like This



SSM & Pioneer curacies are often planned to take the full four years or longer

## TOP TIPS

"Use this year as a deacon to get out there working in the community, doing pastoral visits and enjoying all the learning opportunities on offer."

*Susy Brouard, Curate*

"Enjoy being out and about in the parish wearing your collar and seeing who you meet, building connections for the kingdom and not feeling guilty that you should be 'doing something'."

*Sarah Mortimer, Curate*

“I’ve really enjoyed getting to know people from the different parishes, schools, local churches, baptism & funeral families, wedding couples, and especially those who have reconnected with the church. It’s a complete joy and delight to be invited into people’s lives & stories, and a privilege to be asked to pray with & for people.”

*Cara Smart, Curate & IME 2 Steering Group Rep*

## Practical Ministry in your Local Context

The heart of your curacy will be rooted in learning by doing in your local context. Local ministry and reflection in your context should make up about 85% of your time (five days per week for full-time stipendiary curates), with about 15% given for study and central IME 2 training (one day per week for full-time stipendiary curates).

For pioneers, church-planters, chaplains and others, there should be a clearly defined split of that 85% between your different ministry contexts. This may change from year to year as your focus develops and should be included in your Learning and Ministry Agreement.

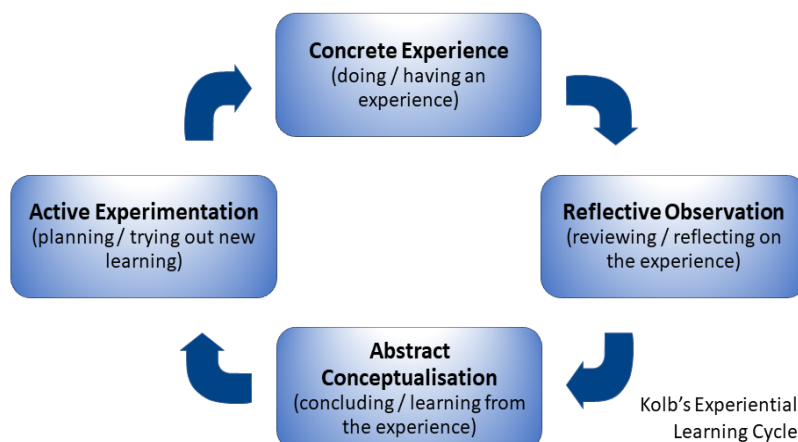


## Reflective Practice

At the core of curacy training and ministry is a desire that we should all be reflective practitioners, constantly noticing our experiences, digging into them, relating them to our faithfulness as disciples and changing how we behave in the light of what we’ve learned. Each learning track begins with reflective practice and we want to see evidence of your own reflection and how it’s changing you as a person, a disciple and a minister in your supervisions and written reports.

Often people arrive with very different experiences of theological reflection at their colleges or courses and there can be a real danger of it seeming something scary and complicated or irrelevant and bound up in slightly contrived models. We believe good critical reflection is central to purposeful human learning, as we do, think, conclude and adapt over and over again; and good theological reflection central to Christian discipleship as we learn and grow in faithfulness to Christ.

Models and methods (like the Pastoral Cycle based on David Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle) may help focus and discipline us but are no more essential than a particular form of daily office is to prayer.



## The Learning and Ministry Agreement

Every curacy is different and so we ask every curate and TI to work out an individual Learning and Ministry Agreement. A template and some guidelines are offered on the website and Moodle but you can use any framework that suits you both. The key is to have honest and open conversations, to name and think through expectations on all sides, and to begin to understand one another's gifts and characters.

You may want to start working on this together even before ordination but must have completed a draft by September when you and your TI meet with Grant. At that point it can be confirmed and also signed by Grant to ensure it includes the Diocesan IME 2 expectations and seems reasonable.

The result is not a contract but a working document that should be reviewed at least once a year and amended as necessary.

## Core Skills – Building Confidence and Competence

By the end of curacy we hope that all curates will have gained confidence and competence in a wide variety of aspects of ministry, from preaching in civic contexts and officiating at weddings to chiring meetings and ministry with schools. These experiences should be recorded on the Core Skills Checklist, with sections being updated at least annually, as you and your TI reflect on your progress. Skills are scored 0-5 with associate-focus ministers needing to achieve mostly 3s ("can perform without regular, direct supervision") and incumbent-focus ministers mostly 4s (independently "confident and competent").



### TOP TIP FOR SSMS

"Remember you are one person with two roles – the day job and a chosen disciple of Christ. Whatever hours you work as an employee, your role as an SSM is full-time in your heart and mind. Carefully manage your time and your physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing."

*Polly Falconer,  
SSM Curate*



### TI'S TOP TIPS

"Enjoy the good moments, reflect on the challenging moments, take your time off and rest. Be yourself (because God called you, not a version of you!) and flourish."

*Katie Tupling*

## Supervision – A Container for a Conversation

### Regular, Focused, Distinct from Other Meetings

Regular, focused supervision and reflection with your TI (and mentor if you have one) is vital to your formation, development and ministerial practice. It's not simply about line management or shared ministry and should be clearly distinct from staff meetings or other planning. At its heart should be shared reflective practice and mutual learning, rooted in a continual spiral of noticing, digging down, relating to faith, discipleship and theology, and real change.

There is no one way to do this. In our TI training sessions, we commend Michael Paterson's approach – hosting & containing, eliciting & focusing, exploring & imagining, tracking & monitoring, bridging & enacting and reviewing & closing. TIs and curates are encouraged to explore a range of possibilities and discover what works for you. You will be different people with different expectations, communication styles and learning preferences; all of which may be temporarily thrown into a little turmoil by the beginning of the curacy, with all the emotional and personal challenges and changes that brings. One of the earliest supervision priorities should be spending time understanding your own and each other's disposition and ways of working and communicating. Think about practicalities, like where to meet, structure (especially how you will set the agenda) and boundaries.

### Frequency of Supervisions

- 60–90 minutes every fortnight at first for stipendiary curates (perhaps changing to 90–120 minutes every month over time)
- At least 60–90 minutes every month for those not full-time in the parish
- Pioneers and those in dual ministry contexts should ensure a good balance of time with their pioneer or chaplaincy mentor as well

It is your responsibility as the curate to keep notes of supervisions and the key learning your reflection there inspires. Unlike some dioceses, we don't insist you keep a journal or record everything but it is well worth noting significant moments in your electronic MDF as you go, so that you have a pool of evidence for your curacy review form. After training days, there will be set supervision topics or case studies which you should record on the 'homework' form.

contemplative | compassionate | courageous

## Ministry Development Groups (MDGs)

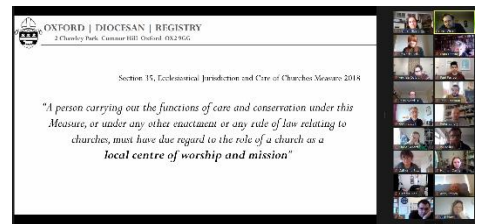
Ministry is something we are formed in and do together, so all curates are part of a Ministry Development Group (MDG) for the first three years of curacy. The MDG offers curates a safe space to share with others in similar situations. It's a group where you can share ideas about preaching or funerals or how to make sure you are having time off. It's also a place where you can share concerns and fears confidentially. This is not a group where information goes back to the Diocese, it's run by the group, for the group. At its best this is a group where you can feel nurtured and supported as well as making friends.

Each group usually has 4–7 curates and meets together at least six times a year, supported by a wise, local minister as the MDG Animator. MDGs take priority over other parish or ministry commitments.

## IME 2 Training Days

All stipendiary curates should aim to spend about a day a week (15% of your time) in study. For SSMs it will likely be somewhat less in real terms but maybe a little more proportionately in terms of hours you can offer to ministry. To support this we offer a considerable number of training days of different types that you can book onto through Eventbrite. They are a mix of online and onsite and full-time stipendiary curates should aim to do about 10–12 per year (SSMs 6–8).

There are two main types of training days – Core and Optional (Free Choice). The Core Training Days have a natural progression over the 3–4 years and most curates do them at the same time as the cohort they are ordained with. The Optional or Free Choice Training Days can fit in at any time and each curate will choose different options to suit their own learning needs. So you should plan your choices carefully with your TI.



### MDGS

“It's about sharing celebrations and challenges in a safe and supportive environment.”

Margreet Armistead,  
MDG Animator



### TOP TIP

Many books, articles and videos are on Moodle but the Diocese will also sponsor access to Cuddesdon library for curates who will use it.

## Core Training Days

Core Training Days tend to either focus on an aspect of formation relating to your stage of curacy (like Getting Up to Speed, Preparing for Incumbency or SSM Transitions) or on a topic (like Preaching, Mission & Evangelism, Community Outreach or Leadership & Collaboration).

Topic Days are typically supported by online resources and structured learning to take you deeper and often have a larger 'theory' element than the stand-alone optional days but are still geared towards contextual ministry and reflective practice.

Most topics are explored over three separate days in each semester (autumn-spring and spring-summer), delivered on-site or online, with some work to do between each teaching day set on Moodle. Sometimes there's a choice of inputs for each topic, so for Mission & Evangelism next summer most curates will choose three of Apologetics, Growing New Communities, Sharing in Youthwork, Nurturing Disciples or World Faith & Mission. The topics build up over the whole curacy as a 'Learning Track', with the BA & PGDip tracks also having some specialist input or workshops.

Remember to build on your IME 1! It's amazing how often curates forget to refer back to key learning or thinking from their college or course. Aim to build on this knowledge, making the most of previous reading and sifting through what continues to hold true in the complex everyday realities of ministry.

## Optional (Free Choice) Training Days – Choose the Ones that Appeal to You

These are themed study days on practical ministry and applied theology. At present there are about 20 different days, some of which only run every other year. The programme includes topics like Beginning Funerals Ministry, Weddings, Rural Ministry, Exploring Chaplaincy, Buildings & Faculties and Media. The days use case studies and draw on experienced practitioners from around the Diocese and beyond. Curates, in discussion with their TI, choose the days best suited to their own learning and calling. Each day has a homework reflection or case study to do afterwards with your TI. Expectations vary according to focus of ministry and length of curacy, with incumbent-focus curates choosing three a year, whereas associate-focus SSMs typically just choose two a year.



Think outside the box

What really matters to the school community?

What is going to make a difference to them?

How can the church share God's love in a practical way schools will understand, value and appreciate?



**ODBE schools**

**Ministry with Schools**  
Some ideas from the Bloxham Project

Pastoral: biggest challenge is probably time.  
Who is being 'pastored'?

Liturgical: In a church school the work of worship belongs to the community.  
Spiritual: Exploration of spirituality is increasing in schools. In schools spirituality is not always of a faith character.  
Missional: The church school is the church's mission. Define carefully how mission in/with schools might be understood.  
Prophetic: Not 'telling the future' but rather, 'speaking the truth'.  
Pedagogic: The learning of children and young people is at the heart of the endeavour.

Working with Schools is about Presence

**ODBE schools**

**Ministry with Schools**

What I Could Be ...  
Governor  
Worship Leader  
Consultant/Adviser  
RE Resource  
Pastor  
Ambassador  
... ?

What I Could Do ...  
Pray  
Turn up on time  
Conduct Worship  
Listen  
Build relationships  
Plan  
Open the Book  
... ?

What can't you do?

## A Stipendiary Incumbent-Focus Curate's Plan Might Look Like This

	<b>Semester 1 Core (Autumn-Spring)</b>	<b>Semester 2 Core (Spring-Summer)</b>	<b>9 Optional/Free Choice Study Days over Curacy (~3 per year)</b>
Year 1	Getting Up to Speed Reflecting on Contexts Preaching the Lectionary Preaching at Occasional Offices	Mission & Evangelism I-III	eg. Beginning Funerals Ministry Weddings Presiding at the Eucharist
Year 2	Catechesis Community Outreach I-II Looking Ahead	Leadership & Collaboration I-III Moving On	eg. Exploring Chaplaincy Healing & Deliverance Churchyards
Year 3	Preparing for Incumbency		eg. Meetings & Governance Money for Clergy Buildings & Faculties

## An SSM Associate-Focus Curate's Plan Might Look Like This

(Limiting attendance to mostly Saturday Training Days and spreading over 4 years)

	<b>Semester 1 Core (Autumn-Spring)</b>	<b>Semester 2 Core (Spring-Summer)</b>	<b>6 Optional/Free Choice Study Days over Curacy (~2 per year)</b>
Year 1	Getting Up to Speed Reflecting on Contexts Preaching at Occasional Offices Preaching the OT		eg. Beginning Funerals Ministry Presiding at the Eucharist
Year 2	Catechesis	Mission & Evangelism	eg. Baptisms Weddings
Year 3	Community Outreach Looking Ahead	Leadership & Collaboration	eg. Rural Ministry
Year 4	SSM Transitions		eg. Environmental Theology



## Choice of Tracks – Academic Options for Those who Want Them

Oxford is one of the four centres in the [South Central TEI](#) and so we are able to offer curates a formal academic route through curacy as part of a [Durham Common Awards](#) BA or Postgraduate Diploma/MA, with all costs covered by the Diocese. It doesn't change the key areas you will explore and study but is more about the depth at which you're encouraged to engage (through additional online learning and short specialist workshops or tutorials) and how you present the evidence of your ministry, learning and reflection. It's a little more work and a fair bit more writing but can be enormously rewarding. Pioneer curates often study for an MA in Pioneering through CMS.

### Standard Track

For most curates

Five extended topics over the curacy

(currently Preaching, Mission & Evangelism, Catechesis, Community Outreach and Leadership & Collaboration)

At the end of each topic, curates submit a 1,000-word theological reflection and/or a practical resource

Standard track curates also write a 2,500 word reflection on their Mission & Ministry Project

### BA Track

For curates with a Common Awards Diploma

Six 20-credit L6 modules (currently Preaching in the Contemporary World, Reflective Practice: Mission & Evangelism, Reflective Practice: Worship, Reflective Practice: Leadership & Collaboration, an optional topic and an Independent Learning Project based on the Mission & Ministry Project)

6,000-7,000-word assessed portfolios for each module, with practical, theoretical & reflective elements

### PGDip Track

For curates who already have a BA in theology or a BA in another subject & Diploma in theology

Six 20-credit L7 modules (currently Resources & Research Methods, Reflective Practice: Mission & Evangelism, Preaching in a Ministerial Context, or Reflective Practice: Worship, Reflective Practice: Leadership & Collaboration, a Reflective Practice module based on the Mission & Ministry Project and an ILP)

7,000-8,000-word assessed portfolios for each module

### Self-Directed Study Track

For curates with a doctorate in theology and an active research vocation

Curates agree a programme of writing and reflection with Grant that combines the necessary formational study with the curate's own research

Self-directed curates always also undertake a Mission & Ministry Project in Y3 and write a suitable reflection

*"If for you the academic side of theological college was an ordeal to be survived, it might be tempting to consider the potential for further studies in IME 2 in the same light. Do resist this. My discipleship has been deeply enriched by the opportunity for ongoing reflection. I would encourage you to value study time and offer it in worship to God; you may well find the Holy Spirit continuing to form you in the likeness of Christ in ways you would never have imagined."*

*Ayo Audu,  
PGDip Track Curate & CAMC Curate Rep*

Whichever track you choose, support and reasonable adjustments are available for dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities. Do talk to Grant or Katie Tupling, our Disability Adviser, if you would like to discuss this at any point.

## Mission & Ministry Project

At the start of your third year of curacy (or fourth for very part-time SSMs), all curates are asked to bring together a team of lay people and lead a project that matches your gifts and the needs of your parish or ministry. These tend to be exciting pieces of work, some of which have had long-lasting effects.

Recent projects have included community larders, a repair café, a beer festival, inter-generational singing groups, seasonal outreach, such as the woolly nativity trail or Pentecost missions, greening groups and eco-church, bereavement cafés and Grave Talk, Messy Church, Muddy Church, Forest Church and Minecraft Church, pilgrimage resources and estate mission.

There's a briefing day in March of the second year which everyone should try to attend and most curates carry out their projects in the July-December of their third year. Key insights are then written up as either a 2,000-word theological reflection (Standard & Self-Directed Study Tracks) or a 6,000–7,000-word assessed portfolio (BA & PGDip).



### WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

- A project that excites you, not a hoop to jump through
- Significant work over several months with curate leading (not TI)
- Understanding of your ministerial context & local theology
- Understanding of your own missional gifts & calling
- Collaboration with a lay team
- Written reflection on aspects of the learning experience



Bampton Beer Festival



Woolly Nativity



Chat-in-a-Box



Rev Kev & Minecraft Church

## Assessment

The [House of Bishops](#) requires all curates to show evidence of their engagement with key formation qualities and capability in core skills to continue in ministry. Although increasingly the same headline descriptors will be used in pre-ordination discernment and IME 1, all curates are expected to progress in inhabiting the qualities more deeply over the course of their curacy. Each diocese assesses this slightly differently and in Oxford we ask you to collect a range of key evidence in an electronic **Ministry Development Folder (MDF)** for final assessment when you are ready.

PRIEST IME2	CHRIST	CHURCH	WORLD	SELF
<b>LOVE FOR GOD</b> The curate...	Is reliant on God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – and lives out an infectious, life-transforming faith	Is rooted in scripture, the worship of the Church and the living traditions of faith	Whole-heartedly, generously and attractively engages with God's world	Is prayerful and studies the Bible
<b>LOVE FOR PEOPLE</b> The curate...	Welcomes Christ in others, listens, values and respects; cares for those in poverty and the marginalized	Builds relationships which are collaborative and enabling	Shows God's compassion for the world	Has empathy and is aware of how others receive them
<b>WISDOM</b> The curate...	Is inquisitive, curious and open to new learning	Shows leadership that enables thriving and healthy churches, handles conflict, and can lead in mission	Is robust and courageous and prepared to take risks	Is a mature and integrated person of stability and integrity
<b>FRUITFULNESS</b> The curate...	Embraces the different and enables others to be witnesses and servants	Shows the capacity to exercise sacramental, liturgical and effective and enabling teaching ministry	Shares faith in Christ and can accompany others in their faith	Has resilience and stamina
<b>CALL TO MINISTRY</b> The curate...	Responds to the call of Christ to be a disciple	Understands the distinctive nature of ordained priestly ministry	Is committed to being a public and representative person	Articulates an inner sense of call grounded in priestly service
<b>POTENTIAL</b> The curate has potential to...	Grow in faith and be open to navigating the future in the company of Christ	Manage change and see the big picture	See where God is working in the world and respond with missionary imagination	Be adaptable and agile
<b>TRUSTWORTHINESS</b> The curate...	Follows Christ in every part of life	Leads maturely which promotes safe and harmonious Christian communities	Lives out their life as a representative of God's people	Has a high degree of self-awareness

Although the seven qualities and the four domains are the same for distinctive deacons, they are differently expressed to better reflect the diaconal calling described in the ordinal.

Full details and advice are available on Moodle and we will also look at this at the Induction. Essentially as you move through your curacy and attend IME 2 training, you will build up reports, references, a checklist of core skills, examples of ministry, reflections and assignments, showing how you have progressed. When you and your TI believe you are ready for your next post, an assessor appointed by the Bishop reads through your MDF and on the basis of that evidence makes a recommendation to your Area Bishop.

In the unlikely event that your assessor believes you have not reached the level of fitness to practice for your curacy to be signed off, the Diocesan policy on Assessment at the End of Curacy will be followed and your Bishop will make clear to you precisely what further evidence, skills or dispositional growth is needed. Broad guidance on the sorts of evidence expected to show sufficient progress in inhabiting the formation qualities for each focus of ministry is available on the Church of England [website](#).

“Build up your MDF as you go along.”

“Try to keep a curacy journal if you can. Even the occasional short reflection will be really helpful when you come to fill in your curacy review form later in the year!”

*Ann Cogle, Curate*



We hope that the majority of full-time stipendiary curates will feel ready to submit their final MDF by summer of their third year.

Your progress is checked at two key points before this.

- Your First Year Report (in April) as part of the process of your TI recommending you for priesting (distinctive deacons also complete a similar report).
- Your Interim Report, usually in June of Year 2 (but this may be deferred if the curacy pathway is expected to take a full four years or more).

After each progress check, you and your TI are offered feedback and advice to help you plan the rest of your training and complete your curacy confidently and on time.

## MDFS & ASSESSORS

Your assessor is here to help you & will give you clear feedback each year.

Make sure you have a balance of evidence & reflection. Give specific examples of what you've done & show some of what you've learnt from it.

Do remember to respond to advice from previous assessors the next year.

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is central to our ministry of love in Christ's name to a broken world.

All curates should have completed their Basic Awareness, Leadership, Safer Recruitment and Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse modules prior to ordination (usually through your college or course in IME 1). Your DDO will ask you to send confirmation of dates of training and any certificates to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team as part of the curacy paperwork. If you have not yet completed this training, you must let your DDO and Grant know as soon as possible and book into the relevant courses (mostly offered online).

All curates should keep their safeguarding training up-to-date every three years through a Diocesan course (dates listed on the [website](#)) and safeguarding dimensions are regularly explored as part of case studies at various training days.

Should you have a safeguarding concern at any point in your curacy, please raise it as soon as possible with the appropriate safeguarding officer. Referrals to the [Diocesan Safeguarding Team](#) for church contexts can be made on 01865 208295 or [safeguardingreferrals@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:safeguardingreferrals@oxford.anglican.org).

## Pastoral Support

The Vocations Team and Area Bishop will have done their best to set up a curacy that is right for you and your unique vocation but sometimes things can go wrong. Although very few curacies break down to the point that a move is the best option, national research shows that up to 33% of curates do not have a positive experience. Please don't suffer in silence and do talk to someone. Help, advice and practical support is always available from Grant and David, as well as from other people around the Diocese, particularly your Area Dean, Parish Development Adviser (PDA) and Archdeacon.

## Clergy Wellbeing

The Diocese is keen to promote a healthier and more sustainable approach to ordained ministry and offers a range of resources on the website, including [Flourishing in Ministry](#) and [Flourishing Together](#) (which you'll receive in your welcome packs). One of the most helpful to many is the Employee and Clergy Assistance Programme (EAP) which gives you 24-hour access to a confidential helpline (with support for family issues, bereavement, trauma, relationships, stress, money management and legal advice) – 0800 028 0199. You can also access confidential telephone counselling and up to six face-to-face counselling sessions per issue, without any referral.

For longer term support and counselling, you can approach clergy support charities like [St Luke's](#) or [Sheldon](#). Where a referral is required, your Archdeacon will support you with that.

## Financial Support

Curacy can sometimes be a straining time on household finances, particularly in the transition from college or work to stipendiary ministry. Please do not be embarrassed to ask for help.

This can be raised discretely with your DDO, Grant or David or your Archdeacon. The [Clergy Support Trust](#) also offer a range of grants and support.

## Sickness, Special Leave & Family-Friendly Guidance

All stipendiary curates are required to report time off sick by phone or email to your incumbent and also the HR & Stipends administrator, Nicole Hayes ([nicole.hayes@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:nicole.hayes@oxford.anglican.org)). Although you are technically office-holders, rather than employees, in the case of long-term sickness, stipendiary curates are still entitled to Statutory Sick Pay and should follow the guidance on the [website](#).

In the case of unforeseen emergencies, particularly regarding children or dependents, or some public duties, your TI and Bishop (or Archdeacon) can grant you a period of special or compassionate leave. Please do speak to them if and when the need arises.

Under Common Tenure, curates have the same legal rights to parental leave, maternity, paternity and adoption leave as employees and [the Diocesan policy](#) often goes slightly beyond these in what we can offer. Curates with a new baby can also claim a £200 grant by applying to your Archdeacon.

## RESEARCH EVIDENCE

In 'good' curacies, the Curate

- Is able to use their own gifts
- Learns new skills
- Shares in the pastoral, liturgical & teaching ministry of their TI
- Is encouraged to develop and lead an area of their own
- Is present at the table as strategic decisions are made
- Learns how to share leadership with colleagues and volunteers

The TI

- Fosters healthy creativity of difference
- Facilitates release and development of gifts without feeling threatened
- Feeds back constructively
- Challenges appropriately

Jon Marlow, *Thriving in Curacy*  
(Grove, 2020)



## If Things Go Wrong

Sometimes relationships in curacy become strained or expectations are mis-communicated or misunderstood and both curates and TIs may seek help in resolving any issues that arise. The 'When Things Go Wrong in Curacy' document offers an informal policy and procedure to help with this and all curates are encouraged to familiarise themselves with it before problems arise.

The Church is required by God to foster human relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness, and trustworthiness. Lack of respect, bullying, harassment and discrimination have no place and will not be tolerated in the Diocese of Oxford. [The Dignity & Respect in Ministry and at Work Policy](#) (revised in 2021) sets out the framework in which bullying and harassment can be defined and recognised and wherever possible, behaviours changed, relationships rebuilt with trust restored. What was damaged in ministry and work can be made effective once again, if tackled promptly and appropriately. The policy offers both informal and formal procedures to address concerns.

## Useful Contacts

### Formation for Ministry Team

[Andy Angel](#) – Director of Formation in Ministry (CMD & beyond curacy)

[Navita Singh](#) (currently on maternity leave with cover from Betty Hayes) – Academic Administrator (Moodle & CA)

[Polly Falconer](#) (UKME Enabler) | [Liz Jackson](#) (Lead Women's Ministry Adviser) | [Katie Tupling](#) (Disability Adviser)

### Archdeacons

Archdeacon of Berkshire: Stephen Pullin

01635 552820 | [archdeacon.berkshire@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.berkshire@oxford.anglican.org)

Archdeacon of Buckinghamshire: Guy Elsmore

01865 208266 | [archdeacon.buckingham@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.buckingham@oxford.anglican.org)

Archdeacon of Dorchester: David Tyler

01865 208245 | [archdeacon.dorchester@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.dorchester@oxford.anglican.org)

Archdeacon of Oxford: Jonathan Chaffey

01865 208263 | [archdeacon.oxford@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.oxford@oxford.anglican.org)

Archdeacons are not sinister figures who drive around in the back of black cabs à la Rev! Rather they are experienced priests, mines of valuable information and pastoral advice, and will usually know your parish/benefice fairly well. They also have authority to make some decisions or give permissions in certain cases and would usually rather help you deal with something before it becomes a major problem.

### Press and Media Matters

The communications team offer advice and support in both times of crisis and when you are simply seeking to improve communications across your benefice. The emergency mobile will be answered 24/7 and is for precisely that – emergencies. Excellent training is offered on the Media for Clergy training day.

If you are contacted by a member of the press seeking a quote or response to a story, do politely ask for time to get back to them and contact one of the communications team for advice.

Interim Director of Communications: Rebekah Sharrock

07880 71676 | [rebekah.sharrock@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:rebekah.sharrock@oxford.anglican.org)

### Safeguarding

General safeguarding enquiries can be made to [safeguarding@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@oxford.anglican.org).

Concerns or incidents should usually be reported via for your Parish Safeguarding Officer in the first instance.

Head of Safeguarding & DSA: Louise Whitehead

07391 868478 | [louise.whitehead@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:louise.whitehead@oxford.anglican.org)

Safeguarding Training & Policy Adviser: Melody Stack (Tues/Weds/Thurs)

01865 587041 | [melody.stack@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:melody.stack@oxford.anglican.org)

Safeguarding Training & Policy Adviser: Helen Walker (Mon & Thurs)

01865 587041 | [helen.walker@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:helen.walker@oxford.anglican.org)

### The Registry

Advice relating to your office as curate or to your parish/benefice is usually covered under the Diocesan retainer and the Registry attempt to provide a first response to all enquiries within 48 hours.

Diocesan Registrar: Darren Oliver

01865 297210 | [doliver@wslaw.co.uk](mailto:doliver@wslaw.co.uk)

Registry Manager: Sara Leader (marriage, clergy licences, baptisms)

01865 297211 | [sleader@wslaw.co.uk](mailto:sleader@wslaw.co.uk)

Registry Clerk: Helen Lambourne (faculties, graves & churchyards)

01865 297208 | [hlambourne@wslaw.co.uk](mailto:hlambourne@wslaw.co.uk)



## Be Joyful

Above all things in your curacy we wish you joy. As Frederick Buechner puts it, “The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”

Ministry is not always easy or happy. We hope there’ll be times of fun and humour but joy is something deeper. That’s why even from prison, Paul could say, “Rejoice in the Lord always.” We hope and pray that as you navigate all that ordination and its many transitions bring, you will have a sense of the ‘rightness’ of your ministry.

## Stay Prayerful

One of the greatest mistakes any of us make as ministers is to try to do things in our own strength. At your ordination, the Bishop will charge you to be “diligent in prayer” and “in the strength of the Holy Spirit” to “continually stir up the gift of God that is in you.” As you start your curacy, it can be very easy to feel cut adrift from your prayer life. Routines from your college, course or past life can be disrupted or abruptly removed. There are new demands and expectations on your time and often on your ways of praying themselves, whether from making room for others as you pray in new contexts with new people or the pressure of leading prayer and worship more regularly. The temptation will be to rush into doing everything you can but nothing will be more important than setting down new habits of prayer for this time and this place and these people.



“There will be times that are busier & times that feel more leisurely. Don’t be tempted to fill your days so much that you don’t have time enough to pray, reflect and be nourished by God, because you will need this to sustain you.”

*Cara Smart, Curate*

## Go with God

“The One who calls you is faithful and he will do it.”  
(1 Thess. 5:24)

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## DEACONS

Deacons are called to work with the Bishop and the priests with whom they serve as heralds of Christ's kingdom. They are to proclaim the gospel in word and deed, as agents of God's purposes of love. They are to serve the community in which they are set, bringing to the Church the needs and hopes of all the people. They are to work with their fellow members in searching out the poor and weak, the sick and lonely and those who are oppressed and powerless, reaching into the forgotten corners of the world that the love of God may be made visible.

Deacons share in the pastoral ministry of the Church and in leading God's people in worship. They preach the word and bring the needs of the world before the Church in intercession. They accompany those searching for faith and bring them to baptism. They assist in administering the sacraments; they distribute communion and minister to the sick and housebound.

Deacons are to seek nourishment from with God's people that the equipped to live out the They are to be expectant and signs of God's reveals his among us.



the Scriptures; they are to study them whole Church may be gospel in the world. faithful in prayer, watchful for the presence, as he kingdom

Priests are servants and the people to whom their Bishop and fellow proclaim the word of the Lord God's new creation. They are to be the Lord; they are to teach and to admonish, to feed and provide for his family, to search for his children in the wilderness of this world's temptations, and to guide them through its confusions, that they may be saved through Christ for ever. Formed by the word, they are to call their hearers to repentance and to declare in Christ's name the absolution and forgiveness of their sins.

called to be shepherds among they are sent. With ministers, they are to and to watch for the signs of messengers, watchmen and stewards of

With all God's people, they are to tell the story of God's love. They are to baptize new disciples in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and to walk with them in the way of Christ, nurturing them in the faith. They are to unfold the Scriptures, to preach the word in season and out of season, and to declare the mighty acts of God. They are to preside at the Lord's table and lead his people in worship, offering with them a spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. They are to bless the people in God's name. They are to resist evil, support the weak, defend the poor, and intercede for all in need. They are to minister to the sick and prepare the dying for their death. Guided by the Spirit, they are to discern and foster the gifts of all God's people, that the whole Church may be built up in unity and faith.

## PRIESTS