

Checklist of issues to be covered by Applicants to Candidate for Ordained Ministry

(Presbytery Resource)

In the NSW/ACT Synod, the Synod Selection Panel is the body which determines applications for the Specified Ministries of Word and Deacon. The Presbytery Coordinator for the Period of Discernment together with the Mentor, will need to ensure that the development of the portfolio reflects that move towards application to any of the Specified Ministries.

1. The applicant's understanding of, and ability to accept:

(a) the Uniting Church's position on Baptism:

from Paragraph 7...

The Uniting Church will baptize those who confess the Christian faith, and children who are presented for baptism and for whose instruction and nourishment in the faith the Church takes responsibility.

(Note: This question is primarily about the Applicant's willingness to accept that the Church baptizes and recognizes both the baptism of infants and believers' or adult baptism)

(b) the Uniting Church position on the ordination or accreditation of women and men

(Note: The UCA recognises that all members of the Church are gifted by God and that God calls both men and women into ministry leadership. Candidates are expected to accept the leadership of both women and men in the Church and be prepared to work with both respectfully.)

(c) the various specified ministries of the Uniting Church

[See *Basis of Union, Para 14*];

Applicants are expected to be aware of the nature and expressions of each of the specified ministries, not just the one for which the applicant is applying.

The Specified Ministries of the Church are:

Ministry of the Word

Ministry of Deacon

Lay Specified Ministry of Pastor

Accredited Lay Preacher

Elder

Note: There continue to be recognised the following Lay Specified Ministries, which are now closed to new applicants, however, it is important that Ministry Candidates are aware of their existence, as they are still active in the Church and may be colleagues in Ministry Teams:

Lay Pastor (different from above)

Accredited Youth Worker

Deaconess

(d) the ministry of the whole people of God

[See *Basis of Union, Para 13 and Para 14*];

(e) the consensus model of meetings and decision-making

see Supplementary Readings "*A Manual for Meetings in the Uniting Church*".

It is recommended and expected that those undertaking a Period of Discernment attend a Presbytery [or other] meeting which uses the consensus model for decision-making.

(Note: If the applicant is accepted as a Candidate, he/she will undertake further Polity and Ethos training, however, it is helpful for Applicants to have an elementary awareness of the consensus model at this point because the decisions related to their own acceptance as a Candidate will be within this context.)

(f) the Uniting Church's position on being faithful in a pastoral relationship

[Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice, and For dealing with a complaint of sexual misconduct.]
Reflection on this ought to be done with the Mentor.

2. The applicant's awareness of **his or her own style of leadership and the leadership style of others** from the specified ministry for which the applicant is candidating.

Portfolio. In preparing the portfolio, those completing the Period of Discernment with a view to responding to a call to a specified ministry, will need to demonstrate an awareness of appropriate leadership in a congregational setting.

3. Through the processes of journaling and guided reflection the applicant should gain an awareness of:
 - self and self worth
 - ways of relating to others
 - areas of personal growth
 - acknowledgement & appreciation of the different cultures
 - some experiences peculiar to the Uniting Church.
 - areas known to require more intentional intervention

Some thoughts for Mentors

- LEARNING AGREEMENT** – Establish Goals and Methods

- TIMETABLE** – Establish a pattern for meeting. Set dates to complete different tasks. Monthly meetings might include:
 - Initial meeting and discussing Goals and possible Strategies. Draft Learning Agreement.
 - Finalize Learning Agreement. Set some initial reading and reflection tasks.
 - 4 x monthly meetings to discuss and reflect on progress. (This may include working through issues in the Checklist for people applying to Candidate.)
 - Review Progress.
 - Initial meeting with Ministry Committee.
 - Start working on Portfolio
 - 4 x monthly meetings to discuss and reflect on progress. (This may include working through issues in the Checklist for people applying to Candidate.)
 - Review Progress.
 - Finalize Portfolio.
 - Concluding meeting with Ministry Committee.

- PORTFOLIO** - What is the purpose of the Portfolio? Who will read it and why?

- RESOURCES**
 - Basis of Union
 - Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice
 - (NEW) Resource about Introducing Reflective Practice with Lay Leaders
 - PoD Kit
 - 'Mentoring' by John Mallison
 - A Manual for Meetings
 - Information about the different Specified Ministries
 - Information about Baptism
 - Information about Men and Women in Church Leadership
 - Contact details for
 - Presbytery PoD Contact
 - The Dean of Formation, UTC

- INVITATION** – invite the Discernee to visit Church Council, Presbytery and/or Synod (if not a Member)

- ENCOURAGE** - encourage the Discernee to explore their gifts and graces for Ministry in a range of ways and in a variety of settings. This is not just about their personal and individual discernment, but also about their future service in the Church – as a volunteer, a lay worker or in specified ministry.

BASIS OF UNION PARAGRAPHS 13 and 14

13. GIFTS AND MINISTRIES

The Uniting Church affirms that every member of the Church is engaged to confess the faith of Christ crucified and to be his faithful servant. It acknowledges with thanksgiving that the one Spirit has endowed the members of Christ's Church with a diversity of gifts, and that there is no gift without its corresponding service: all ministries have a part in the ministry of Christ. The Uniting Church, at the time of union, will recognise and accept the ministries of those who have been called to any task or responsibility in the uniting Churches. The Uniting Church will thereafter provide for the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them, and will order its life in response to God's call to enter more fully into mission.

14. MINISTERS, ELDERS, DEACONESSES AND LAY PREACHERS

The Uniting Church, from inception, will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to recognise among its members women and men called of God to preach the Gospel, to lead the people in worship, to care for the flock, to share in government and to serve those in need in the world.

To this end:

(a) The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as ministers of the Word Since the Church lives by the power of the Word, it is assured that God, who has never failed to provide witness to that word, will, through Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit, call and set apart members of the Church to be ministers of the Word. These will preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments and exercise pastoral care so that all may be equipped for their particular ministries, thus maintaining the apostolic witness to Christ in the Church. Such members will be called Ministers and their setting apart will be known as Ordination. The Presbytery will ordain by prayer and the laying on of hands in the presence of a worshipping congregation. In this act of ordination the Church praises the ascended Christ for conferring gifts upon men and women. It recognises Christ's call of the individual to be his minister; it prays for the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to equip the minister for that service. By the participation in the act of ordination of those already ordained, the Church bears witness to God's faithfulness and declares the hope by which it lives. In company with other Christians the Uniting Church will seek for a renewed understanding of the way in which the congregation participates in ordination and of the significance of ordination in the life of the Church.

(b) The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as elders or leaders those who ... adhere to the Basis of Union. It will seek to recognise in the congregation those endowed by the Spirit with gifts fitting them for rule and oversight. Such members will be called Elders or Leaders.

(c) The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as deaconesses... It believes that the Holy Spirit will continue to call women to share in this way in the varied services and witness of the Church, and it will make provision for this. Such members will be called Deaconesses. The Uniting Church recognises that at the time of union many seek a renewal of the diaconate in which women and men offer their time and talents, representatively and on behalf of God's people, in the service of humanity in the face of changing needs. The Uniting Church will so order its life that it remains open to the possibility that God may call men and women into such a renewed diaconate: in these circumstances it may decide to call them Deacons and Deaconesses, whether the service is within or beyond the life of the congregation.

(d) The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as lay preachers ... It will seek to recognise those endowed with the gift of the Spirit for this task, will provide for their training, and will gladly wait upon that fuller understanding of the obedience of Christians which should flow from their ministry. Such members will be called Lay Preachers.

In the above sub-paragraphs the phrase "adhere to the Basis of Union" is understood as willingness to live and work within the faith and unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church as that way is described in this Basis. Such adherence allows for difference of opinion in matters which do not enter into the substance of the faith.

The Uniting Church recognises that the type and duration of ministries to which women and men are called vary from time to time and place to place, and that in particular it comes into being in a period of reconsideration of traditional forms of the ministry, and of renewed participation of all the people of God in the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, the building up of the fellowship in mutual love, in commitment to Christ's mission, and in service of the world for which he died.