

February 2024



The Church of England  

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Diocese of Ely

# Vocations

*Ordination  
Training and  
Curacy*

*An overview of the  
process*



### Before training

Before going to a stage 2 panel you will likely begin working with your (A)DDO or the DDO to consider training options. You may go to open days or have interviews at colleges before then deciding, with the DDO, on the best pathway for you. The final decision as to your training pathway belongs to the Bishop.

Information about the various Theological Education Institutions (TEIs) can be found here: [Your pathway | The Church of England](#)

Training is provided by the national church, but the level of funding provided depends on your age at the start of training.

Age	Band	Sufficient for
< 32 years	1	3 years full time
32- 39 years	2	2 years full time
40 - 54 years	3	3 years part time
55 and over	4	2 years part time

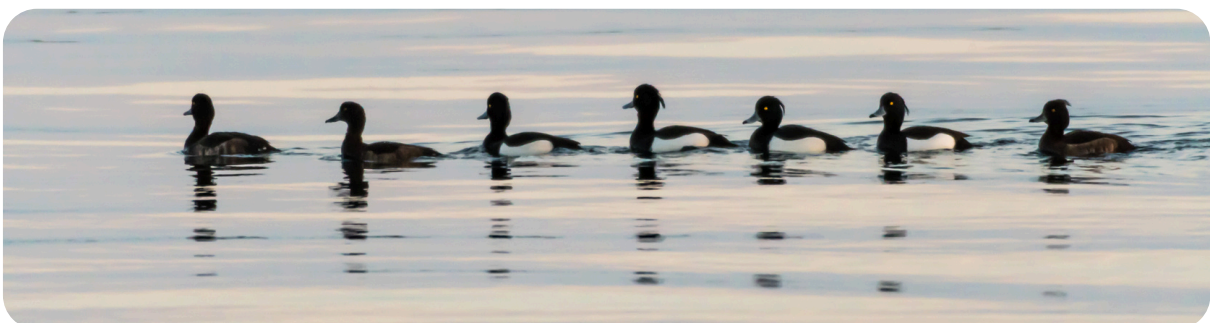


This banding provides a guide as to what form of training you might expect, but each ordinand's training pathway is worked out individually. For example, if you already have some training in theology, it may be that your period of training is shorter than the table indicates. How the diocese allocates the funding from the national church, and the training options offered to each ordinand, are finally decided by the Bishop in consultation with you and the DDO. If you are recommended for training, your training pathway will then be confirmed with your TEI and you can begin preparing in earnest for the start of training and the changes that may bring.

### Deferring Training

You can defer the start of your training for up to three years after a stage 2 recommendation. (For example, if you attended a stage 2 panel in March 2025, the latest you could begin training would be September 2027).

There are a variety of personal circumstances that mean deferring the start of training may be a good idea. Please consider the needs of your household, including how schooling for any children might best dovetail with training and curacy (note: curacy is usually three years, although pioneer curates can be offered a five-year curacy).





## Finance

All ordinands have their tuition fees paid for. Means tested maintenance payments are made to those in full time training. Non-residential, part time students receive a personal allowance and travel expenses.

If you find yourself in hardship as an ordinand, then there are several funds that you can apply to. Please approach the DDO who can point you in the right direction.





### SpLD, neurodiversity, and health related matters

You may enter the discernment process already knowing about a special education need you have, or with a diagnosis for neurodiversity, or a health related matter. Or, something may begin to come to light through discernment.

In either case it is good to alert the TEI as soon as possible. Where it has not previously been done, TEIs can arrange assessments that will then lead to a report recommending reasonable adjustments that should help you through your training. Any diagnoses or assessments by the TEI should be passed on by you to the DDO to ensure reasonable adjustments are also put in place for curacy.





### The role of the diocese during training

The DDO will want to stay in touch with you during your training. They will come and visit you, or talk to you online, at least once or twice a year. If you have any questions or concerns, then the DDO is always available for you to arrange a conversation with. We seek to foster an open three-way relationship between you, your TEI, and the Diocese.

Your TEI will produce an interim-report which will indicate how you are getting on and if there are any particular areas of development still needed. Any concerns will have already been talked about with you and the DDO. This interim report is issued before you are offered a curacy. Please note that completing the training does not always lead to ordination and a curacy: there are occasions when this would not be suitable.

At Stage 2 you are recommended for *training*. The recommendation for *ordination* is given by your TEI.



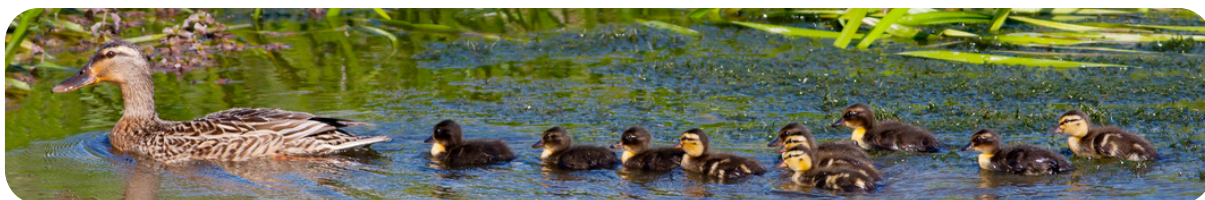


## Thinking about curacy

In January of your penultimate year, you will receive a curacy profile form which asks you to write about the kind of curacy you are looking for. There is then the opportunity to go through this form (around early March) with you, and your partner or spouse (if applicable), because decisions about your curacy will have implications for your whole household and it is important that these are talked about openly and are fully understood.

The DDO then works with others in the Diocese, and with the Bishop, to think about possible curacies for each ordinand. In June, we will either write to you suggesting a curacy for you to consider or informing you that you have been “released” and are free to look at curacies in other dioceses. We often have more ordinands hoping for a stipendiary curacy than we have funding for. Self-supporting curacies should always be available within the diocese. If you have been recommended as ‘assistant’ focus, a stipendiary curacy will not be available.

If you have been offered a curacy in this diocese, what happens after that depends on whether you, and the potential training incumbent, feel able to accept the curacy or whether there needs to be some further reflection. You are only able to explore one curacy at a time. It is possible that if you turn down the first suggestion that you may then be “released”, enabling you to look for curacies in other dioceses.





### Looking to ordination

If you are to be a curate in this diocese you will be ordained deacon at Petertide in Ely Cathedral. Just before this there is a retreat of 3-4 days where all those to be ordained deacon join with those who are about to be priested. (More information about this can be found in the ordination handbook).

