

**THE APPOINTMENT
PROCESS FOR DEANS**

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1. Overview of process for choosing Deans

An overview of the process for appointments can be found [here](#).

2. Commencing the appointment process

Once it is known that a Deanery is to become vacant, the Diocesan Bishop will need to liaise with the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments (ASA) to set out an outline timetable for the process of selecting the next Dean. This will be essential because the process is critically dependent on a number of bodies electing members of the selection panel, the Appointments Secretaries setting aside dates to visit the Cathedral, the city and the diocese to conduct consultations and the number of meetings that will be required by the selection panel. This outline timetable will be finalised once the Chair of the panel is in place.

For Cathedrals where the appointment is made by the Crown, the Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary will be involved at this stage. For a Cathedral where the patronage is vested in any trust body, such trust(s) will be involved at this stage. In the case of Sheffield Cathedral, the representative of the trust which is the patron of the specific appointment under consideration will be consulted.

The ASA will manage the administration associated with the process. The costs associated with the appointment will be borne locally but whether this should be met by the DBF, the cathedral or both will be a matter for local discussion between the diocesan bishop and the cathedral. The Appointments Secretaries' costs will be covered by their own departments.

3. Appointment and role of the selection panel

3.1 Membership of the panel

The panel will be chaired by a lay person who is a communicant Anglican and who has wide and senior experience in public life. He or she is likely to be connected with the part of the country in which the cathedral is located. The appointment of the Chair will be made by the Archbishop of the Province after consultation with the Diocesan Bishop and, for Crown Deaneries, the Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary and where applicable the trust patron. In the case of Sheffield Cathedral, the representative of the trust which is the patron of the specific appointment under consideration will be consulted.

The Archbishop will invite the Bishop (and Downing Street for a Crown Deanery, and where applicable the trust patron(s)) to put forward suitable names for this role and to comment on each other's proposals, prior to inviting the person to take up this role.

The role of the Chair is to be a facilitator and guardian of fair process and to ensure that all relevant voices are heard before the final decision is made.

The other members of the selection panel will be:

- The Diocesan Bishop
- A lay member elected by, and from, the Bishop's Council of the diocese. This person should not be a member of the Cathedral Chapter
- A member of the College of Canons who is not a member of the Chapter, elected by the college
- A member of the clergy with current or recent experience of cathedral ministry in a similar context to the vacant cathedral. This person will be chosen by the Archbishop of the Province from a panel of Deans and Residentiary Canons. This panel will have been appointed by the Archbishops after consultation with the Chair of the Deans and the Deans elected to General Synod. (S)he would be ineligible for consideration for this post and should not be from the diocese or cathedral concerned
- The Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary, representing the Crown, and the ASA are non-voting members. The ASA will be Secretary to the panel
- Where the Bishop, or a trust body, is the patron of the Cathedral, the two lay Chapter members appointed under the 1986 Patronage (Benefices) Measure will also be part of the selection panel. This is also the case for St Albans
- One representative of any trust body which is a patron of the cathedral in question. In the case of Sheffield Cathedral the representative of the trust which is patron for the appointment under consideration will exercise the vote. The representative of the other trust will be non-voting

The relevant nominating bodies will be contacted by the ASA and invited to make their nominations to the panel by an agreed date. As soon as the panel is known all members will be advised. The Chair of the panel will wish to decide at what stage and to whom this information is publicised. The Cathedral Council will need to be formally advised.

There may be cases where, because of the unusual significance and challenges of the Cathedral's ministry, there would be an advantage in involving an additional member in the panel. The Chair, having agreed with the Diocesan Bishop, may agree to the presence of a non-voting member as a specialist adviser.

3.2 Role of the panel

The role of the panel will be to:

- Agree the role specification of the new Dean and the skills and qualities (s)he requires
- Identify a short list of candidates
- Discuss the details of the selection process
- Carry out the selection process including the interviews
- Vote on the preferred candidate.

Members of the group will need to have sufficient time to commit to this process and also be ready to take part in training to develop good practice in interviewing techniques if required.

3.3 Meetings of the panel

There will be at least three meetings of the panel.

The first meeting will be held to:

- i) Discuss the nature of the selection process that will be followed, e.g. balance of interview and presentation, one interview panel or several, agree shortlisting criteria, whether testing might be used, who candidates should meet prior to interview etc.
- ii) Agree the nature of the role and the type of person being sought.

The second meeting will be held to:

- i) Identify the candidates for further consideration and interview.

The third meeting will be held to:

- i) Consider short listed candidates in more depth and to conduct interviews
- ii) To select the preferred candidate.

4. Determining the needs of the role

4.1 Statements of Need

The Secretary to the panel will co-ordinate the production of the following documents to assist the panel in this:

- A statement from the Chapter outlining the challenges facing the cathedral and the qualities they would like to see in the next Dean
- A statement from the Bishop outlining his perspective on the challenges facing the cathedral, and his requirements in the next Dean.

The Chapter are also able to request a meeting with the Bishop and, where applicable, the relevant trust patron.

For appointments to Crown Deaneries, the Appointments Secretaries will visit the diocese to produce a confidential Statement of Needs. For other Deaneries the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments will undertake this work. The Chair of the Panel, with the Diocesan Bishop and where applicable the representative of the trust patron (in the case of Sheffield Cathedral this will be the representative of the trust for the appointment under consideration), will decide whether he or she should have a colleague in this. The Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary is usually replaced by the Dean on the appointment panel.

Consultations will be held with representatives of the wider church and community. Members of the Cathedral Council should always be consulted. The Secretaries and the Chair of the panel will agree whom they should meet

and advice will be required from the Bishop and the Cathedral. The arrangements for these meetings are normally made by the Cathedral.

These statements will be made available to the selection panel and to the candidate as he or she is considering an offer.

4.2 Finalising the role specification

This will be the main task for the first meeting of the selection panel.

The documents set out above will be sent to all members of the selection panel prior to their first meeting, at which they will discuss and finalise the role specification. This will incorporate information derived from the chapter's statement, the bishop's statement and the consultation. It will be made available to those who express an interest in being considered for the role.

5. **Finding the candidates**

5.1 Announcement of the vacancy and search

Every vacancy will either be announced or advertised, as decided by the Chair of the selection panel following consultation with the panel.

Given that there is no longer a central database for sourcing candidates, the Chair of the Panel may wish to widen the possible pool of candidates by sharing the details of a role with those who might be able to draw it to the attention of suitable candidates. These might include other bishops, the national CMEAC Adviser, Deans of Women's Ministry and the Archbishops' Advisers for Appointments and Development amongst others. It is important that potential candidates approached in this way are aware that they will need to apply as other candidates and that they are considered against the same criteria at the shortlisting stage.

The ASA will manage the administration associated with the process.

5.2 Long list of names and short listing

The panel will be sent all application forms and are then invited to complete shortlisting paperwork. These papers would then be reviewed at the second meeting of the panel and candidates for interview identified.

The Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments will contact unsuccessful candidates and ensure that opportunities for feedback on why they have not been shortlisted are offered to them. Successful candidates will be contacted to schedule an interview. The Diocesan Bishop and the Dean on the panel may also wish to make themselves available to provide feedback.

5.3 Candidate confidentiality

Confidentiality should be maintained at all times. Best endeavours should be taken to ensure that candidates are not in a position to discover the identity of others at any stage throughout the recruitment process. Candidates are clearly free to share their candidature but if others involved in the process share this

information, it can cause difficulties for the candidate and their families. If the Diocesan bishop is seeking additional references, he or she may also make it clear to referees that his or her request should be kept confidential.

5.4 Monitoring diversity

In order to monitor the contribution of selection and development policies to a diverse senior leadership in the Church, diversity monitoring information needs to be collected. The ASA office will manage this process.

6. Candidate briefing prior to interviews

It is recommended that shortlisted candidates are given the opportunity to talk to somebody about the vacancy and the diocese prior to interview.

The Chair and Diocesan Bishop may wish to nominate a person who is available to meet with the candidates prior to interview and give them an outline of the cathedral, diocese, role and current issues and priorities. This person will need to be kept in touch with the thinking of the selection panel so that they have a clear understanding of the challenges of the role. They will not take part in the interviews. This person may be a member of the Chapter.

Some dioceses may use a group to brief candidates prior to interview. This will allow candidates to ask questions about the diocese. The panel may also consider that candidates should meet with Chapter prior to interview. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that candidates build up as wide a possible picture of the cathedral, its mission and ministry. It should be made clear that neither of these are part of the assessment process.

7. Selection processes

7.1 Interview structure

The detail of the selection processes will need to be flexible and designed for the post and context. The selection panel will agree the process at its first meeting and it is essential that candidates are aware of the process. Interviews will be mandatory – the panel will decide on the nature of any presentations or other selection tools.

Interviews should be structured and appropriate for the level and kind of post. It is hoped that all panel members are appropriately skilled as interviewers to select at this level. The Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments can provide a briefing. Preparing and structuring the interview can help improve its usefulness in predicting how a candidate will undertake the role and also assist in the comparison of candidates.

The interview will look at the role specification and the specific challenges of the role and consider the skills, experience and strengths of the candidates against these areas. It may also include an exploration of vocational issues relating to

the candidates' individual ministry and how their calling and experience will enable them to fulfil the needs of this particular role.

The Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments will record the evaluation of candidates. This should be completed on all candidates as it will assist in feedback to unsuccessful candidates, and the induction of the preferred candidate.

7.2 Individual meeting with the Bishop

The Diocesan Bishop will have a one-to-one meeting with all the candidates prior to the vote being taken. This will be timetabled into the selection day. This one-to-one meeting is very important as it is vital that the candidate and Bishop feel able to develop a successful and effective working relationship. It is possible that either the Bishop or the candidate may decide that this appointment is not right following this meeting.

7.3 Additional selection methods

The interview is an important part of the selection process but it is also useful to build up an understanding of a candidate's strengths and gaps against the profile via other means, which might include:

i) *Presentations*

These are usually prepared in advance on a topic specified by the panel. They demonstrate ability to present knowledge and lateral thinking and to communicate vision and ideas about areas of work relevant to the role.

ii) *Exposition of a biblical passage*

Candidates would be requested to prepare a brief talk on a particular biblical text. This would give insights into someone's teaching style, their ability to communicate theological ideas and to engage people.

iii) *Tests*

There are different schools of thought on the value of testing as part of a selection process. They can be useful as a way of identifying areas that it would be useful to explore further with candidates but it is important that they are used carefully. It is advisable to get professional advice if the use of tests is being considered and the ASA will be available to support in this.

7.4 Identifying the candidate for appointment

The preferred candidate will be identified by a majority vote amongst the five voting members (or seven where two lay Chapter members have been appointed under the 1986 Cathedrals Measure, for cathedrals where the Bishop is the patron and for St Albans, or eight where there is a trust patron). The Bishop must be one of the majority, as should the representative of the trust patron which has patronage of the appointment under consideration and the lay Chapter members where they are on the panel.

It is recommended that, if it is possible, the panel identify a second candidate in case the first candidate is unwilling or unable to take up the role. This will mean that the panel would not need to reconvene.

8. Offer and appointment

Appropriate arrangements should be made for the candidate to visit the house, have full information about the stipend and other financial details (including the expense of running the house) and to ensure he or she has a full understanding about the role, its challenges and benefits before deciding whether to accept it.

The preferred candidate should also be encouraged to consult, in confidence, with a limited number of people about the suitability of the appointment, including their Diocesan Bishop and spiritual director.

Once it is clear that the preferred candidate will accept the role the Chair of the selection panel will need to advise the Archbishop of the Province.

9. Next steps

9.1 Medical forms and DBS checks

The office of the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments will arrange for a medical examination and DBS check of the candidate. Please click [here](#) to open the Church of England's *Practice Guidelines: Safer Recruitment*. The purpose of the medical is to ascertain whether there are any medical issues the Church and the candidate need to take into account on taking up the appointment. The ASA will provide further details.

9.2 Crown Appointments

For appointments to Cathedrals where the Crown is patron, once the above checks have been satisfactorily completed, the Archbishop of the Province will write to the Prime Minister with the Church's nomination. The Prime Minister will submit the name to The Queen for her approval. An offer of appointment will be sent to the candidate from Downing St.

9.3 Bishops' Appointments (and an Appointment where a Trust Patron is involved)

Once the above checks have been satisfactorily completed, the Bishop, or where applicable the trust patron in consultation with the bishop, will send an offer letter to the candidate.

9.4 Paperwork

On completion of the interview process, the ASA needs to ensure that:

- i) Any paperwork on candidates held by the group is destroyed
- ii) One set of paperwork on candidates is held on file for six months, at which point it should be destroyed
- iii) A diversity monitoring form is completed.

9.5 Feedback

Each candidate should be entitled to feedback as to why they have not been successful in their application. At the end of an interview process it is helpful if the panel agree the messages to be passed back to unsuccessful candidates. Feedback will either be done by the Bishop, the Dean on the panel, or the ASA.

9.6 Announcement

For a Crown Appointment, a mutually convenient announcement date for the diocese and Downing St will be found. It is likely that a simultaneous announcement will be made on the Downing St website and in the diocese.

For an appointment where the Bishop or a trust is patron, the diocese will arrange the announcement – where applicable, in consultation with the trust patron.

The Chair and the Diocesan Bishop will wish to ensure that the new Dean has the appropriate support from the Diocesan Communications Officer at this stage.