This advice has been issued by the Archbishops’ Council for information and to assist the development of good practice. It does not constitute formal guidance or directions under the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) legislation.

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A) INTRODUCTION

This section provides advice on how to produce role descriptions. Person specifications are covered later.

A role description describes a role at the time of writing. It describes what the role holder is required to do to carry out the role effectively and can be used for a variety of purposes:

(i) To provide a clear description of the role for applicants and those involved in the appointments process;
(ii) To clarify roles and responsibilities for existing role holders
(iii) To inform training and development needs
(iv) To inform Ministerial Development Review

Examples are provided within this advice, purely for illustrative purposes, to show how the advice might be applied in a particular context. Those making use of the examples should not regard them as definitive, and should feel free to adapt them as required.

A role description is a technical document and is a fundamental part of the appointments process. Each diocese has its own arrangements for supporting appointments. You are strongly advised to contact your archdeacon or diocesan office to ensure that the completed role description complies with best practice. If the role description is to fulfil its purpose, it will need to command the support of the parish. We therefore also recommend that role descriptions are approved by PCCs.
B) WRITING A ROLE DESCRIPTION: OVERVIEW

There are four principles to follow when writing a role description:

1. ROLE – NOT THE PERSON
Describe the requirements of the role not the person in it. Describe the responsibilities and functions of the role, not how they are discharged by the current role holder.

2. ANALYSIS – NOT LISTS
Summarise the functions of the role; don’t write a list of the tasks that are carried out by the role holder (see guidance on the purpose of the role below).

3. FACTS – NOT JUDGEMENTS
The role description should be a clear, factual record of what the role holder is required to do. Do not under-state or over-state the requirements of the role – try to describe them objectively and accurately.

4. TIMING
Describe the role being done, or required to be done, now and in the foreseeable future.

The role description should be reviewed once the post holder has been in office for six months, and this should be clearly stated on the role description. Subsequently, it should be reviewed as required (perhaps every 5 years).

Role descriptions should be no more than 5 pages long. The role description should describe the core of the role in broad terms; fine details are not necessary. Also, take care not to repeat the same information in different sections.
C) OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Parish Statement of Needs
Under Section 11 (1) (a) of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986, the PCC is required to produce ‘a statement describing the conditions, needs and traditions of the parish’.

Bishop’s statement
If requested by the PCC under Section 11 (1) (e) of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986, the bishop produces ‘a statement in writing …… describing in relation to the benefice the needs of the diocese and the wider interests of the Church’.

Role description
The role description should be closely derived from the statement of needs produced by the parish (and the bishop’s statement, if there is one). The role description should be shared with the parish and be supported by it. However, it is a technical document, and parishes will find it helpful to take advice from their diocesan office on how it should be drawn up and approved.

Person specification
This is produced from the role description, the statement of needs, and the bishop’s statement (if there is one).

Advertisement
If the post is advertised, the advertisement will need to be consistent with the above.

Terms and conditions
These will need to be agreed before the post is advertised.

The relationship between these documents and the appointing process is shown in visual form overleaf.

General expectations of a priest
The Ordinal
The Canons
The learning outcomes approved by the House of Bishops
Assessment at end of curacy

Ministerial Development Review and objectives
The role description may be referred to, but should not be formally reviewed at every MDR, although it should be reviewed as required (perhaps at least once every 5 years). MDR focuses on the objectives – which would also include some personal development objectives, which would not necessarily directly relate to the needs of the parish. However, one of the objectives that might spring from MDR could be to revise the role description and consult over how it might be amended.
CME  

MDR  

Person specification 

Role description 

Application takes up post 

Application 

Induction process 

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Starting up the post 

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Development 

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The applying process?
D) ROLE DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

Diocese of ______

Role description signed off by:  ________________

Date:       XX.20XX

To be reviewed next on XX.20.XX

1 Details of post

Role title (as on licence):

Name of benefice:

Episcopal area:

Archdeaconry:

Deanery:

Initial point of contact on terms of service¹: ___________________________

This would normally be specified as the Archdeacon of X or the Bishop of Y.

2 Role Purpose

General
This is likely to apply to most parish appointments in the diocese. It might be based on - or refer to - the diocesan mission strategy.

Specific
This will relate to the tasks and challenges that are specific to the parish concerned.

3 Key contacts

Generic

¹ Pastoral care and oversight are ultimately the responsibility of the Diocesan Bishop, who shares this responsibility with (and in some cases delegates it to) members of his staff team. The post holder might relate to different members of that team at different times. The person above is designated as the one to whom the post holder would normally relate on matters to do with terms of service and welfare.
These might include:
- Parish ministry team
- Churchwardens
- PCC
- Deanery
- Local head teachers

Specific
List other contacts specific to the post.

Speculative
List potential contacts that could be developed.

Supportive:

These might include
- Designated initial point of contact [on terms of service]
- The Archdeacon of X (who will review the role description when you are 6 months in post)
- The diocesan CME officer
- The Bishop’s Officer for Pastoral Care and Counselling
- The area dean
- The Director of Mission and Ministry

4 Role context and any other relevant information

5 Benefice summary:

Parish(es):
- Patron(s): the Bishop of X

PCCs:
- Churchwardens:
- Ministers:
- Buildings:
- Population:
- Usual Sunday Attendance:
Parish share:
(provide both amount requested and percentage paid)

Resolution A,B,C:

Church tradition:

Pastoral reorganisation proposals:

Outreach/service to the wider community by the parish:

Business element (e.g. major building project or hall used by variety of tenants)
E) NOTES ON EACH SECTION OF THE TEMPLATE

1) Role details
2) The purpose of the role (generic and specific)
3) Key contacts/relationships (generic, specific, speculative and supportive)
4) Role context and any other relevant information

Please read through these notes thoroughly before completing each section of the form. Where possible, try to make the answers short but to the point. Answers should describe the role as it is now and for the foreseeable future, not as it should or might be.

Further examples can be found at the model descriptions (G and H).

SECTION 1 Role details

Please enter the ‘role title’ (the one on the licence) and the name of the parish or benefice. If the role is related to a parish or benefice within a deanery, please also enter its name.

Include subsidiary appointments such as chaplaincies and diocesan roles that are not separate appointments (and rough proportions of time).

Whilst the diocesan bishop has ultimate responsibility for all the clergy in his diocese, this is not something that he can possibly discharge personally for all of them. In practice, he cannot be everyone’s port of call, and some clergy will have a closer working relationship with their archdeacons. It is therefore important that all clergy are clear where they are meant to go if they have a point of concern about their ministry and their terms and conditions in order to ensure that people do not fall through the gaps. This person might also be responsible for the office holder’s MDR, but, in many dioceses, this goes through a cycle so that the area or diocesan bishop sees everyone, but only once every few years. It is therefore necessary to ensure that there is someone designated by the bishop to exercise the function of taking initial responsibility for the cleric.

Under the Ecclesiastical Offices (terms of service) legislation, which is expected to come into force towards the end of 2010, a statement of particulars will need to be issued to the post holder. It will need to be consistent with the role description.
SECTION 2 the purpose of the role

It may be easiest to complete this section last after giving thorough consideration to all aspects of the role, and considering the following questions:

• What is the role intended to achieve?
• What would not get done if the role did not exist?

It may be helpful to divide it into two parts, one generic, and one specific.

Generic statement of purpose

This is an accurate and concise statement summarising the overall purpose of the role. This statement should be brief and should not normally be more than 2 or 3 sentences in length.

The purpose does not include a detailed list of how the role is done, nor is it a list of problems, tasks and activities. Be careful not to overdraft.

The generic statement would be appropriate for most parochial appointments in the diocese, and draw on the Ordinal and the Canons and possibly the diocesan mission strategy, and would state the relationship with the bishop, as the person with oversight with whom the cure of souls is shared.

For example

➢ To advance the Kingdom of God in this place through leadership, collaboration and example
➢ In collaboration with the bishop and your colleagues to exercise the cure of souls shared with the bishop in this place and carry out the ministry of word and sacrament
➢ To be rooted in this community and to give its people pastoral support and service (including baptisms, weddings and funerals)

or

To build up the Kingdom of God in this place by
➢ creatively using the many opportunities to develop links with local communities and to be a sign of God’s love to all those who come to work visit or shop in the town centre
➢ building up the existing congregation through the ministry of word and sacrament and the provision of enhanced pastoral care
➢ collaborating with other parishes in the diocese in showing the love of God by responding to local needs

➢ A specific statement, recognising the key challenges of this role for this time around, recognising it as a part of a continuing story, i.e. potentially something quite different from the role the previous incumbent held.
Specific statement of purpose and key responsibilities

This would set out tasks and challenges that were specific to the individual parish and Describe the key areas in which responsibility must be taken in order to fulfil the overall purpose of the role and address its key challenges. It is not necessary to write the responsibilities in order of importance, but try to follow a logical sequence. If there are more than eight, they are probably a list of duties rather than the main responsibilities.

The parish and the diocese may have different perspectives about what the priest’s main priorities should be. It is important to be honest about where there are differences and to ensure that both positions are taken into account. However, whoever is appointed to the post must not be put in the position of having to try and fulfil two incompatible sets of expectations.

The process for listing the main responsibilities could be done as follows.

1. List the relevant key areas of the role, using the checklist at F.

2. For each of these key areas, produce statements setting out
   (i) What is done and to what/with whom, describing a main activity that states the role holder’s responsibility in connection with the activity;
   (ii) what the end results ought to be, describing the reasons for or the end result of the role.

Three possible examples are provided below for working collaboratively, worship and leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working Collaboratively</th>
<th>Worship</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) What is done… and to what/with whom</td>
<td>Encouraging and enabling….. clergy colleagues, churchwardens, PCC, staff and volunteers, to participate fully in planning and decision making, tasks and activities</td>
<td>Planning, organising and conducting a programme of worship…. with others (e.g. Ministry Leadership Team) making appropriate use of resources, music, teaching and preaching,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) With what end result</td>
<td>to ensure that gifts and talents are identified and used effectively to encourage and build up the community of faith</td>
<td>to give glory to God and support the vision and needs for ministry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. When the statements have been drafted, check that:

(i) Together they represent all of the key responsibilities of the role (although the relative importance of each of these may change from year to year);

(ii) They incorporate any specific local and diocesan issues;

(iii) They focus on addressing the role purpose and key challenges of the role, and not tasks or activities;

(iv) Each one is distinct from the others, and describes a specific area in which results may be achieved;

(v) They relate specifically to this role.

For example,

➢ Build a greater sense of unity in order to foster a sense of common purpose and develop greater co-operation between the parishes in the benefice

➢ Make better use of resources and buildings so that mission and outreach are more effective

➢ Forge better links with the benefice’s communities so that the Church can serve them more effectively

or

➢ Maintaining a distinctively Christian witness, and developing existing links with those who have buildings within the parish so that full use is made for opportunities for outreach and service to the local community

➢ Collaborating with other local churches in the town centre to ensure that ministry is provided effectively

➢ Acknowledging and respecting diversity developing unity and a sense of common purpose and involvement and providing well organised and comprehensive pastoral care, so that members of the different congregations are individually and collectively committed to a vision of how to serve the area and advance the gospel.
SECTION 3 Key contacts/relationships

These will vary from post to post, and should be adjusted accordingly.

Briefly describe the significant types of relationships that are important for this role, one helpful way to think of this is in terms of those relationships that are:

*Generic* (e.g. deanery/diocesan)

*Specific* NB this may include a relationship with a sector

*Speculative* – this refers to potential links that have yet to be developed

*Supportive* – these are contacts that will support the cleric in their ministry, and might include the area dean, the archdeacon, anyone to whom the bishop has delegated his authority, the Diocesan Ministry Development Officer, and the Bishop’s Adviser in Pastoral Care and Counselling.

Take care not to duplicate information provided earlier. Describe the overall purpose of these relationships and the type of communication required.
SECTION 4 Role Context and any other relevant information

Briefly explain any aspect of the role not adequately covered in previous sections and which is important in understanding the role.

Think about the role in both an internal and external context:

Internally this might include:

• Special factors that impact on the role, e.g. the parish’s baptism policy or practice on weddings for those who have been divorced

  NB – whilst it is appropriate for the role description to say what has been the parish’s practice, it is not appropriate to put adherence to this in the person specification.

Externally this might include:

• Politics/public relations issues, e.g. rural area previously traumatised by a foot and mouth disease outbreak

*Flexibility and pastoral reorganisation.*

Whilst it is desirable to encourage office holders to be flexible, this needs to be done with some care (for example by encouraging collaboration with colleagues in the deanery and mentioning diocesan strategy). It will be helpful to flag up the likelihood of pastoral reorganisation, but an office holder cannot be bound in advance through the role description actively to support pastoral reorganisation. Role descriptions have a part to play in supporting the mission of the deanery as a whole and ensuring sufficient resources are available, but are about mapping the territory rather than directing the individual office holder.
SECTION 5 Benefice summary

This section should provide relevant factual, quantitative information that describes the responsibilities and scope of the role on an ongoing basis.

Examples of key elements to include are:

• number of licensed ministers relating to the role holder;
• buildings;
• parish share (responsibility for budgets, grants, contracts etc with approximate figures);
• usual Sunday attendance;
• approximate population the role is responsible for; and
• any other dimensions relevant to the role.
NB – this is only a general checklist and it will be important to ensure specific local and diocesan issues are picked up and included where appropriate.

### 1. Mission and outreach

Possible ways this might be expressed include……

- developing a ministry that encourages new people to Christian faith
- supporting existing Christians in evangelism and discipleship so that members of the parish are encouraged to show God’s love in action
- developing relations with community and external organisations to promote positive links with the church
- making full use of opportunities for outreach and service to the community, collaborating where appropriate with other parishes and agencies, so that assistance is provided to the community as effectively as possible
- working with other churches in the deanery to assist in implementing the diocesan mission strategy.

### 2. Leadership and working collaboratively

Possible ways this might be expressed include……

- leading the Church in setting and holding its vision
- inspiring, motivating, challenging and empowering members of the church, individually and collectively, to achieve that vision
- sharing ministry as appropriate and working collaboratively with others, (including clergy colleagues, churchwardens, PCC, staff and volunteers), so that individuals’ gifts and talents are identified and used effectively in any given situation or task
- encouraging and building up the community of faith.

### 3. Worship and preaching

Possible ways this might be expressed include……

- leading worship that gives glory to God, prayerfully, competently and confidently
- planning, organising and conducting a programme of worship that supports the church’s vision and needs for ministry including appropriate use of resources, music, teaching and preaching
- planning, organising and conducting a programme of teaching which supports the Church community, develops its faith and responds to the needs of different ages and levels of faith or knowledge
- reflecting, interpreting and preaching the gospel in a way that will encourage faith development, adapting content and style for different audiences, occasions and purposes.
### 4. Pastoral care

Possible ways this might be expressed include……
- identifying pastoral care needs and ensuring appropriate structures and skills to provide this to the community (including parish visitors, pastoral assistants and other teams)
- giving support to those in need of pastoral care as appropriate, including baptism and marriage preparation, care to the sick and dying, bereavement, individual support and visiting
- communicating effectively and appropriately in both written and verbal form with people of all ages and situations in society, inside and outside the church.
- demonstrating active listening and empathetic behaviour.

### 5. Stewardship and parish organisation

Possible ways this might be expressed include……
- working with the PCC and churchwardens to ensure that structures and resources for parish organisation are appropriate, including clear boundaries and accountabilities of roles
- ensuring that structures, processes and policies in relation to services, weddings, baptisms and funerals, health and safety, financial, fabric, staff management, etc meet diocesan and legal requirements.
- managing his or her time effectively through personal administration, planning and organisation, working in a team, chairing meetings, interpersonal skills and taking appropriate breaks
- following an appropriate pattern of work that enables a full spiritual and personal life, as well as meeting the demands of ministry.

### 6. Personal development and spirituality

This might include……
- continually developing personal skills and knowledge in relation to ministry through courses of study, reading, consultancy, training courses and workshops
- maintaining a prayerful spiritual life with appropriate support networks (including spiritual director or equivalent and regular retreats)
- recognising that s/he is on a life journey involving development of theological understanding and spiritual reflection
- inspiring growth in others through learning and example and by acting as a model of the love of God in action
- care and development of themselves and their personal relationships, including adequate time for family life, friendship, recreation, renewal and personal health, through taking a weekly day off and their full holiday entitlement.
G) MODEL ROLE DESCRIPTION – URBAN PARISH (High Church using BCP)

This example is provided purely for illustrative purposes to show how the advice might be applied in an actual context. The personal qualities required of a good priest can be appropriately expressed in a variety of ways, and will be different in different situations. Those making use of this example should feel free to adapt it as required.

For reference, see also the person specification designed for the same parish.

Diocese of ______

Role description signed off by: The Archdeacon of Y

Date: XX.20XX

To be reviewed: six months after commencement of appointment

1 Details of Post

Role title (as on licence): Vicar
Name of benefice: St M’s, ********

Episcopal area: X
Archdeaconry: Y
Deanery: Z

In this diocese, the initial point of contact on matters to do with terms of service in your area is the Archdeacon of Y.

2 Role purpose

General

To maintain and strengthen the visible presence of the Church in the town by
➢ nurturing the existing congregation through divine worship, orthodox teaching and pastoral care
➢ creatively using the many opportunities to develop links with local communities and to be a sacramental sign of God’s love to all those who come to work, visit or shop in the town centre
➢ collaborating with other parishes in the deanery and diocese in showing the love of God by responding to local needs
Specific

1. To develop a vision of how to serve the area and advance the life of the Church in this place so that the different and dispersed congregations attending the 5 weekly services are united behind it and actively committed, both individually and collectively, to its advancement;

2. To be a good steward of the existing resources (including a fine, well maintained building, strong musical tradition, with 3 choirs based in the parish, clergy, lay volunteers, and music team) and, in collaboration with the friends of St M’s, support fund raising in connection with the fabric and music provision, so that lay ministry and pastoral care are revitalised and resources are used effectively in the service of the Church;

3. To teach, interpret and preach the faith of the Church by adapting the content and style for different audiences, occasions and purposes (using doctrine, pastoral care, ethical teaching, biblical interpretation and other models) and to develop your own faith through regular prayer and broad study, in order to deepen and develop the faith of all those attending services, both the different worshipping congregations and occasional visitors;

4. To build on the existing ministry to the choir and choir families and find ways of extending it towards other people, and ensure that a full range of teaching is available for different ages and levels of faith or knowledge, in order to widen the age profile of the congregation;

5. To plan, organise and conduct worship especially drawing on the tradition of the BCP that gives glory to God and makes use of the rich existing musical and liturgical resources in the parish so that those attending are inspired on their spiritual journey, have their love of God and his Son Jesus Christ deepened, and are encouraged to express that love in prayer and action;

6. Whilst maintaining a distinctively Christian witness, to make new positive links and develop the existing links with community and external organisations based in the parish and town, including civic authorities, the County Council, educational establishments, and local businesses with buildings within the parish, so that full use is made of opportunities for outreach and service to the community in collaboration with other parishes and ecumenically;

7. To maintain and develop a prayerful spiritual life (including retreats, continuing ministerial education and personal study) so that you are a walking example of the Good Shepherd and display evidence of deep pastoral concern and love for all members of the congregation and the wider community;

8. To work with the PCC and churchwardens on developing appropriate structures and resources for parish organisation. This will include clear boundaries, processes policies and accountabilities of roles in relation to services, weddings, baptisms and funerals, health and safety, finances and fabric etc in order to meet diocesan and legal requirements and ensure that it is well equipped to strengthen the presence of the Church in this town.
3 Key contacts

Generic
Ministry team of:
Honorary assistant curate (also chaplain to ** School)
1 Reader
6 chalice administrators
retired clergy active in the parish

PCC
Deanery link group at which representatives from all the churches in the deanery meet once a month
Other parishes and churches in the Town centre
*** School which uses the Church as a venue for special school services and performances – the Chaplain is a parish NSM

Specific
Crèche and Sunday school administrators
Director of Music, verger, assistant verger
Committees including
- Outreach group, chaired by the NSM curate, which recommends charities to the PCC for support and organised charitable fundraising activities
- Concert Committee responsible for organising 30 free lunchtime concerts a year
- Social Group
- Stewardship or Resources Group
- Sanctuary Guild

Three housegroups
Friends of St M’s (established as a separate trust to help with repairs to the maintenance of the church fabric, buildings, contents and surroundings and for the purchase of new music) – the Vicar will act as one of the trustees

The adjacent United Reformed Church, with whom the Church shares a Palm Sunday procession and service, a joint Lent study course and a Friday lunch club

Speculative
Organisations in the parish including
The Town Hall
Citizens Advice Bureau, Blind Society, Cruse, Local Hospice
Most of the town’s shopping centre and many local businesses

Opportunities to develop further links with
Other schools and educational establishments in the parish
Chamber of Commerce  
Local Authority and the Borough Council  
Inter-faith initiatives – especially with the local Bangladeshi community  

supportive  
The Archdeacon of Y  
The Diocesan Ministry Development Officer  

4 Role context and any other relevant information  

The vicar will need to be able to respond to the challenge of a parish with very few residents  
and five separate congregations that come mainly from outside the parish.  

The county’s racial mix is less than the national average, but the town’s racial mix is greater  
than the national average. As funding is on a county basis, this leads to the town being  
comparatively underfunded.  

The vicar will need to take advantage of opportunities to promote diversity and challenge  
racism.  

There is potential for leading inter-faith activity in the parish and for developing closer links  
with representatives of the Bangladeshi community in the town.  

5 Benefice summary:  
Parish(es): 1  
Patron(s): the Bishop of X  
PCCs: 1  
Churchwardens: 2  
Ministers: 1 NSM curate, 1 reader, 6 chalice administrators plus the help and support of retired  
clergy within the congregation  
Parish paid staff: verger, Director of Music  
Parish unpaid staff: assistant verger  
Buildings: 1 church listed grade X  
1 additional building, with meeting room, small kitchen, choir rehearsal room  
and living accommodation for full time verger  
Churchyard: closed for burials and maintained by the local authority
Population: X

Usual Sunday Attendance:

Electoral roll:

Parish share: £XXX paid in full

Resolution A,B,C: No

Church Tradition: Catholic - BCP

Pastoral Reorganisation proposals: None

Outreach/service to the wider community by the parish

➢ Members of the congregation work as volunteers with a soup kitchen that operates just outside the church, and collections are made regularly to support its work.

➢ The Church is used by civic and other organisations for special services

➢ The church provides 30 lunchtime concerts a year as part of its mission to the town.
H) MODEL ROLE DESCRIPTION for multi-parish rural benefice describing itself as ‘open evangelical’

This example is provided purely for illustrative purposes to show how the advice might be applied in an actual context. The personal qualities required of a good priest can be appropriately expressed in a variety of ways, and will be different in different situations. Those making use of this example should feel free to adapt it as required.

For reference, see also the person specification designed for the same parish

Diocese of _____

Role description signed off by: The Archdeacon of Y Date: XX.20XX

To be reviewed: six months after commencement of appointment

1 Details of post

Role title (as on licence): Rector
Name of benefice:
Deanery:
Archdeaconry:
Episcopal area:
Initial point of contact on terms of service: the Suffragan Bishop of X

2 Role purpose

General
➢ To help discern God’s will for our churches.
➢ To enable the churches to minister to our members.
➢ To help us reach out to the communities in which we live.

Specific
1. To be a person of prayer able to help develop the prayer life within the parishes, sustaining Bible based preaching and teaching the Gospel of Christ;
2. To value the diversity of styles of worship and musical traditions and feel comfortable leading them;
3. To relate to people in the local communities, and provide pastoral care and support;
4. Through understanding the opportunities and difficulties of ministry in a rural area to attract those on the fringe and draw them into the life of the church and initiate fresh ways of drawing in the uncommitted;
5. To encourage and develop links with other Christian communities within the parishes;
6. To help develop ministry amongst young people and children, and particularly to build on the opportunities provided by our schools;
7. To develop and support cells and other groups and networks;
8. To help develop greater co-operation between the different parishes.

3 Key contacts
Key contacts/relationships within the benefice and deanery include:

Generic
- Ministry Team (stipendiary curate, non-stipendiary minister, two lay readers and lay worship leaders supported by the administrator)
- Members of the PCCs.
- Deanery chapter
- Head teachers of the local schools (one controlled, one voluntary aided, one non-Church secondary)

Specific
- Regular meetings of all the churchwardens in the benefice
- Local preachers group

Speculative
- A youth worker or fresh expressions worker (part-time) to explore ways of attracting youth and young adults

Supportive
The Archdeacon of Y who will help you review this role description when you are six months into post
The Diocesan CME Adviser
The Bishop’s Officer for Pastoral Care and Counselling
The Area Dean
Parish consultants are available via the diocesan office

4 Role context and any other relevant information
The congregations include people of a variety of theological traditions. The Rector must be able to work with everyone, but the predominant tradition is open evangelical.
The parishes run preparation courses which parents who bring their children for baptism are expected to attend.

5 Benefice summary
Parish(es): 4

Patron(s): the Bishop of X, Lord Emsworth, the personal representatives of the late B W Wooster, Simeon’s Trustees.
PCCs: 4

Churchwardens: 8

Ministers: stipendiary curate, non-stipendiary curate (NSM), ordinand in training; 3 lay readers, 7 lay worship leaders

Buildings: 5 parish churches (2 grade 1 listed, 2 grade 2 listed); mission hall; rectory & vicarage (stipendiary curate); 2 church schools

Churchyards: 5 all open

Population: 4,000

Average Sunday Attendance: 207

Parish share: £79,500 pa, paid in full.

Expenses: Reimbursed in full

Resolution A, B, C: Not passed, though opinions differ. We currently have both men and women clergy.

Church tradition: Varied but predominantly open evangelical

Pastoral reorganisation proposals: None

Outreach/service to the wider community: Church schools and state secondary school. Agricultural college
WRITING A PERSON SPECIFICATION

This advice has been issued by the Archbishops’ Council for information and to assist the development of good practice. It does not constitute formal guidance or directions under the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009.

Date: October 2009

A) GENERAL

1. Person specifications support the process of discernment through which candidates, patrons, parish representatives and others involved in the appointment process discover whether someone has been called by God to serve in a particular place by
   • focussing on the attributes that are essential to carry out the duties of the post;
   • listing the qualities and skills that will enable someone to carry out the duties of the post to a good standard; and
   • avoiding unnecessary assumptions that might deter good candidates.

2. The person specification
   • describes the skills and knowledge and experience which a person will need to have, or be able to acquire, in order to do the job well;
   • uses explicit terms (for example, rather than referring to ‘good preaching skills’, say something like ‘needs to be able to use a variety of presentation styles effectively, particularly in children’s worship, in order to attract people to the Gospel and improve their understanding of it’. Instead of ‘pastoral experience’ say ‘needs to be able to provide examples of how their pastoral ministry has been effective’. The important thing is to be as specific as possible about the requirements of the particular post).
   • avoids subjective or irrelevant criteria.

3. A good person specification is concise and straightforward and is drawn up directly from the role description. The criteria set out in the person specification are the only criteria against which applicants should be assessed at the short listing, test and interview stages. The criteria must be specific, measurable (where appropriate), justifiable in relation to the job requirements and not be unnecessarily restrictive. Measurability does not necessarily imply something numerical, but should enable those assessing candidates to make fair comparisons.

4. It is often helpful to specify whether a particular attribute is essential or desirable. However, describing a particular attribute as essential should only be done after careful consideration, as it will not be possible to make an appointment unless there is at least one candidate who meets all the essential criteria.
5. For information about role descriptions, please see the separate advice.

6. It may be useful to list the criteria under the following categories, although they are only there to provide a general structure to help when preparing selection criteria.

(i) **Qualifications/training**

7. In the case of clergy, what is essential will be similar for most incumbent status positions, and will include satisfactory completion of assessment at the end of Initial Ministerial Education.

(ii) **Experience**

8. It is important remember that people can be well able to carry out the duties of the post without necessarily having previous experience in that area of work. For example, someone ordained later in life who had run a large organisation effectively might be just as suitable as someone with many years of experience in parishes.

9. Valuable experience can be gained in a variety of ways, (including before ordination) for example, through paid work in another sector, as a reader, through charity work, hobbies, bringing up a family, etc. Consider the type, level and quality of experience. The stipulation of length of experience should be used with caution, as quality of experience and what it enables someone to do competently is usually more important. (It is possible to have had 10 years of bad experience!) In any case, stipulating a length of time may be discriminatory under the age regulations. Instead it would be better to require the ability to supervise and motivate with experience of conducting staff reviews/appraisals, or to include overseeing the successful completion of a building project or a development appeal in the list of desirable qualities.

(iii) **Knowledge, skills and competencies**

10. This covers the specific skills and knowledge the cleric is required to bring to the role and describes the behaviour needed for effective performance. Again it is important to be specific. Rather than suggesting that someone needs to be an effective communicator, you should ask what kind of communication. If it is about preaching, what kind of preaching is needed in the parish? For example, ability to preach concisely and interestingly in a variety of styles and media to a range of ages.

(iv) **General Attributes**

11. This section should refer to particular aspects of personality that are required to carry out the duties of the post. This area is often the most difficult to test objectively and care should be taken to avoid assumptions or stereotyping. For example, do not say: ‘needs to have a good sense of humour/optimistic temperament’. It would, however, be appropriate to require qualities such as:

- Good interpersonal skills that develop and maintain effective working relationships;
- the ability to work on own initiative;
the ability to talk about how prayer has sustained them on their journey of faith and made them an effective minister.

(v) Other
12. This should be used as necessary to list any criteria not covered by any of the above categories.

13. Care should be taken before including requirements that might disadvantage a disabled person. The Disability Discrimination Act imposes a duty to make reasonable adjustments to working arrangements and premises to prevent or reduce any substantial disadvantage that a disabled applicant would otherwise have. Consideration may, therefore, need to be given to making reasonable adjustments and allocating particular tasks to others. If there are physical requirements associated with the job, then be specific, e.g. ‘must be able to make visits throughout a large multi-parish benefice sometimes out of normal working hours and at short-notice’ and avoid broad statements that make assumptions, such as ‘needs to be able to drive’.

Theological tradition

14. It is not always necessary to specify in the person specification that a candidate must subscribe to a particular theological tradition. Such labels are potentially ambiguous and easily misinterpreted, and may have the effect of putting off some excellent candidates. Instead, it is better for the parish to describe itself and what it wants the person to do. This might include requiring candidates to be supportive of the parish’s tradition or theological ethos, or to be able to operate within the theological and liturgical tradition of the parish, as set out in its statement of needs.

15. It is easy to assume that congregations will prefer someone who, as a matter of personal conviction, actively supports their own theological position rather than merely acquiesces in it. But there are other factors.

- Parishes often contain people with a number of different theological positions.
- Labels can easily mislead. (‘Open evangelical’ may mean different things to different people.)
- Some candidates genuinely want to broaden their experience by working in a tradition that is not their own.
- Clergy change and develop their own theological position over time, and do not necessarily become unsuitable for their posts merely because the parish does not change with them.

Pastoral practice

16. Where the parish has strong views on pastoral issues the role description may specify that this has been the tradition and the practice in the parish. However, the person specification should not attempt to require support for a particular tradition or practice, as other factors will normally be involved, such as the provisions of the Canons, national guidance, policy in the diocese and the need for clergy to have a degree of freedom to exercise their conscience.
B) MODEL PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR AN URBAN PARISH (HIGH CHURCH USING BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER)

This example is provided purely for illustrative purposes to show how the advice might be applied in an actual context. The personal qualities required of a good priest can be appropriately expressed in a variety of ways, and will be different in different situations. Those making use of this example should feel free to adapt it as required.

For reference, see also the role description designed for the same parish.

E = essential and D= desirable

(i) Qualifications/training

Applicants for the post should

a) have been ordained priest within the Church of England, or a Church in communion with it, or a Church whose orders it recognises (E)

b) have satisfactorily completed Initial Ministerial Education (E)

c) be able to demonstrate a capacity to exercise priestly ministry at incumbent status which involves vision setting and team development (E).

d) be able to demonstrate a willingness to engage in further training that enhances the skills of community leadership (D)

(ii) Experience

Candidates equipped for the role will be able to demonstrate experience and understanding in the following areas:

a) responsibility in a complex organisation with substantial resources (for example people and buildings) to manage (E);

b) congregations that include a number of people who worship in a different place from where they live (D);

c) engagement with and pastoral support for people of all ages (D)

d) leading mature and thoughtful all age worship (D);

e) The liturgical tradition that is catholic, orthodox and honours the distinctive gifts of the BCP (D);

f) The care, maintenance and development of buildings (D);
(iii) Knowledge, skills and competencies

They will be able to demonstrate that they possess knowledge, skills and competencies as follows.

a) An ability to make - and build on - links with individuals and community organisations whose involvement with the Church is limited (E)

b) Collaborative working – especially with volunteers and other churches (E)

c) Leadership skills including the ability to motivate, inspire and effectively co-ordinate volunteers (E)

d) Ability to preach well in a variety of styles and formats to a broad range of listeners with varying outlooks, ages and understanding (E)

e) Ability to organise resources (own time, volunteers, buildings, groups of volunteers) effectively to meet a large number of demands (D)

(iv) General Attributes

a) an appreciation of the opportunities provided by this Church’s place within the existing secular structures for developing positive links with those not actively involved in it (E)

b) Evidence of a deep prayer life and ability to draw on a wide range of spiritual resources (E)

c) An ecumenical outlook and willingness to work with other local churches and faith groups (D)

d) Good singing voice (D)

(v) Other

a) A love of the arts in general and church choral music in particular and an understanding of how they can draw people to God (D)

b) An understanding of the part of the Church can play in the life of a community whilst remaining true to its distinctive Christian vision (E)

c) a willingness

➢ to enhance and encourage artistic activity in the Church including 30 concerts and recitals given in the church each year
➢ to be involved in the work of the 3 choirs associated with the church
➢ assist in commissioning new musical settings (D)
C) MODEL PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR RURAL BENEFICE DESCRIBING ITSELF AS ‘OPEN EVANGELICAL’

This example is provided purely for illustrative purposes to show how the advice might be applied in an actual context. The personal qualities required of a good priest can be appropriately expressed in a variety of ways, and will be different in different situations. Those making use of this example should feel free to adapt it as required.

For reference, see also the role description designed for the same parish.

E = essential and D= desirable

(i) Qualifications/Training

Applicants for the post should

a) have been ordained priest within the Church of England, or a Church in communion with it, or a Church whose orders it recognises (E)

b) have satisfactorily completed Initial Ministerial Education (E)

c) be able demonstrate a willingness to engage in ongoing continuing ministerial development appropriate for this post (E)

d) be able to demonstrate a capacity to exercise priestly ministry at incumbent status (E)

(ii) Experience

Candidates equipped for the role will be able to demonstrate experience and understanding in the following areas:

a) equipping and supporting people in developing their talents (E);

b) the opportunities and difficulties of ministry in a rural area (D);

c) leading and managing a team of ordained and lay people (D);

d) working with people of different traditions (D);

e) developing fresh ways of drawing people into church (D);

f) working with young people (D).

(iii) Knowledge, skills and competencies

Suitable candidates will be able to demonstrate that they possess knowledge, skills and competencies as follows.

a) An ability to make - and build on - links with individuals and community organisations whose involvement with the Church is limited (E)
b) Working with others – especially those in the ministry team (E)
c) Leadership skills and an ability to motivate church members (E)
d) Delegating to an administrator and other volunteers (D)

(iv) General Attributes

Suitable candidates will be able to demonstrate the following

a) the ability to teach the Bible and communicate the Gospel to others (E);
b) a personal prayer life and the ability to encourage this in others (E);
c) the ability to lead and inspire others in using their own talents (E);
d) the ability to relate to non-Christians (D).

(v) Other

a) Willingness to encourage a diversity of styles of worship and musical traditions (E);
b) An evangelical faith, whilst being open to other traditions, to those on the fringe and to those outside the church (E).