

# MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW GUIDANCE

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“You did not choose me, but I have chosen you and appointed you to go and bear fruit.”

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**PART 1**  
**INTRODUCTORY**

**1. *The authority of the guidance***

- (1.) This guidance is issued under Regulation 18 of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 and sets out advice in relation to the making and keeping under review arrangements for Ministerial Development Review schemes in dioceses.

**2. *The purpose of Ministerial Development Review***

- (1.) Ministerial Development Review (MDR) facilitates a guided discussion framed around an office holder's ministry. The purpose of the review is to look back and reflect on what has happened over the last year or two of ministry and, informed by that, to look forward to plan, anticipate and develop a clearer vision for what lies ahead. In looking back there is an opportunity to acknowledge all there is to be thankful for and anything that is a matter for lament, and in looking forward to anticipate the changing demands of the role, identify future objectives and areas for potential development.
- (2.) MDR is founded in the assumption that all office holders are responsible to God for the ministry entrusted to them and that they are accountable to the Church and to one another for the way in which it is exercised. Ministry is a gift and a trust for which each individual holds account. Accountability includes a preparedness to grow and develop on the basis of experience and the learning gained from it. It is about affirmation and encouragement as well as challenge.

**3. *Basic principles***

- (1.) MDR is episcopally led. The bishop may wish to delegate some of their functions in this area to others.
- (2.) The bishop is responsible for ensuring that a MDR scheme is provided, in accordance with this guidance as amended from time to time by the Archbishops' Council.
- (3.) All clergy, including those with freehold, should be offered MDR. All clergy on common tenure are required to participate in MDR and arrangements for this should be agreed as part of their conditions of service on appointment and reviewed when circumstances change. Special factors apply in some cases.
- i. Particular care should be taken in cases in which clergy hold two different appointments with responsibilities in different fields and their interrelationship to ensure clarity about the review procedure and who is to conduct it.
  - ii. Any minister with a contract of employment (e.g. a sector minister) is likely to be covered by his or her own employer's scheme; a person employed by an outside body but licensed by the bishop should be within the MDR scheme in respect of the licence. The scope to their review should be appropriate to requirements of the post.
  - iii. Clergy in their title post are subject to review as part of their on-going training and therefore ought not to be part of the standard diocesan MDR process.
- (4.) It is recommended that some form of review take place every year but MDR, in accordance with the regulations, must be carried out not less than every two years. Within that framework, bishops may wish to implement a review cycle in their diocese with different forms of review in alternate years, e.g. an interim review may be carried out as part of the induction process on moving post or assuming additional responsibilities.

## PART 2

### THE PRACTICE OF MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

#### 4. *The Reviewer*

- (1) It is for the bishop to decide who will conduct reviews in their diocese. The bishop will decide whether they wish to conduct reviews themselves. In most dioceses the bishop is unlikely to be able to conduct all reviews themselves but is likely to want to conduct the reviews of their senior clergy. The bishop should appoint reviewers and ensure that they are briefed, trained and continue to meet the required standard.
- (1A) The bishop should not appoint the dean of a cathedral to conduct the reviews of any residentiary canons who are executive residentiary canons for the purposes of Regulation 18A of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 (the 2009 Regulations). This is because the dean is required to conduct annual reviews for executive residentiary canons in their cathedral and the same person should not conduct the MDR and the annual review.
- (2) If the reviewee has no input into the choice of reviewer, they should be able to make a reasoned objection.
- (3) MDR should be conducted on a one-to-one basis. The bishop should ensure appropriate pairings of reviewers and reviewees and direct how this is to be done in their diocese.
- (4) The reviewer should be able to take an objective view and be conversant with the bishop's vision and expectations of their clergy in general and this parish/group of parishes/area of ministry in particular. The reviewer should be authorised to agree personal objectives with the reviewee, bearing in any mind parish and diocesan mission priorities or strategy.
- (5) The MDR is expected to be searching and requires both the reviewer and the reviewee to prepare beforehand.

#### 5. *The Reviewee*

- (1.) MDR should recognise the context in which the reviewee is ministering. Prior to the first MDR in a new post, or following introduction of a new scheme, a statement should be prepared setting out the basic facts of the parish or focus of ministry. This should be reviewed and updated, if necessary, by the reviewee before the MDR each year. Existing role descriptions and statements of expectations should also be reviewed. If it is apparent that these require updating, this should become an objective to be completed within the review period.
- (2.) The MDR should include an assessment of how far past objectives or priorities have been met or refined and how fruitful they have been in the life of the parish/benefice/area of ministry and of the participant. This should help to identify whether they were useful, realistic and achievable and whether some form of additional help or support is needed. Some objectives will be long-term and the fact that little apparent progress has been made should not necessarily be seen as failure on the part of the reviewee: it may prompt reflection and perhaps re-statement of the objectives. Often objectives will be completed and priorities addressed. This should be a cause of satisfaction and celebration.
- (3.) Following prayerful reflection before the MDR and in the light of discussions within the MDR, fresh objectives or priorities for the forthcoming period should be agreed. These should focus on the development of the person in role and the ministry they exercise. No more than six should be normally agreed – three of each. They should be flexible. It

may be that the same objective will occur over several years. Longer term development and ministry objectives may also need to be considered. Ministry focussed objectives should normally be shared with and owned by those with a part in the relevant ministry, e.g. the churchwardens or PCC.

## **6. External perspectives**

- (1) Before the review takes place, written feedback should be sought from a representative range of others who have direct knowledge of the reviewee's ministry including lay representatives in the parish/area of ministry. This feedback should have a developmental focus and may usefully include reference to specific ministerial skills identified for particular comment. Depending on local arrangements, these may be collected by the reviewee or by a designated MDR administrator.
- (1A) In addition, residentiary canons who are executive residentiary canons for the purposes of Regulation 18A of the 2009 Regulations should provide to the bishop (or their representative), prior to the MDR, signed copies of the recorded outcomes of all their annual reviews since their last MDR.
- (2) In order that there should be balanced and useful feedback the reviewee and the bishop should have the opportunity to nominate individuals who should be approached for feedback and should also be able to object to any names suggested by the bishop or reviewer. Any difference of opinion should be formally noted.
- (3) The MDR should pay attention to ministerial skills, knowledge and relationships, which are often identified through the feedback from the lay representatives. Where people have particular strengths, these should be identified for particular comment, not just in terms of offering affirmation and encouragement to the office holder concerned, but also when appropriate to recommend that they be made more widely available within, say, a deanery or within the diocese.

## **7. Recording the review**

- (1.) A written summary of the MDR will be made by the reviewee or the reviewer. The minimum information to be recorded will be:
  - i. Date;
  - ii. Reviewer, reviewee;
  - iii. Review of past objectives or priorities and completion / movement towards them;
  - iv. Relations with others;
  - v. Summary of input from lay people and colleagues and reviewee's response to this;
  - vi. New objectives or priorities;
  - vii. CME requirements and how the reviewee seeks to address them;
  - viii. a note of particular ministerial skills that might be made more widely available.
- (2.) The reviewee ideally should be involved in the writing of the summary and, as a minimum requirement, must be given an opportunity to see the written summary. The reviewee and the reviewer should each have the opportunity to note any areas of disagreement, if any, and sign the summary.
- (3.) Copies of the MDR summary should be kept by the reviewee and the bishop. The bishop will arrange for a copy to be placed on the reviewee's blue file (the file held by the bishop which is passed on when there is any change of diocese) and for a note of development issues to be passed to the CME officer or equivalent.

- i. The primary responsibility for follow-up action after MDR lies with the reviewee and the bishop. The bishop may delegate aspects of follow-up to designated officers in the diocese but ultimately it is the bishop's responsibility.
- ii. MDR is part of the pastoral care a bishop gives to the clergy and does not preclude time being requested and given on specific pastoral matters or for advice about a move.

### **PART 3**

#### **OTHER ISSUES**

##### **8. *The relationship between Ministerial Development Review and Capability***

- (1.) MDR and the capability procedure are two separate and self-contained procedures, but they need to be consistent. MDR must not be used as a substitute for the capability procedure or its informal stages: if there is a issue of capability, it is necessary to go through the initial stages of the capability procedure, and make it clear to the office holder that their performance is not of an acceptable standard, and that the formal procedure will be activated unless their performance improves. That said, it would be open to question whether the capability procedure had been properly followed if the written record of the MDR did not provide evidence that issues about performance and the need to improve had been raised with the office holder. Similarly, if there is an agreed MDR record which is inconsistent with matters being dealt with simultaneously in a capability proceeding, the case for incapability is unlikely to be proven.

##### **9. *The relationship between Ministerial Development Review and the Clergy Discipline Measure 2006***

- (1.) A wilful or serious refusal to participate in MDR or CME is, technically, capable of amounting to misconduct under the Clergy Discipline Measure. However, in practice, the reasons for such a failure to participate need to be explored and any underlying issues identified will usually be most appropriately addressed under the capability procedure, at least initially.

## Approval and review

Approved by	Archbishops' Council
Policy owner	Ministry Development Team
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## Revision history

Version no.	Date	Summary of changes
1	January 2010	Adoption of new guidance
2	March 2022	Inclusive language for bishops  Reflects changes to the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009, affecting the terms and conditions of residentiary canons