

**THE APPOINTMENT  
PROCESS FOR  
RESIDENTIARY CANONS**

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## 1. General Introduction

Section 7.4.1 of the report *Talent and Calling* (GS1650) states:

*'The process adopted for any appointment must be proportionate to the level and nature of the appointment. Residentiary Canons vary considerably both in the duties attached to them and in the level a responsibility involved ... [It is not] necessary or desirable for there to be a common process or appointment to Residentiary Canonries'.*

These guidelines set out the main elements of any appointment process.

## 2. Overview of process for appointing Residentiary Canons

### 2.1 Cathedrals where the Bishop is the patron

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

### 2.2 Cathedrals where the Crown is the patron

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

## 3. Authorisation process

### 3.1 Decision to fill vacant canonry

The Bishop in consultation with the Dean will decide when and how any vacancy needs to be filled.

If the post is a Crown Canonry, the Church Appointments Secretary at Downing Street will need to be made aware of the nature of the role to be filled and the process that will be used for filling it. Such appointments are made on behalf of the Crown who will wish to be satisfied that due process is in place. The Bishop will also wish to decide how the Church Appointments Secretary might be involved in the process and should contact him or her to discuss this.

### 3.2 Residentiary canonries held with other posts

If the Canonry is held with a Suffragan Bishop, then the process for the appointment of a Suffragan Bishop should be followed. The Dean must be a member of the Advisory Group.

If the Canonry is held with an Archdeaconry then the process for the appointment of an Archdeacon should be followed. The Dean must be a member of the Advisory Group.

## 4. The role of any Advisory Group

Unless the Canon is either an Archdeacon or a Bishop, an Advisory Group is not necessary and the Bishop will decide whether to establish one to support the appointment. It is important that any such group is clear on its role in the appointment process. Further information on possible roles for Advisory Groups can

be found in the processes of appointment for Suffragan Bishop; which can be found [here](#).

## **5. Role specification**

Each role should have a clear written description of what is required, prepared by the Bishop and the Dean.

Prior to the completion of the role specification, the Bishop and the Dean will wish to ensure that they consult interested parties in order to capture the full complexities of the role and the key challenges facing the appointed candidate.

The purpose of this consultation is to aid thinking. It is not necessary or desirable for the role specification to reflect everything that has been said. The Bishop and Dean will wish to ensure that the specification sets clear priorities for the ministry of the new Canon.

## **6. Finding the candidates**

These posts would normally be advertised.

### **6.1 Advertisement and/ or search processes**

The normal expectation is that posts will be advertised, although there may be reasons why this might be supplemented e.g. an appointment has not been made following an advertisement, encouraging under-represented groups to apply for a role.

Advertisements are normally placed in the Church Press. If the Bishop is also searching for candidates this should be stated so that those replying to the advertisement are aware that candidates from a search will be being considered as well.

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 and interview stage.

### **6.2 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.

It is recommended that when candidates request information on a post, the [Diversity Monitoring Form](#) is sent out with other information. Candidates will need to complete this and send it in with the application form.

The form should be detached from the application form prior to short listing. Once the selection process is complete, the Bishop's office should complete the "[Fostering Diversity: Summary Sheet](#)" and return it to the office of the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments.

### 6.3 Long list of names and shortlisting

The Bishop will collate names of those who have applied or been submitted. It is recommended that the Advisory Group (if there is one) or the interview panel is involved at this stage. The Dean will be involved.

A possible shortlisting form can be found [here](#) to assist in this stage.

Referees should not be contacted for further information until a candidate has been advised that they have been shortlisted for interview.

### 6.4 Invitation to Interview

The letter inviting candidates to interview will need to include the following information:

- An outline of the selection process and the number of candidates to be seen
- The date, time and location of the interview and the names of the panel members
- The purpose of the interview and the role of the Advisory Group
- The next steps
- Arrangements for the provision of further information
- The role specification and any other relevant information should be enclosed.

### 6.5 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 wish to make it clear to referees that his or her request should be kept confidential

## 7. **Candidate briefing prior to interview**

If it is felt to be useful, the Diocesan Bishop will nominate a person who will meet with the candidates prior to interview and give them an outline of the cathedral, the diocese and current issues and priorities. This person will not take part in the interviews. In the interests of fairness, this meeting should take place with candidates from the diocese as well as those from outside.

Some dioceses may use a group to brief candidates prior to interview. This will allow candidates to ask questions about the diocese. It should be made clear that this is not part of the assessment process.

## 8. Selection processes

### 8.1 Wider involvement in the selection process

Some Bishops like to ensure that candidates have met with as wide a group as possible prior to interview to ensure that they have a detailed understanding of the context and challenges of the role, and so that they can build up a wider picture of the candidate. There are several models for this. The guiding principles should be that (i) it is clear to candidates when they are being assessed and when discussions are set up to inform them, (ii) that each candidate has the same opportunity to meet the same people and to discuss the same issues, and (iii) if the purpose is to provide information that will assist the candidate then each candidate should meet the group prior to the formal interview.

In the light of (ii) it is not recommended that social gatherings at which a group of candidates are expected to 'work a room' are part of a selection process. Those designing selection processes will also wish to be very careful about when spouses and civil partners are invited to visit the diocese. Ideally this will be once a candidate has been offered a role so that candidates are not evaluated on whether or not their spouse or civil partner has accompanied them or, indeed, the perceived suitability of their spouse.

Possible models for wider involvement include:

- Establishing a number of interview panels which will convene for a review meeting when all interviews are completed
- Setting up a series of meetings with different groups at which the candidate is invited to explore particular issues e.g. a group from the Bishop's Council, a group of clergy/laity, and a group from the wider community who will feed back to the appointing Bishop.

### 8.2 Interview structure, questions and assessment form

The Bishop and the Dean will both be part of the interview panel. If a wider panel is being used the Bishop will make them aware of their role in the interview process. They may be invited to explore how candidates might conduct the role, identifying strengths and areas of concern and advise the Bishop accordingly, or requested to make a recommendation of a preferred candidate to the Bishop, or to take a full role in the selection of the candidate. It is vital that both the panel and the candidate are aware of which role they will be taking.

It is recommended that more than one person is interviewed for a post, although there may be circumstances where candidates are interviewed one by one until an appointment is made.

Interviews should be structured and appropriate for the level and kind of post. The Bishop will need to ensure that members of the panel are appropriately skilled and experienced to interview at this level. If required the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments can provide some briefing/ training materials. Preparing and structuring the interview can help improve its ability to predict 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.

Following the interview with the panel, one or more candidates may be invited to meet with the appointing Bishop. The Bishop will make it clear to candidates whether they are a preferred candidate or one of a number of possible candidates.

### 8.3 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 the following:

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 text*

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 if the HR Advisor is not able to support this, the ASA office will be available to do so.

## 9. Individual meeting with the Chapter

Before an appointment is offered, the preferred candidate should have an opportunity to meet those who would be their fellow Chapter members. This enables the candidate to gain an understanding of the community he or she would be

entering as well as enabling that community to express their views to the Bishop. Such informal discussion would be a two way exploration of whether someone was being called to join the residential and worshipping community of the Chapter.

If a number of candidates are being interviewed it may be that they all meet with the Chapter.

## 10. Offer and appointment

Once the Bishop has identified the preferred candidate, he or she will make a verbal offer to the preferred candidate, subject to a DBS check. The Bishop may also decide whether a medical examination would be helpful. The purpose of any medical is to ascertain whether there are any medical issues the Church and the candidate need to take into account on taking up the medical. The diocese or cathedral are responsible for arranging DBS and any medicals.

Appropriate arrangements should be made for the preferred 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 they have a full understanding about the role, its challenges and benefits before deciding whether to accept the nomination.

The Diocesan Bishop will give feedback to the unsuccessful candidates after the interviews. This will include their strengths and areas for them to develop further.

## 11. Next steps

### 11.1 DBS checks

After nomination and before confirmation of appointment, the candidate must have a DBS check. Please click [here](#) for a link to the Church of England's *Practice Guidelines: Safer Recruitment*

### 11.2 Crown appointments

For appointments to Cathedrals where the Crown is patron, once the above checks have been satisfactorily completed, the Bishop will write to the Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary with the Church's nomination. An offer of appointment will be sent to the candidate from Downing St.

### 11.3 Bishops' appointments

Once the above checks have been satisfactorily completed, the Bishop will send an offer letter to the candidate.

### 11.4 Paperwork

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

- Any paperwork on candidates held by the Advisory Group is destroyed
- One set of paperwork on candidates is held on file for six months, at which point it should be destroyed



- The diversity monitoring form is returned to the office of the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments.

#### 11.5 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 or the Dean. A note of effective feedback can be found [here](#).

#### 11.6 Announcement

For a Crown Appointment, an announcement date will be agreed by the diocese and Number 10 Downing St. It is likely that a simultaneous announcement will be made on the Downing St website and in the diocese.

Shortly before the appointment of the new canon is announced, the Diocesan Bishop should inform members of the Chapter, in confidence, of his or her name.