

Help Sheet for applications for a Lay Worker Post in the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District

The aims of this document are to both help those employing bodies who are starting from scratch to create a good set of documents in the process of recruiting and employing a new member of the lay staff and also to avoid “repeat errors” which members of the District Lay Employment Sub-Committee keep seeing in documentation. Together these should make the process of employing a new lay person more slick.

Much information can be found on the Methodist website:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/> This help-sheet does not repeat the website but is additional to it.

Further local information can be found on the District website:

<https://www.candsmethodists.org.uk/what-we-do/lay-employment.html>

In the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District, we do ask you to use the District website where you will find our own version of the Authorisation to recruit form and the medical form. There is also the key document, Supporting Lay Employment.

The documents required in order for the Authorisation to Recruit form to be signed by the Lay Employment Secretary are on this link: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/4-advertising-recruitment-and-selection-for-lay-posts/downloadable-templates-recruitment-forms-letters>

Here also are other downloadable templates including the Job Description and the Person Specification. Please download just before you use them as changes are made to these documents. **However, please use the Authorisation to recruit form from the District website.**

Authorisation to Recruit form

This details all of the documents needed for the post to go to advert, as well as the Terms and Conditions i.e. otherwise known as the contract. Please submit them all with this form, including the name of a Correspondent with whom all of the communication between the DLESC and the employing body will take place.

Job Description

Here are some specific hints to help you fill in the JD.

Job Title – please ensure you use the same title consistently throughout all documentation and avoid using terms which may be seen as discriminatory (e.g. use “lead pastor” rather than “senior pastor”).

Location – it may not make sense to say the location is a church if the post is for a pastoral visitor, for example, working from home and so all the travel is from their home. Travel is always paid from their designated place of work. Working from home as an official base is an option which can work well for both employer and employee. Here is the link to a sample homeworking policy:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/8-key-policies-and-guidance-documents/flexible-working-requests/downloadable-templates-flexible-working-homeworking-hybrid-working-policies/>

More information may be found in the District Supporting Lay Employment document and this link describes tax relief for employees working at home.

<https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home>

Nevertheless, it is helpful to be specific about the churches worked at or with, either in the job purpose and objectives or in the main responsibilities section.

Salary – fill in as to either:

Full-time (and state hours) and then the salary

or

Part-time, state pro rata of the possible full-time salary, quoting how many hours and the actual salary to be paid. (When advertising the post, just put in the actual salary and the hourly rate, not the full-time equivalent salary as this could confuse.)

Responsible to: In some cases, the terms line manager and supervisor are interchangeable. Some employing bodies appoint both a line manager and a supervisor, so that the supervisor is available to explain local requirements, while the line manager can provide the HR function. If there are relatively few hours, the two could be combined into one role.

Here the term “Supervisor” needs to be differentiated from a Reflective Supervisor. From September 2023 lay workers in a pastoral role, who work over 20 hours per week will also need a Reflective Supervisor, like Ministers have.

Main responsibilities

There are sample role profiles on the above link, from which certain phrases can be plucked if they are helpful.

Terms and Conditions.

Time-limited employment. This is allowed but employers should be aware that after two years’ service the employee has enhanced rights;

- right to a redundancy payment
- right to bring claims in the employment tribunal for unfair dismissal etc

Re the printed phrase, “and a small allowance given for on-going training”, a better phrase is, “and an allowance given for on-going training”.

With regard to using a car for travel, it is important that those who cannot or choose not to drive are not discriminated against. A useful phrase is “Ability to travel between churches and other places of work.”

Correct link for pensions is: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/7-pay-and-pensions/pension-provisions-for-lay-employees/pensions-provisions-for-lay-employees/>

Basically the employing body pays 6% and the employee can pay between 2-6%.

“At least one day free of responsibilities each week”. This is better if it reads “At least two days free of responsibilities each week” and part of the reason for that is holidays.

The best tool to work out holiday allowance is <https://www.gov.uk/calculate-your-holiday-entitlement> and you will notice that if for example working over 3, 4 or 5 days is put in for a part-time post, the same amount of holiday comes out, whereas if 6 days is put in, less holiday entitlement is the result.

“28 days annual leave entitlement per year (pro-rata for part-time employees)”.

At this point, use the gov.uk holiday entitlement holiday calculator (above) and work out the hours leave per year. Hours is better for part-time employees. Note that the annual leave entitlement is either 28 days including Bank Holidays or 20 days plus Bank Holidays.

“Appointment will be subject to the satisfactory completion of up to three/six month probationary period”. Decide how long-although the probationary period cannot be over 12 months-and delete the words, “up to”.

Management

If you have both a Line Manager and Supervisor:

where it says: “Determine priorities for the work”, a suggested improvement is: “With the supervisor, determine priorities for the work” (if they are separate people).

where it says, “Prepare a personal development plan...” a suggested improvement is, “With the supervisor, prepare a personal development plan with the Lay Employee (if they are separate people).

Person Specification

Make this document specific as these qualifications and attributes are the markers for shortlisting. If a quality goes in the “essential” column, think carefully, as technically you can’t interview those who don’t have these specifications. For example, do they really need Maths GCSE to be an excellent family worker? Qualities can go in the desirable column but then they are scored differently-please see the shortlisting sheet for details.

Where the post requires the post holder to have specific experience and/or undertake a higher level of responsibility, the person specification must set this out clearly.


Then, in recognition of this, where certain criteria are met, additional points in the areas of qualifications, experience and responsibilities can be awarded to give an increase to the basic salary. Note that the points are given for the post, not for the particular person.

For instance, if the job requires a degree, a point is added. If it does not but the appointee happens to have a degree, no point is added. Please refer to the [Guidelines for determining](#)

[the salary figure for lay posts](#) and scroll down to Part B The Point System, bearing in mind that in Chester and Stoke on Trent District, the allowance per point is 0.50. In addition, on the Terms and Conditions section of the job description, where it says "The salary will be: £", please specify the basic salary and the number of pay points to be awarded, cross-referenced to the Person Specification, e.g. £12 per hour (living wage basic) plus 50p per point = £13.50 per hour (for three points). Therefore annual salary for 37.5 hours per week = £26,325.

Advertisement

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/4-advertising-recruitment-and-selection-for-lay-posts/step-2-preparing-the-documents/create-an-advert/>

As well as including the basic information, adverts need to capture interest and include brand, so add in the circuit logo or the Methodist Orb and Cross 

(For submission to the DLESC-only the text of the advert is needed.)

Basics for the advert:

Employing body eg X Methodist Circuit

Title of role

X hours/week, and the actual salary

Length of contract-

Information about the post: The X Methodist Circuit is seeking a X to work alongside Methodist communities in a, b, c, Methodist Churches. We are looking for a.....

For more information, please contact: normally administrator`s email address

Applications by-closing date and time 12 noon, interviews-date, role to begin-date.

If you would like an informal chat about this post, please telephone our Administrator on:

Advertising route. The DLES suggests considering this document

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/25016/jds-equality-impact-assessment-0322.pdf> to help with thinking about the equality of the reach of the advertising. The DLES does not need to see the list but here are some examples of free places to advertise: (The general idea is for as wide a reach as possible.)

Local church newsletters, local information points eg Post office, local church Facebook/social media pages.

Circuit newsletters, office, websites, social media.

Via District office: To all circuit communication contacts, all Circuit Administrators, all Lay Staff and all Ministers, members of Synod, District Website and other district administrators.

Saltbox email@saltbox.org.uk,

Ecumenical links, eg Churches Together, known local priests or church offices.

The Methodist Church website: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/connect/jobs-volunteering/jobs-around-the-connexion/>

All the following documents mentioned on the Authorisation to Recruit form can be submitted on one A4 sheet:

Background to the role

There needs to be some background for the LESC. The general idea here is to say why the post has arisen.

(The employing body may wish to supply other information for candidates.)

Mention the place within Circuit Strategy eg reduction in ordained staffing, additional post due to local need, to encourage members` participation in discipleship etc.

Income and expenditure estimates for the funding of the appointment.

Income

This could be as simple as:

Example 1: "This position would continue to be budgeted for and funded through church assessments and available reserves, as has been done previously."

or Example 2, as per this chart below:

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
X Church Committed Fund	9,000	10,000	11,000	30,000
X Circuit Fund	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
District Grant Funding	12,000	11,000	10,000	33,000
Total	31,000	31,000	31,000	93,000

Expenditure

This does not need to be overlong. Here is an example for a 2 year post:

Expenditure	
Salary (year 1) (Based on £12.00 per hour for 40 hours per week	24,960.00

NI Employer's Contribution (Assume class A)	2,388.00
Employer's Pension Contribution (@ 6%)	1,497.60
Initial equipment (eg laptop and mobile phone)	1,000.00
Ongoing expenses	1,500.00
Training Grant	250.00
TOTAL:	£31,595.60

Expenditure	
Salary (year 2) (Based on £12.24 per hour for 40 hours per week)	25,460.00
NI Employer's Contribution (Assume class A)	2,435.00
Employer's Pension Contribution (@ 6%)	1,528.00
Expenses	1,500.00
Training Grant	250.00
Statutory Redundancy Costs (after 2 years)	900.00
TOTAL:	£32,073.00

Line Management

Say who or what position the proposed line manager holds and why they are an appropriate person to line-manage-eg Circuit steward with background in HR or Circuit lay coordinator etc. There is no need to repeat the Management section of the Job Description here as that is submitted at the same time. However, please add any extra local information as necessary. If there is also a local supervisor, mention their position eg Minister of the church(es) where the lay employee will be working.

Timetable

Please put in actual or anticipated dates for the following:

- – post approved by Circuit meeting or Circuit committee with delegated authority
- – papers sent to District Lay Employment Sub-committee
- – anticipated return of papers from checks (add on 3 weeks)
- – post advertised as above-allow as much time as possible eg 6 weeks
- – shortlisting
- – interviews
- - post to begin

Interview Panel: For example,

Rev X-Superintendent Minister

Rev/Deacon X– Minister in pastoral oversight

Name X– Senior Circuit Steward

Name X–Line Manager

Please note from September 2024, all interviewers on the panel should be EDI and Unconscious Bias trained.

Just to be clear the candidate need ONLY be sent the

Job Description

Person Specification

Application form

EDI monitoring form

Information on the church/circuit may be helpful.

Terms and Conditions document i.e. the Contract

Please see the separate document-“Notes to aid completion of the Terms and Conditions” which can also be found on the District website. Please click on this link:

<https://www.candsmethodists.org.uk/what-we-do/lay-employment.html>

Advertising the post

The documents for this are:

Job Description and Person Specification-as above

Information Brief/Background information for the candidate-as above, if desired

Here is the link for the next three documents you need:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/4-advertising-recruitment-and-selection-for-lay-posts/downloadable-templates-recruitment-forms-letters/>

Application form. To prepare this, download when you need it and prepare it following the red and blue instructions on it.

Equality and diversity monitoring form. To prepare this, download when you need it and prepare it, following the red and blue instructions on it.

The correct Link for Privacy, which you need for these documents is:

<https://www.tmcpc.org.uk/about/data-protection/managing-trustees-privacy-notice>

Letter responding to request for application pack. This can be prepared as above and copied and pasted on to an email when a request for a pack is received.

When the closing date has passed, you will hopefully need the following documents which can be found on the same link above. The instructions are helpful and clear on how to proceed.

Shortlisting scoresheet

The Sample Interview Invitation Letter

The Interview scoresheet

Regarding the presentation, it is best to decide before you start how you are going to score the presentation. Are you scoring in the same way as a question, and weighting it? Or giving it more marks. How important is the presentation as compared with the interview questions?

The scoresheets for shortlisting and interview should be collected in by the Chair of the interview panel and kept in compliance with your Circuit/District policy. One Circuit in the District keeps these for six months. This link may be useful:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/guidance-for-churches/data-protection/>

Application forms should be deleted when the interview process is complete unless you think you might want to employ them for another job in the future.

Either way you should let the individuals know.

Offering the post

Paperwork following verbal offer of post.

Excerpt from the standard template letter, along with notes:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/5-employment-contracts/downloadable-templates-written-statement-of-terms-letters-policies/>

This offer of appointment is subject to:

1. The receipt of satisfactory references.

References: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/4-advertising-recruitment-and-selection-for-lay-posts/downloadable-templates-recruitment-forms-letters/>

2. The receipt of a satisfactory medical report. Please contact the Lay Employment Secretary who will put your new lay employee in touch with the district's recommended Occupational Health company. They will do all the work required in a confidential

manner to ensure the new lay employee is fit for work including the generation of an official fit note.

3. Confirmation of your **authorisation to work in the UK**. Please provide your passport to confirm that you are a British citizen or have the right to work in the UK. If this is not available, please contact _____ to obtain details of the combination of documents that will be accepted.
4. Access to a satisfactory [standard/enhanced] certificate issued by the **Disclosure and Barring Service** (*for roles which involve working with children or vulnerable adults groups*).
5. Documentary evidence of your stated [qualifications/degree/diploma/professional qualifications/date of birth/driving licence]; and
6. Satisfactory completion of an initial **probationary period** of up to **three/six** months duration. Here is the link to the probationary review form:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/8-key-policies-and-guidance-documents/probationary-periods/downloadable-templates-probationary-policy-and-probationary-review-form/>

Don't forget to send a copy of the signed contract to District!

Bank details can be destroyed once the person who needs them is in receipt of them.

INDUCTION PROCESS

Please refer to this on the Methodist website:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/8-key-policies-and-guidance-documents/new-employee-orientation/downloadable-templates-induction-checklists/>

An equipment provision list, signed by the lay worker and line manager could be useful here.

Exit Interview

In the event of an employee leaving, an exit interview is recommended. Please download an up to date copy of this form from this link and add the following disclaimer to the top:

“Elements of this form may be shared with your (former) employer and the District Lay Employment Sub-committee as appropriate.”

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/8-key-policies-and-guidance-documents/ending-the-employment-relationship/downloadable-templates-exit-interview-pro-forma/>

Very best wishes! If you have any questions please contact the Lay Employment Secretary on layemploymentsecretary@gmail.com