

# READERSHIP

## **Introduction**

Readers are commissioned locally by the Church to conduct worship, preach, and in some cases offer pastoral care. As with all recognised ministries, the ministry of the Reader must be seen in the context of the ministry of the whole people of God. Readers can be attached to a charge, working regularly with one congregation. In some circumstances they can also work as chaplains and can act as locums during vacancies.

## **Readers fulfill a variety of patterns of work or roles, including:**

### **Pulpit Supply**

A Reader is qualified to lead public worship anywhere within the Church of Scotland. Traditionally the main role Readers have played has been providing 'supply' when ministers are unavailable or sick, or in situations where there is no minister regularly available. Undertaking a task similar to that which other denominations might be carried out by someone called a 'local preacher' or 'lay preacher', Readers enable worship to take place Sunday by Sunday in locations where otherwise it might not happen. For many Readers this is the characteristic role.

### **Attachment to a Charge**

As part of their strategic planning, roughly one presbytery in three now attaches some of its Readers to specific charges. An attached Reader may engage in service in a variety of ways.

These may include:

- The conduct of worship, including funerals
- Chaplaincy
- Participation in school assemblies
- Other forms of ministry which have mainly to do with the conduct of worship but may include related pastoral work.

In such roles, the Reader is normally seen as a member of a ministry team under the minister's leadership.

One problem about attaching Readers to a charge is that it tends to remove them from their home congregation and cut down the number of Readers available for pulpit supply. Some Presbyteries have chosen to limit the attachment to, for example, two Sunday's a month, leaving the Reader free on the other two or three Sundays to be involved in their home church or to take pulpit supply elsewhere.

### **A specific role allocated by Presbytery**

As Readers are under Presbytery supervision, the Presbytery can choose to use them across Presbytery as a whole. Examples have differed widely, ranging from a training role to acting as a locum. The only requirement is that the role should be worship related. Some Presbyteries have made particular use of Readers as members of chaplaincy teams in hospitals or prisons.

## Limitations on service

Readers may conduct funerals and other acts of worship, but cannot preside at Communion, conduct baptisms or marriages.

## Where do I go from here?

Should you wish further information or wish to apply to be considered for training as a Reader please contact:

Ministries Council

e-mail: [vocation@cofscotland.org.uk](mailto:vocation@cofscotland.org.uk)

Tel: 0131 225 5722 ext 348/419

For more information on requirements for Readership Candidates, please see the Readership Candidate Handbook on the website:

[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/subjects/ministries\\_resources#readers](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/subjects/ministries_resources#readers)

## Readers Training Programme

### Academic Modules

The programme for the academic element of Readership training is to the standard of a Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE), which is the equivalent of 120 credit points. Modules from three academic providers have been identified as providing a suitable programme and are approved by the Ministries Council for Readership training.

When you are in a position to apply to proceed with academic training (either whilst going through the Assessment and Enquiry process or following local review) please apply directly to an academic provider as noted below. Guidance and advice can be sought from the Ministries Council although better detailed information will be given by the contacts for each academic provider.

### Enrolling with the provider of your choice

To assist us in being able to follow your academic progression along with other aspects of your training please ensure the academic provider is aware that you are carrying out this course of study as preparation for the Readership within the Church of Scotland. The enrolment with an academic provider is entirely your responsibility and to do this you will need to do the following:

- **Get a copy of the prospectus**
- **Get the appropriate forms**
- **Return forms in time for registration**
- **Ensure the regulations of the provider are complied with**

- **Ensure fees are paid**

The Council will also consider applications for a 100% refund of the course fees incurred. Form AF1 is contained in the Readership Handbook which should be completed once you have paid for your modules and returned to Ruth Johnston, Readership Administrator for re-imburement of fees (an invoice/receipt should be included with the form).

## Residential Conferences

It is compulsory for you to attend 5 weekend training conferences over a two year period within your time as a Reader in training. If you are a Readership Candidate planning on studying for only two years these will coincide with these two years, if you are studying over three years as a Readership Candidate these will coincide with years two and three.

These residential conferences follow a 2 year cycle so missing one could delay your training for a long period of time. An introductory conference, which includes Safeguarding training (for clarification this is not the same Child protection training that is provided at presbytery level), is held in November for all those just starting with the conference program.

In January everyone meets together at a national conference in one venue the theme of which is Worship

In June everyone meets together at a national conference in one venue the theme of which is Pastoral Care or Personal Development

### Contact details and available modules are:

| <b>Aberdeen University</b> |  |               |
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| <b>Contact</b>             | Dr Leigh Clayton<br>Christian and Religious Studies Programme<br>Centre for Lifelong Learning<br>Regent Building<br>King's College<br>ABERDEEN<br>AB24 3FX<br>Tel: 01224 272 164<br>Fax: 01224 272 478<br>E-mail; <a href="mailto:leigh.clayton@abdn.ac.uk">leigh.clayton@abdn.ac.uk</a> |               |
| Delivery                   | telephone conference tutorials   |               |
| Cost                       | £160.50 for 15 credit module (£53.50 per 5 credit)   |               |
| Assessment                 | Most level 1 courses are assessed wholly on course work – Student Handbook will provide details of exceptions.   |               |
| <b>Availability</b>        | <b>Title</b>   | <b>Credit</b> |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester   | Christology  |               |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester   | Criticism and Defence of Christianity  | 15            |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester   | Greek Language (New Testament ) 1  | 15            |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester   | Homiletics   | 15            |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester   | Introduction to New Testament Theology   | 15            |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester   | St Mark's Gospel   | 15            |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester   | An Introduction to Worship   | 15            |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester   | Exodus   | 15            |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester   | Greek Language (New Testament) 2   | 15            |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester   | The Early Church   | 15            |
|                            | * Late registration will be accepted but delivery of course materials will be delayed. Students wishing to study only in the second half-session may apply up  |               |

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|  | until January. |  |
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| Highland Theological College (register by start of term, TBC) |   |               |
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| <b>Contact</b>  | <b>The Academic Officer</b><br>HTC<br>High Street<br>Dingwall<br>IV15 9HA<br>Tel: 01349 780000<br>Fax: 01349 780001<br>e-mail: <a href="mailto:htcadmissions@htc.uhi.ac.uk">htcadmissions@htc.uhi.ac.uk</a> |               |
| Delivery  |   |               |
| Cost  | £161.00 for each module   |               |
| Assessment  | Courses are assessed wholly on course work and all modules must be taken  |               |
|   |   |               |
| <b>Availability</b>   | <b>Title</b>  | <b>Credit</b> |
| <b>Core Modules</b>   |   |               |
|   | Pentateuch  | 15            |
|   | New Testament Introduction  | 15            |
|   | Early Church History  | 15            |
|   | Introduction to Pastoral Theology and Preaching   | 15            |
|   | Former Prophets   | 15            |
|   | Jesus and the Gospels   | 15            |
|   | Introduction to Systematic Theology   | 15            |
|   | Worship   | 15            |
|   |   |               |
|   | <b><u>Please note: There may be some additions to the courses available for Readership</u></b>  |               |

| International Christian College *register by 1 September |  |               |
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| <b>Contact</b>   | <b>Distance Learning Administrator</b><br>International Christian College<br>110 St James' Road<br>Glasgow<br>G4 0PS<br>Tel: 0141 552 4040<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:alison.nicolson@icc.ac.uk">alison.nicolson@icc.ac.uk</a>   |               |
| Delivery   | 6 Courses provided, 4 are core offered 2 a year on a 2 year rolling programme include correspondence materials, tutor support and one college based day per course. Two out of six elective courses must be completed and can be taken any time, these do not include college based day. |               |
| Cost   | £230 per core course. £185 per elective course (Or £1050 for all 6 if one payment made)  |               |
| Assessment   | Courses are assessed wholly on course work   |               |
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| <b>Availability</b>                                      | <b>Title</b>   | <b>Credit</b> |
| <b>Core Modules</b>                                      |  |               |
| September (2012 and 2014)                                | New Testament Introduction   | 20            |
| February (2012 and 2014)                                 | Christian Worship  | 20            |
| September (2011 and 2013)                                | Old Testament Introduction   | 20            |
| February (2011 and 2013)                                 | Ministry in the Local Church   | 20            |

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| <b>Elective Courses</b> (1 core must be completed before any elective) |  |    |
| Any time   | The Holy Spirit  | 20 |
| Any time   | World Mission  | 20 |
| Any time   | Understanding Romans   | 20 |
| Any time   | Creeds: Their Making and Meaning                             | 20 |
| Any time   | Evangelism   | 20 |
| Any time   | Independent Study (on approved dissertation)                 | 20 |
|  | * Late applications will be considered for a February start. |    |