

X. SELECTION AND TRAINING FOR FULL-TIME MINISTRY ACT (ACT X 2004) (AS AMENDED BY ACTS II, X 2005, III 2007, VI 2009, VIII 2011, XI 2014, IV 2015, XIV 2016, II 2017, XI 2018, I AND III 2019, IX AND XV 2020, XIV 2022 AND ACT V 2023)
Edinburgh, 20 May 2004, Session VII

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain as follows:

Definitions

1. In this Act the following definitions apply:
 - (a) “The FAPLT” is the General Assembly’s Faith Action Programme Leadership Team.
 - (b) *This definition was repealed by Act XIV 2022.*
 - (c) “The Assessment Conference” is the body of trained Assessors to which the FAPLT delegates authority to assess the calling and fitness of applicants for all forms of ministry (in terms of 6(1)), and to accept as Prospective Candidates those deemed appropriate.
 - (d) “Ministry” is the full-time ministry of inducted parish ministers, and other posts requiring the same training and qualifications.
 - (e) *This definition was repealed by Act XI 2014.*
 - (f) “Applicants” are persons who are seeking to be recognised as Candidates for the ministry.
 - (g) “Prospective Candidates” are persons who have been accepted by the FAPLT at an Assessment Conference and who are awaiting the outcome of their application to Presbytery for nomination.
 - (h) “Candidates” are persons who have been both accepted by the FAPLT and nominated by their Presbytery. The term “Candidate” may not be used of or by any person who has yet to be, or who has failed to be, nominated by Presbytery.
 - (i) “Probationers” are Candidates currently undertaking the full-time probationary placement of fifteen months described in section 17(1).
 - (j) “Graduate Candidates” are those who have completed their training and received Exit Certificates in terms of section 22, but who have not yet been ordained. The term is to be applied without limit of time to anyone in this situation.
 - (jj) “Candidature” means the whole time during which a person is a Candidate (including the period during which they are a Probationer).
 - (k) “Accredited institutions” are academic institutions accredited by the FAPLT for the academic formation of Candidates.
 - (l) “Recognised institutions” are academic institutions recognised by the FAPLT for the purposes of section 12(1)(c) and sub-section 12(1)(f)(ii) below.
 - (m) “UK State Pension Age” means a person’s UK State Pension Age as determined at the relevant time by the UK Government’s calculations.¹

Discernment conversation and Initial Screening process

2. (1) A person wishing to apply for the Ministry of the Church of Scotland shall have a discernment conversation with a staff member of the FAPLT’s People and Training Team to determine how they will proceed, and should they

¹ *Ascertained currently by the calculator found on the gov.uk website.*

- subsequently make application, this will be followed by an Initial Screening process arranged by the FAPLT.
- (2) A person deemed ready to proceed after that screening process shall be entitled to apply in terms of section 4 to be recognised as a Candidate for the Ministry. Any person who makes such an application shall be known as an Applicant.
 - (3) A person who is not deemed ready to proceed after that screening process must wait a period of between one and three years, as notified to that person by the FAPLT in writing, before they may again participate in an Initial Screening process.
 - (4) The outcome of each Initial Screening process shall be final and not subject to any form of review or appeal.
 - (5) The provisions of this section are subject to those of section 3.

Age, Time and Membership Limits for Applicants

3. (1) The FAPLT will not consider an application from any person who has not attained the age of eighteen years by the date on which the FAPLT receives the application.
- (2) The FAPLT will not normally consider an application from any person who has not been either a member or adherent of the Church of Scotland, or who has not been actively involved in a congregation of the Church of Scotland, or who has not been a member of a denomination belonging to the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), in any case for a period of 3 years immediately prior to receipt of the application.
- (3) The FAPLT will not consider an application from any person who in all normal circumstances could not complete the prescribed course before 31 December in the year which is 10 years before the calendar year in which that person will reach UK State Pension Age. The acceptance of a Candidate who has delayed commencement of the prescribed course will be discontinued if in all normal circumstances that course could not be completed before 31 December in the year which is 10 years before the calendar year in which that Candidate will reach UK State Pension Age.
- (4) The acceptance of a Candidate may be reviewed by the FAPLT if the prescribed course has not been commenced within three years of acceptance.

Submission of Application

4. (1) The FAPLT will, on request, issue to each Applicant who has fulfilled the requirements as set out in sub-section 2(2) and section 3 the relevant application, which shall be completed by the Applicant and sent to the FAPLT by the date determined and supplied by the FAPLT.
- (2) The FAPLT will inform Presbyteries of Applicants within their bounds, the appropriate Presbytery being determined according to section 8 of this Act.

Period of Discernment and Local Review

5. (1) Following the FAPLT's receipt of their application, the Applicant will enter a period of discernment with a Mentor. During the period of discernment, the Applicant and the Mentor shall explore together the nature of the Applicant's call and gifting. The period of discernment shall last for three to six months. The Mentor will be chosen by the FAPLT and shall undertake such training as may from time to time be specified by the FAPLT. The Mentor shall be

- responsible for supervising the period of discernment according to the guidelines and standards established by the FAPLT, and shall produce assessment materials as required using such *Indicators for Assessment* document as may be from time to time in use by the FAPLT. During the period of discernment the Applicant shall also meet regularly with a representative (or representatives) of Presbytery.
- (2) At the end of the period of discernment the Applicant shall proceed to a Local Review. The Local Review will be undertaken by a group consisting of a National Assessor appointed by the FAPLT, the Mentor and a representative appointed by the Presbytery. In the event that one of the three individuals undertaking the Local Review cannot attend the Local Review, it may still proceed if the Applicant consents.
 - (3) In addition, before the end of a period of discernment, the Presbytery or the FAPLT may require that an early Local Review takes place. Such a Review shall be undertaken by the same group as specified in section 5(2) but may only reach a decision in terms of section 5(4) (ii), (iii) or (iv). Sections 5(5) and 5(6) shall still apply.
 - (4) Subject to the provisions of section 5(3), arising out of the Local Review, one of the following written decisions shall be reported by the Review to the FAPLT:
 - (i) That the Applicant is ready to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 6 (or in the case of the Readership, to proceed to training for the Readership);
 - (ii) That the Applicant should undergo a further period of discernment of such length as may be determined by the Local Review before a decision to proceed to National Assessment can be made;
 - (iii) That the Applicant is not yet ready to proceed to National Assessment in terms of Section 6;
 - (iv) That the Applicant is not suitable to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 6.
 - (5) Applicants in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of section 5(4)(iii) shall be subject to the terms of section 6A below.
 - (6) Applicants in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of section 5(4)(iv) may have a right of appeal in terms of section 6 below, subject to the terms of section 6B.
 - (7)
 - (i) All materials received by the FAPLT from the Local Review in terms of sub-section 5(4) shall be available to those making consideration in terms of sub-section 6(1).
 - (ii) No individual shall serve as an Assessor for the same Applicant more than once.

National Assessment

6. (1) National Assessment shall consist of a conference at which there shall be careful consideration of the Applicant's character and beliefs, vocation, motivation and general suitability for ministry in the Church of Scotland. The conference shall normally be an in-person residential event but the FAPLT reserves the right to hold an Assessment Conference online should circumstances make this necessary or desirable. At the Assessment Conference a decision shall be made as to whether or not the Applicant shall

be accepted as a Prospective Candidate for the Ministry and the Presbytery shall be informed of the decision.

- (2) All Applicants who attend an Assessment Conference shall receive, as part of their training and development, feedback in the form of a report.
- (3) An Applicant who is accepted as a Prospective Candidate shall, following Assessment Conference, undergo a medical check and a Disclosure Scotland check in the form prescribed by the FAPLT and may only proceed as a Prospective Candidate if these checks are, in the opinion of the FAPLT, satisfactory. There shall be no appeal against the FAPLT's decisions on these matters.
- (4) An Applicant who has not been accepted as a Prospective Candidate shall be subject to the terms of section 6A below.
- (5) An Applicant who has not been accepted at Local Review in terms of a decision under section 5(4)(iii) or (iv) or who has not been accepted as a Prospective Candidate by an Assessment Conference may have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel, subject to the provisions of section 6B. Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the FAPLT and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the Local Review or the Assessment Conference's decision, as the case may be, was intimated to the Applicant. At the Appeal Hearing the Applicant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the FAPLT, and to address the Panel. They may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Applicant. A representative of the FAPLT shall also appear to present the case for the decision under appeal. All parties will be in possession of the reports from the Local Review and/or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be.
- (6) An appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that in the course of the Local Review or Assessment Conference there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision of the Local Review or Assessment Conference was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Local Review or Assessment Conference acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
- (7) The outcome of an appeal shall be either to uphold the decision of the Local Review or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be, or to annul that decision, in which case sub-sections (8) and (9) below will apply.
- (8) If the outcome of the appeal is to annul a decision, whether at Local Review or Assessment Conference, the person shall be treated as if they had not attended that Local Review or Assessment Conference, as the case may be, and shall be entitled to enter the Assessment process again on one occasion only at the stage of attending one further Local Review (and, if accepted there, one further Assessment Conference) or one further Assessment Conference, as the case may be. Such re-entry into the process must commence within one year of the appeal decision and shall be permitted notwithstanding the terms of section 3(3) of this Act. Any further "non-accept" decision on that next occasion at either stage shall terminate that person's eligibility to enter the Assessment process under this Act and there shall be no further right of appeal.
- (9) If the outcome of the appeal is to uphold the decision of the Local Review or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be, that shall terminate the

Assessment process for that person and they may not re-enter into it at any time.

Opportunities to become a Prospective Candidate

- 6A. (1) A person applying under this Act shall have three opportunities in total to progress through Initial Screening, Local Review and Assessment Conference to become a Prospective Candidate. Each time the person is not accepted shall count as one “non-accept” decision. Once a total of three “non-accept” decisions have occurred, no further entry into the Assessment process, at any stage, will be possible for that person, save that a fourth application may be submitted only with the prior approval of the FAPLT. A person will however have rights of appeal as set out in section 6 above, subject to the terms of section 6B.
- (2) Following a “non-accept” decision at any stage, a person must wait for the period specified by the FAPLT, being a minimum period of one year, before being assessed again.
- (3) After any “non-accept” decision at any stage, a person who chooses to re-enter the Assessment process shall start again at section 2 ie at the stage of discernment conversation and Initial Screening.
- (4) For the purpose of this section, a decision at Local Review in terms of section 5(4)(iii) and also section 5(4)(iv) would each count as a “non-accept” decision.

Appeal at third “non-accept” decision only unless age-barred

- 6B. A person shall have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel as follows:
- (a) following a third “non-accept” decision, whether that is at Initial Screening, Local Review or Assessment Conference, or
- (b) following a first or second “non-accept” decision where the person would thereafter be age-barred in terms of section 3(3) from pursuing a fresh application for Assessment,

For the avoidance of doubt, in no other circumstances shall an appeal shall be possible after a first or second “non-accept” decision.”

Nomination by the Presbytery

7. A Prospective Candidate seeking nomination by the appropriate Presbytery as a Candidate for the Ministry of the Church of Scotland shall apply in writing to that Presbytery as soon as, but not before, the FAPLT indicates acceptance as a Prospective Candidate for the Ministry.
8. Application for nomination shall normally be made to the Presbytery within whose bounds is situated the congregation of which the Prospective Candidate is a communicant member. Where a Prospective Candidate is not yet a communicant member of the Church of Scotland and does not reside within the bounds of any of the Presbyteries of the Church of Scotland, intimation of intention to seek a Presbytery’s nomination shall be made in the first instance to the Presbytery of Edinburgh. With the written agreement of that Presbytery such an application may at the appropriate juncture be considered by the Presbytery within whose bounds is situated the University at which the Prospective Candidate proposes to study, or by the Presbytery within whose bounds they fix their residence, always provided that nomination does not precede communicant membership of the Church of Scotland.

9. If satisfied with the Prospective Candidate's character and beliefs, vocation, motivation and general suitability, the Presbytery shall then nominate him or her as a Candidate for the Ministry and shall give notice of such nomination to the FAPLT forthwith.
10.
 - (1) A Prospective Candidate who has been refused nomination by the Presbytery has the right of appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel. The Prospective Candidate may in any event submit a re-application for nomination on up to two further occasions, provided that at least one year elapses between each application.
 - (2) Notification of the intention to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel shall be made to the FAPLT and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the Presbytery's decision was made. At the Appeal Hearing the Prospective Candidate shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the FAPLT, and to address the Panel. They may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Prospective Candidate. Such an appeal can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Presbytery acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
11. *Deleted by Act IX 2020.*

The Course

12.
 - (1) Immediately following acceptance as a Candidate, each Candidate shall, for the purposes of section 13(a) below, have a course prescribed by the FAPLT from amongst the following Courses:
 - (a) Course A shall be followed by Candidates who possess a degree (or equivalent qualification recognized by the FAPLT for that purpose) in a discipline other than theology; and shall consist of three years' full-time undergraduate study at an accredited institution leading to the attainment of the BD degree, subject to the provisions of section 14 below.
 - (b) Course B shall be followed by Candidates who do not possess a degree (or equivalent qualification recognized by the FAPLT for that purpose); and shall normally consist of four years' full-time undergraduate study at an accredited institution leading to the attainment of the BD degree, subject to the provisions of section 14 below.
 - (c) Course C shall be followed by Candidates who possess a degree (or equivalent qualification) in theology from a recognised institution; and shall normally consist of two years' full-time postgraduate study at an accredited institution, being a course approved in advance by the FAPLT.
 - (d) Course D shall be followed by Candidates currently studying theology in the School of Divinity (however termed) at an accredited institution and having at least two years' study still to complete; and shall normally

consist of two years' full-time undergraduate study at that School leading to the completion of the degree.

- (e) Course E shall be followed by Candidates currently studying theology in the School of Divinity (however termed) at an accredited institution and having one year's study still to complete; and shall normally consist of one year's full-time undergraduate study at that School leading to the completion of the degree and one year's full-time postgraduate study at the same or another accredited institution, being a course approved in advance by the FAPLT.
 - (f) (i) For the avoidance of doubt, a student or graduate of theology at an institution not recognised by the FAPLT for this purpose shall undertake Course A above, subject to the recognition of course credits by the academic institution at which Course A is to be taken.
 - (ii) For the avoidance of doubt, a Candidate currently undertaking theological study at a recognised institution may choose either (A) to proceed in terms of (f)(i) above or (B) to complete their current course and then proceed in terms of Course C above.
- (2) With the permission in advance of the FAPLT, a Candidate following Course A or B may fulfil the requirements of the first year's study through part-time study over two years. For the avoidance of doubt, no Candidate may undertake part-time study in any other circumstances.

13. The Candidate shall satisfy the FAPLT of competence:

- (a) in the following areas of study (during the period of academic training specified in section 12 above):
 - (i) Interpretation and use of Holy Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, including an introduction to methods of biblical criticism and analysis;
 - (ii) History of the Church, including the development of the Church of Scotland;
 - (iii) Principal doctrines of the Christian faith and their application to preaching and pastoral work;
 - (iv) Principles of Christian Ethics;
 - (v) Ministry and Mission, Worship, Preaching and Sacraments;
 - (vi) Pastoral Care and Theology.
- (b) in knowledge of the Bible and the Law of the Church, by fulfilling such assessment requirements as are set by the FAPLT;
- (c) in all areas of practical knowledge required by the FAPLT, by active participation throughout their Candidature (i) in such residential courses and conferences as are prescribed by the FAPLT and (ii) in seminars and events provided by the Church college attended by the Candidate, such practical training being designed to promote competence in the following areas:
 - (i) Public worship and preaching;
 - (ii) Principles of effective communication;
 - (iii) Speech training;
 - (iv) Sacramental practice in the Church of Scotland;
 - (v) Church law and procedure;
 - (vi) Team working;

- (vii) Leadership, support and encouragement of volunteers;
 - (viii) The practice of ministry and mission, including the minister as celebrant;
 - (ix) Personal prayer life.
- (d) in the practice of ministry, by completing to the satisfaction of the FAPLT the four placements prescribed in section 17 below;
 - (e) in the area of safeguarding (this requirement to have been completed in advance of undertaking the practical training referred to in paragraph (c) above), and
 - (f) in other areas determined from time to time by the General Assembly.
14. The prior permission of the FAPLT is required by any Candidate who, after starting one course of study, wishes to change course or change University. In the event of such a change of course or University the Candidate shall notify the supervising Presbytery.

15-16 Sections 15 and 16 were repealed by Act X 2005.

Placements

17. (1) As part of the Church requirements in section 13, four periods of placement work shall be undertaken by the Candidate, and must be completed to the satisfaction of the FAPLT which shall determine the length and content of each placement. The placements shall normally include three during the academic course (of which two shall be part-time and shall last not less than twenty-five weeks and one shall be a full-time summer placement lasting not less than ten weeks) and one full-time probationary placement of fifteen months commencing on the first day of July, August, September or October in the year of graduation; the FAPLT shall have power in exceptional circumstances to vary this arrangement.
- (2) At the beginning of each placement a Learning Covenant will be agreed by the supervising minister and the Candidate on placement.
 - (3) Without the consent of the FAPLT, the Candidate will not be permitted to engage in academic study through a university or college or in remunerative employment or office during the course of the fifteen months full-time probationary placement at the conclusion of the academic course.
 - (4) The supervisor of each placement will be chosen by the FAPLT and shall undertake training as specified by the FAPLT. The supervisor shall be responsible for supervising the placement according to the guidelines and standards established by the FAPLT, and shall produce assessment materials as required.
 - (5) The assessment materials shall be assessed by the FAPLT. It shall be competent for the FAPLT to refuse to sustain a placement.
 - (6) The FAPLT shall obtain from the Candidate evidence that they have satisfactorily completed the prescribed degree course, whereupon the FAPLT shall inform the Candidate that they have permission to commence the final probationary placement.
 - (7) In respect only of the fifteen month full-time probationary placement referred to in section 17(1) above, the FAPLT shall have power to prescribe a part-time equivalent to the full-time probationary placement, which part-time equivalent

shall have the same overall outcome in terms of hours worked and experience gained.

Presbytery Supervision during Course

18. Throughout the course of training a Candidate must remain under the oversight and pastoral supervision of a Presbytery, initially the Presbytery which nominated him or her, and shall inform the Presbytery of any change of address.
19.
 - (1) Where a Candidate's permanent place of residence changes following nomination so that the oversight and pastoral supervision of the nominating Presbytery is no longer possible, the Candidate shall, within two months of changing residence, apply in writing to the nominating Presbytery, to be transferred to the supervision of the Presbytery within whose bounds they now reside. On granting such application the Presbytery shall forward an Extract Minute to that effect to the Candidate, to the Presbytery within whose bounds the Candidate now resides, and to the FAPLT. This sub-section shall not apply to Candidates who move residence to a University centre for purposes of study, who shall be considered under sub-section (3).
 - (2) Prior to each official meeting with the Candidates under its supervision the Presbytery shall initiate consideration of the circumstances of any Candidate who has thus changed their permanent place of residence but who has not made formal application to transfer. The Presbytery shall thereafter raise with the Candidate concerned the question of which Presbytery might most appropriately be responsible for the continuing supervision, and shall have power to effect a transfer to that Presbytery within whose bounds the Candidate now has permanent residence. When such a transfer is effected an Extract Minute to that effect shall be sent forthwith to the Candidate, to the Presbytery within whose bounds they now reside, and to the FAPLT.
 - (3) A Candidate may, in exceptional circumstances, make application to be transferred to the supervision of the Presbytery within whose bounds is situated the University at which they are studying or proposes to study. If the application is granted the same procedure shall be followed as in sub-section (1).

Initial Course Preparations

20.
 - (1) At the outset of the Candidate's training an Initial Course Meeting shall be held, attended by the Candidate and whichever member of staff of the FAPLT has been allocated responsibility for the care of the Candidate.
 - (2) At the Initial Course Meeting the Candidate and the staff member will discuss a personalised training plan, training policies (including the performance review policy) and the *Expectations and Responsibilities* document. Academic, practical and personal goals for the first year of training will also be discussed. In due course all of these documents will be agreed.
 - (3) Other tasks of the Initial Course Meeting, and its structure and procedure, shall be determined from time to time by the FAPLT.

Appraisal during Candidature

21.
 - (1) An Appraisal Meeting shall take place at the end of each academic year in which training has been undertaken, whether or not a Candidate has

- undertaken academic study during that year, and shall be carried out in terms of this section except during the final fifteen month probationary placement when the provisions of section 22 shall apply in supplement of this section 21.
- (2) The functions of each Appraisal Meeting shall be to confirm whether or not there is satisfactory progress, to set formation and learning goals through a facilitated conversation and discussion, and to implement the performance review policy if applicable. Other tasks of the Appraisal Meeting shall be as determined from time to time by the FAPLT.
 - (3) The member of staff of the FAPLT who has been allocated responsibility for the Appraisal Meeting shall receive written reports from the Candidate, the supervising minister (if any) and the College (if academic study has been undertaken during the year); and shall use them along with any other written reports which the staff member obtains and the Formation Framework to prepare a Pre-Appraisal Form, to be circulated to all those attending the Appraisal Meeting, containing a satisfactory or unsatisfactory recommendation regarding the Candidate's progress.
 - (4) A satisfactory recommendation on the Candidate's progress shall mean that one of the following conclusions may be reached after the Appraisal Meeting:
 - (a) that progress is satisfactory; or
 - (b) that pieces of work require to be completed, or areas of work require to be improved, within a period of time to be specified in the report.
 - (5) An unsatisfactory recommendation on the Candidate's progress shall mean that one of the following conclusions may be reached after the Appraisal Meeting:
 - (a) that progress is satisfactory; or
 - (b) that pieces of work require to be completed, or areas of work require to be improved, within a period of time to be specified in the Report; or
 - (c) that an extension of training requires to be arranged by the FAPLT and a further, final Appraisal Meeting conducted; or
 - (d) that the Candidature should be terminated.
 - (6) At the Appraisal Meeting the following shall apply:
 - (i) Any person who acts as a representative of Presbytery or the FAPLT shall receive appropriate training as shall be determined and provided by the FAPLT.
 - (ii) The representatives appointed by the Presbytery and the FAPLT shall each be appointed with powers to make decisions on behalf of the Presbytery and the FAPLT respectively; if a member or representative of the FAPLT is not present, it shall be the member of staff who has powers to make decisions on behalf of the FAPLT.
 - (iii) In the case of a Pre-Appraisal Form containing a satisfactory recommendation, in attendance shall be the Candidate, the member of staff of the FAPLT who has been allocated responsibility for the Appraisal and a representative of Presbytery.
 - (iv) In the case of a Pre-Appraisal Form containing an unsatisfactory recommendation, in attendance shall be the Candidate, the member of staff of the FAPLT who has been allocated responsibility for the Appraisal, a member or representative of the FAPLT and a representative of Presbytery. In this situation, the Candidate shall be notified prior to the Appraisal Meeting that there are concerns regarding

- their performance and that a member or representative of the FAPLT shall be present.
- (v) In addition, at the final Appraisal Meeting which takes place before the final (fifteen month) probationary placement is due to commence, and whether the Pre-Appraisal Form for that Appraisal Meeting contains a satisfactory or unsatisfactory recommendation, a member or representative of the FAPLT shall attend in addition to the member of staff of the FAPLT.
 - (vi) The Meeting shall be co-convened on behalf of the FAPLT and the Presbytery.
- (7) Following the Appraisal Meeting, an Appraisal Report will be prepared by the member of staff of the FAPLT who has been allocated responsibility for the Appraisal and circulated within 3 working days of the Meeting to all those who attended the Meeting. If the Candidate dissents from the Report or any part thereof, their dissent and the reasons for it shall be recorded in the Report, but shall not alter the status of the Report for the purposes of this Act.
- (8) The Appraisal Report shall contain one of the following decisions:
- (a) that progress is entirely satisfactory; or
 - (b) that pieces of work require to be completed, or areas of work require to be improved, within a period of time specified in the Report.
 - (c) that an extension of training requires to be arranged by the FAPLT and a further, final Appraisal Meeting conducted (this option may be exercised only once in any academic year); or
 - (d) that the Candidature should be terminated.
- (9) The Candidate may appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel against a decision in terms of sub-sections 21(8) (c) or (d) on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that in the course of the Appraisal Meeting there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Appraisal Meeting was conducted contrary to the principles of natural justice. Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the FAPLT and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the Appraisal Report was intimated to the Candidate. At the Appeal Hearing the Candidate shall be entitled to appear in person and the representative of Presbytery who co-convened the Appraisal Meeting shall appear to present the case for the Appraisal decision. The Candidate may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel but who may confer with the Candidate.
- (10) Notwithstanding the above provisions, at any time during Candidature, and including in terms of section 22, an Appraisal Meeting with full powers may be held.

Appraisal while a Probationer and sustaining the course

22. The Appraisal process during the final (fifteen month) probationary placement shall be as follows:
- (1) The normal process shall be Interim Appraisal after six months and Final Appraisal after twelve months. Alternatively, in the discretion of the FAPLT, the FAPLT may determine that a pattern of three-monthly Appraisal Meetings, or such other pattern as may seem appropriate to the FAPLT in its discretion, may apply throughout the probationary placement, until Final Appraisal. A

- third possibility is that where the FAPLT has prescribed, under section 17(7) above, a part-time equivalent to the requirement of a fifteen month full-time probationary placement, the FAPLT may prescribe equivalent milestones for Appraisal Meetings, including the Final Appraisal, as are appropriate to the arrangements agreed for the part-time probationary placement.
- (2) At all Appraisal Meetings held during the final probationary placement, including the Final Appraisal, the following shall apply:
 - (i) The procedure set out in section 21 shall be followed.
 - (ii) The full range of decisions in terms of section 21(8) shall be possible, in addition to a decision at Final Appraisal in terms of sub-section (3) below.
 - (iii) In attendance shall be the Candidate, the supervising minister (for the first part of the Meeting only), a representative of the Presbytery, a member or representative of the FAPLT and the member of staff of the FAPLT allocated responsibility for the Appraisal.
 - (iv) Decisions shall be taken jointly on behalf of the Presbytery and the FAPLT.
 - (3) At the Final Appraisal, in addition to any decision reached in terms of sub-section 21(8), it shall be decided whether the final placement can be sustained and whether the Candidate is fit to be ordained in due course. The Presbytery representative and the member or representative of the FAPLT shall each be appointed in such a way as to have powers to indicate the final approval of the Presbytery and of the FAPLT respectively to these matters at this stage.

Issue of Exit Certificate/Graduate Candidate Certificate

- 22A. (1) Where final approval on behalf of the Presbytery and the FAPLT has been given in terms of section 22, and the FAPLT is satisfied that the requirements of sections 12-17 have been fulfilled, including all academic requirements, the FAPLT shall thereafter have the power to issue an Exit Certificate upon completion of the probationary placement. At that point the Candidate shall become a Graduate Candidate and shall then remain under the supervision of the Presbytery within whose bounds the final placement was undertaken, pending ordination to a charge or appointment.
- (2) The Presbytery shall in each calendar year assess in terms of the criteria set out in section 9 above, the general suitability of each Graduate Candidate and, if satisfied, shall issue a Graduate Candidate's Certificate confirming continuing approval, and shall advise the FAPLT by 31 December. Candidates will have a right of appeal in terms of sub-section (3) below in the event of the Presbytery declining to issue a Certificate.
 - (3) The Graduate Candidate may appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel against a decision in terms of section 22A(2) on one or more of the following grounds:
 - (a) that in the course of the Presbytery's decision there were irregularities in the process,
 - (b) that the Presbytery's decision was influenced by incorrect material fact, or
 - (c) that the Presbytery's decision was conducted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
 Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the Presbytery and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the Presbytery's decision was intimated to the Graduate Candidate. At the Appeal Hearing the Graduate Candidate shall be entitled to appear in person and a representative of the Presbytery shall appear to

present the case for the Presbytery's decision. The Graduate Candidate may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel but who may confer with the Graduate Candidate.

- (4) A Presbytery must obtain a current Graduate Candidate's Certificate for any Graduate Candidate whose call or appointment is to be sustained by that Presbytery after 31 December of the year in which their Exit Certificate was awarded.
- (5) A Presbytery may issue a Graduate Candidate's Certificate on up to three occasions only. Thereafter, in order to obtain a Graduate Candidate's Certificate, the Graduate Candidate must apply for such a Certificate to the Registration of Ministries Committee, following an application procedure equivalent *mutatis mutandis* to that set out in section 27 of the Registration of Ministries Act (Act II 2017) (Application for Category **O** registration).

Complaints Procedure

23. Subject always to the provisions of the Discipline Act (Act I 2019), which shall apply in respect of a Disciplinary Complaint (as that term is defined in the Discipline Act) relating to a Candidate, Probationer or Graduate Candidate (as those terms are used in this Act), the provisions of this section shall apply:

- (a) where any party to an *Expectations and Responsibilities* document claims that another party is in breach thereof; or
- (b) where the Presbytery or the FAPLT claim that a Candidate has failed to fulfil their obligations under the agreed *Learning Covenant*; or
- (c) where a material complaint is made to the FAPLT or Presbytery about the Candidate's conduct during training; or
- (d) where circumstances come to the attention of the FAPLT or Presbytery which give cause for concern about the Candidate's conduct during training.

Any such claim, complaint or circumstances shall be intimated by lodging with the senior staff member of the FAPLT dealing with matters of People and Training, a written statement providing specific details thereof. The senior staff member shall intimate the statement to the Candidate, the Convener of the FAPLT and the Presbytery.

24. (1) As soon as is reasonably practicable after receipt of the statement referred to in section 23, a staff member of the FAPLT shall meet with all relevant parties and seek to resolve such claim, complaint or circumstances to the satisfaction of all concerned.
- (2) In the event that such resolution is not possible, any of the parties mentioned in section 23 may request a formal meeting of all parties in order to determine what is required to effect resolution.
- (3) Such a formal meeting shall be attended by up to two representatives of each party, shall be called by the FAPLT and shall be convened by a staff member of the FAPLT, who will notify all parties in writing of the conclusions of the meeting. Such notification shall provide details of the consequences that will ensue in the event of failure by any parties to adhere to the conclusions of the meeting.

- (4) The provisions of this section 24 shall not apply where the FAPLT makes a resolution in terms of section 25(2) below.
25. (1) In the event that no agreement is reached between parties at such a formal meeting as to the facts, or no agreed resolution is reached; or in the event that any party fails to adhere to the agreed conclusions, the Convener of the FAPLT shall convene a Hearing of all relevant parties.
- (2) Furthermore, the FAPLT shall have power to resolve that it will not be possible to reach a resolution under a section 24 process, in which case the Convener of the FAPLT shall convene a Hearing of all relevant parties without recourse to the procedure set out in section 24.
- (3) The Hearing shall be held as soon as is reasonably practicable. At such a Hearing the Candidate shall be present and may be accompanied by a companion who shall not be entitled to speak to the panel but who may confer with the Candidate. The panel for the Hearing, in addition to the Convener, shall comprise two representatives of Presbytery and two representatives of the FAPLT, none of whom shall have had prior personal involvement with the claim, complaint or circumstances giving rise to the Hearing. The two representatives appointed by the Presbytery and the FAPLT shall each be appointed with powers to make decisions on behalf of the Presbytery and the FAPLT respectively. A FAPLT staff member shall attend as an adviser.
- (4) At the Hearing all parties thereto shall be entitled to present evidence, to question witnesses and to make a concluding statement. At the conclusion of the Hearing, or as soon as may be practicable thereafter, the panel shall issue its decision and advise all parties. Such a decision shall be final and binding on all parties, subject only to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel in terms of Act VI 2007 on the following grounds:(a) that in the course of the Hearing there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision taken at conclusion of the Hearing was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that in the course of the Hearing there was a breach of the principles of natural justice. The intention to appeal shall be intimated to the FAPLT and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the panel's decision.

Repeals and Amendments

26. Acts V 1985 and V 1998 are hereby repealed.
27. (1) In the following Acts references to Act V 1998 are hereby amended by the substitution of "Act X 2004", and references to sections 26 or 27 of Act V 1998 are hereby amended by the substitution of section 22 of Act X 2004: Act II 2000 s.1; Act III 2001 s. 2; Act IX 2001 ss. 1 and 6; Act IX 2002 ss. 9(1) and 9(3), 11; Act VIII 2003 s.20(3); Act XV 2003 s.5; Act XIII 2003 ss.1, 4, 6 and 8 (first sentence).
- (2) Act IX 2001 is hereby amended as follows: in section 2 the first sentence is amended to read "Act X 2004, sections 2-11, 16 and 18-21 shall apply to the Diaconate.";
- (3) Act IX 2002 is hereby amended as follows: (a) in section 10, by the deletion of "sections 3 to 12 of Act V 1998 (as amended)" and the substitution of "sections 3 to 11 of Act X 2004"; (b) by the amendment of section 12 to read "For the purposes of this Act, the Appeals procedure shall be that set out in section

6(6) of Act X 2004 Anent Selection And Training For The Full-Time Ministry And Eligibility For Ordination.”;

- (4) Act XIII 2003 is hereby amended as follows: (a) in section 7 all references to section 6 of Act V 1998 (as amended) shall be deemed to refer to section 6 of this Act; (b) in section 8 by the deletion of the last sentence.