



INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS IN 2024

NAME OF STANDING COMMITTEE/AGENCY: Ecumenical Relations Committee	
CONVENER/CHAIR:	Rev Ross Blackman
VICE-CONVENER(S):	Mrs Pauline Weibye
SECRETARY:	Rev Dr John L McPake
REMIT: The remit of the Committee is to: report to the General Assembly and to advise on matters of policy affecting ecumenical relations, with particular reference to Article VII of the Articles Declaratory of the Church of Scotland; nominate people from across the work of the Church of Scotland to represent the Church in assemblies and synods of other churches, ecumenical consultations and delegations to ecumenical assemblies, etc.;	
call for and receive reports from representatives of the Church of Scotland attending assemblies and synods of other churches and those ecumenical conferences and gatherings which are held from time to time;	
ensure that appropriate parts of such reports are made available to other relevant bodies within the Church of Scotland;	
ensure that information is channelled from and to ecumenical bodies of which the Church of Scotland is a member;	
ensure that information is channelled from and to other churches in Scotland and beyond;	
provide advice and encouragement to presbyteries and congregations in developing and deepening relationships and co-operation with churches of other denominations in their contexts;	
approve guidelines for the setting up and oversight of local ecumenical partnerships.	
SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE SOUGHT AT THIS TIME: Members of the Committee should be committed to the unity of the Church for which Christ prayed (John 17). In practical terms, this means working to build good relationships with other denominations of the Church, principally in Scotland, but also in the rest of the UK and further afield; working to strengthen existing and emerging ecumenical organisations; and fostering ecumenical working at presbytery, parish and congregation level. An understanding of the history, structures and theology of the Church of Scotland is important but equally, an interest in and some knowledge or experience of the theology, structures and practices of other denominations is helpful. Some knowledge of ecumenical theology and of the history of ecumenism in Scotland is good too but these can be and are developed through involvement in the ongoing work of the Committee.	



EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERS:

Members are expected to attend and participate in Committee meetings. Members should also expect to be given other occasional responsibilities such as attendance at and reporting on Assemblies or Synods of other denominations; accompanying other agencies of the Church of Scotland to foster ecumenical thinking and working across the Church and engaging with presbyteries and local ecumenical partnerships.

MEMBERSHIP AND ANTICIPATED VACANCIES:

Include confirmation of the number of vacancies to be filled

NB: a completed Nomination Form must be submitted by all proposed nominees including anyone wishing to be put forward for proposed re-appointment

The membership of the Committee is comprised as follows:

Eight members appointed by the General Assembly.

A Convener, who will act as a personal support for the Ecumenical Officer, and a Vice-Convener, appointed by the General Assembly.

There will be two anticipated vacancies to fill in May 2024.

Other non-General Assembly appointees:

A representative of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. (Saint Margaret Declaration (2022))

A representative of the Scottish Episcopal Church. (Saint Andrew Declaration (2021))

A representative of the Church of England. (Columba Declaration (2016))

One representative from each of three churches drawn on a rotational basis from among the other member churches of Action of Churches Together in Scotland and the Baptist Union of Scotland

The Committee shall co-opt Church of Scotland members elected to the trustee or central bodies of the following:

Action of Churches Together in Scotland

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Conference of European Churches (in conjunction with the United Reformed Church)

Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe (in conjunction with the United Reformed Church)

World Council of Churches

World Communion of Reformed Churches (the British/Irish member of the WCRC Executive Committee is invited to attend one meeting a year if that person is not from the Church of Scotland)

FREQUENCY, TIMING AND VENUE OF MEETINGS:

include mention of any particular day(s) of the week when meetings would fall and whether meetings will be attended online and/or in person

Meetings are normally held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays. Since February 2020, all meetings have been online, although this is subject to review. Members should normally anticipate six meetings per annum: September, November/December, January, February, April/May and June.



DETAILS OF SUB-COMMITTEES/GROUPS:

include frequency, timings, venue and any particular day(s) of the week when meetings would fall

The Committee does not have standing sub-committees, per se. Sub-committees are formed, as required, for particular pieces of work. Contact Groups, in relation to shared Declarations, are maintained in partnership with the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of England.

FURTHER DETAILS:

Include any useful web links

Potential new members would gain a good overview of the work of the Committee by reading the [2018 General Assembly report](#), which contains the revised Ecumenical Policy of the Church of Scotland, [the 2019 report](#) which outlines the Ecumenical Strategy to which the Committee is working. The Remit of the Committee was renewed at GA 2023 and the [Report of the Committee](#) for that year provides further useful information.