

Congregational Worship Leaders

Diocese in Europe Policy

This policy replaces what is contained in section E5 of the Diocesan Handbook. It became effective on 1 January 2009 and was updated on 1 January 2015. The Diocesan Handbook section E5 policy on diocesan lay assistants came to an end on 31 December 2008.

1. The authorisation of a congregational worship leader is given by the archdeacon for a period of 3 years. The term is renewable.
2. A form to request authorisation by the archdeacon is available on the diocesan website. Church council approval for the application is required. (This level of authorisation is parallel to that of a communion assistant). A copy of the archdeacon's approval is noted in the diocesan office for database purposes only.
3. Safeguarding procedures must be completed by the congregational worship leader. This includes the Confidential Declaration Form and a DBS check if the applicant has lived in the UK, and/or the equivalent Police Certificate and Certificate confirming non-conviction record for countries outside the UK where the applicant is living or has lived for 6 months or more from the age of 16. See the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy on the Diocesan Website for details.
4. The training for a new congregational worship leader will be conducted by the incumbent, and will cover at least the following areas:
 - a. The nature of public worship in the Church of England
 - b. Voice production and liturgical presence
 - c. The lectionary and Church Year
 - d. The liturgical resources of the Church of England: The Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship
 - e. Principles and guidelines for celebrating Liturgies of the Word
 - f. Writing and leading intercessions.
5. Congregational worship leaders are authorised to lead Morning or Evening Prayer or Services of the Word. There will be no authorisation to preach at any service, or to preside at pastoral offices. Sermons or homilies prepared by or approved by the incumbent may be read.
6. Congregational Worship Leaders are not authorised to conduct funerals, except for the following historical provision: Those authorised before 31 December 2014 may in addition be authorised by the Archdeacon if they have undertaken the required Diocesan Funeral Ministry Training.