



BOARD OF MINISTRY

of the FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Ministry Pre-Application: Guidelines for Congregations and Presbyteries

When an individual expresses an interest in pursuing a call for ministry, congregations and presbyteries should take the following steps at the pre-application stage.

- Hold frequent, informal conversations with the potential applicant about their sense of call to ministry. These conversations will frequently be with the minister (or interim moderator) of the potential applicant's congregation, but some of these conversations should also include the Kirk Session of the potential applicant's congregation. If applicable, wives should be included in some of these conversations.
- Ensure that the applicant is going to be over 21 years old and that they have been a communicant member of a Free Church congregation for a minimum of 6 months before they submit their application form.
- Ensure that the applicant is asked both why they feel called to ministry and why they feel called to ministry *in the Free Church of Scotland*. This should also include discussion about their understanding of ministry and their own testimony as a disciple of Jesus.
- Ensure that the potential applicant is aware of the Free Church's subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith. They should be instructed to read the Confession if they have not already done so.
- The applicant should be directed to read the article *What Does a Call To Ministry Look Like?* available on the Free Church Website 'Apply for Ministry' page.
- Kirk Session should consider options for giving the potential applicant opportunities to test their gifts. These should include preaching, service leading, leading Bible Studies, leadership of congregational activities, engagement in evangelism, and involvement in pastoral care.
- If candidacy looks likely, the Kirk Session should inform their Presbytery. This would normally be done by informing the Convenor of the Presbytery sub-committee responsible for students.
- The Presbytery will then inform the Board of Ministry, and a training mentor may be appointed by the Board in consultation with the Presbytery.
- The potential applicant should be given some contacts for further information. These should include the Chairman and Clerk of the Board of Ministry, the ETS Secretary, and other current or recent candidates.
- The potential applicant should be encouraged to read the Board of Ministry document, *Training for Ministry: Expectations for Candidates, Congregations and Presbyteries*.
- Further information and links to the application forms can be found at <https://freechurch.org/apply-for-ministry/>
- If an application is submitted, in order to begin studies at Edinburgh Theological Seminary in September, the Application Form must be processed by the Kirk Session by the end of February of the same year.
- At all times, the Student Team of the Board of Ministry is available to give support and advice.