

# Pastoral Skills Course

## Suggestions and Support



Thank you for considering leading a Pastoral Skills course for potential Lay Pastoral Assistants (LPAs) and lay chaplains in various contexts. The success of any course is committed, flexible, imaginative teaching and we could not sustain the level of pastoral ministry in the diocese without you. These notes explain the course and offer some suggestions about the different ways in which the material could be used. From time to time we offer a Zoom session on 'How to lead a pastoral skills course' which will be advertised in the CMD brochure, or on our website, but if you cannot see one soon and would like to hear from someone about their experience of running the course, please do get in touch with the [Mission and Ministry Team](#).

### Shape of the course

The course handbook has recently been updated in the light of feedback from participants and course leaders. The course consists of ten sessions, each intended to last around two hours, though in some sessions you may find you need to pick out the activities and discussions that will be of most benefit to your group rather than feel you have to cover all the material. It is designed to have space of at least two weeks between sessions in order to allow for some active learning and reflection time, but it is very much up to you how you structure the training for your group. Some courses have run on a weekly basis – others have used a combination of Saturdays and midweek sessions to be able to cover more material over a shorter timescale. In addition, there is a Taster session to enable people to reflect on whether Pastoral Skills training is right for them before beginning the course. They are encouraged to spend time when the course concludes to discern whether ministry as a Lay Pastoral Assistant or Lay Chaplain is for them at this time.

Within the course handbook you will find the following sessions:

- Session 1: **Who are we?**
- Session 2: **Who am I?**
- Session 3: **Journey of life**
- Session 4: **Healthy boundaries in pastoral care**
- Session 5: **Learning to listen**
- Session 6: **Engaging with families**
- Session 7: **Coming alongside those with illness or disabilities**
- Session 8: **Valuing later life**
- Session 9: **Our role at a time of loss**
- Session 10: **Ministry matters**

Either before starting, or during the first part of the course, participants will also need to complete three safeguarding modules online in their own time. These will complement the learning together on the course, so course leaders might like to refresh their own safeguarding training in order to be aware of material that might be referred to by course participants.

#### \*A health warning

Be aware that some of the sessions could bring to the surface sensitive issues that the participants may need to work through with someone they trust. Please mention this at the start of the course so that participants are prepared.

Please do not feel that you have to work through everything that is in the handbook. You are encouraged to make the material your own by substituting your own exercises and examples. It will be important to offer opportunities for participants to reflect on the experience that is in the room rather than listen to a lecture, so feel free to improvise and draw on your own pastoral experience.

## Preparing to lead a course – some questions to ponder

### Who?

- Benefice-wide, deanery-wide or even beyond?
- Include your Rural Dean and Lay Chair in the conversation.
- Maximum number of candidates?
- Advertise or invite? (Taster session can be important too as a discernment tool.)

### When & Where?

- One location or mixed? Who pays cost of any hired premises/refreshments etc?
- Online or onsite?
- How long and at what frequency?
- Establish dates of taster session, course dates, concluding session.

### How?

- Who is going to lead the sessions?
- Who is going to coordinate the course (administration!)?
- Who is going to have pastoral oversight?
- AV equipment and other practical considerations (for example diverse ability access?)

Get in touch with the Mission and Ministry Team at an early stage – they may be able to help you work through some of these questions.

## Step by Step Guide to running a Pastoral Skills course

<p><b>Step 1</b></p>	<p>Establish the date of the Taster Session, course start date and structure (and if possible the details and date of the Commissioning service with your Area Office)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leave at <b>least 2 weeks' notice</b> for the taster session after informing Parish Support Team, to allow for it to be advertised.</li> <li>○ Leave at least <b>6 weeks</b> between concluding session and commissioning service date to allow for discernment and for any outstanding DBS/safeguarding training to be completed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 2</b></p>	<p>Email <a href="mailto:parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org">parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org</a> with the relevant information and dates using the form on the website <a href="#">“Notify the Diocese that you intend to run a course”</a></p>
<p><b>Step 3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Publicise the taster session and course dates either by advertising or by invitation to selected candidates.</li> <li>● Download and print sufficient <a href="#">Registration Forms</a> from the website for the taster session, together with taster outlines if you plan to give out copies.</li> <li>● Book venues for all course sessions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 4</b></p>	<p><b>Run the initial Taster Session and give out registration forms, emphasising:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Incumbent's signature is needed.</li> <li>● Forms must be returned either to you or to the Lay Ministry Team before the course start date, preferably electronically.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 5</b></p>	<p><b>Registration forms are emailed to the Lay Ministry Administrator</b> as soon as possible, with a copy to course leader.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This is very important as this triggers the process to get the applicant's DBS processed.</li> <li>● At the start of the course remind participants that they will need to complete <b>Basic awareness (C0)</b>, <b>Foundation (C1)</b> and <b>Awareness of Domestic Abuse</b> online as soon as possible. This must take place well before commissioning.</li> <li>● The Mission and Ministry team is there to provide administrative support to you and participants.</li> </ul> <p>Once the diocese have the registration forms they will commence DBS checks (if necessary) and send a welcome email to course participants. In this email, the Lay Ministry Administrator will further explain the requirements for DBS checks and for candidates to undergo the required safeguarding training. The Mission and Ministry team will continue to monitor course participants progress through these processes, and if necessary remind them of any outstanding training.</p>

<b>Step 6</b>	<b>Run the course!</b>
<b>Step 7</b>	<p><b>Having completed the final session all participants to be commissioned will need to undertake a period of reflection with their incumbent concerning potential LPA Ministry.</b></p> <p>Those who feel they are ready to be commissioned as LPAs will need to work on a Role Description with their incumbent, setting out the kind of ministry they will offer, and the supervision and support they can expect.</p>
<b>Step 8</b>	<p><b>The Commissioning Service details need to be arranged directly with the relevant Area Office and confirmed to the Lay Ministry Administrator.</b> The Commissioning will be undertaken by either the suffragan bishop or an archdeacon.</p> <p><b>Please confirm the names of those going forward for Commissioning.</b> The Lay Ministry Administrator will check that they have the necessary DBS clearance and have undertaken the appropriate safeguarding training.</p> <p>The incumbent is responsible for ensuring the person has been safely recruited in all other respects.</p>
<b>Step 9</b>	<p><b>The participant and incumbent agree the Role Description prior to commissioning.</b></p> <p>Participants complete the Declaration Form prior to commissioning.</p> <p>Course leaders are encouraged to share any feedback with the Parish Support team for future reference and improvements.</p>

## Course materials

The handbook is available online, and printed copies can be collected (by arrangement) from Emmaus House or one of the Area Offices. Printed copies can only be released once all registration forms have been received, but all are welcome to download a pdf from the [diocesan website](#). However, if you are using substantial amounts of your own material, you may prefer participants not to have a handbook until you have finished the course, when they may want to return to it for reference. It is therefore up to you to decide at what stage to point the participants to the course handbook on the website, or to collect printed handbooks to give out.

The taster session is available as a separate download from the website, and you are welcome to use this or make up your own. Most course leaders and participants seem to find the taster session helpful as part of the discernment process. If you have run a course before you may recall there being a separate 'Concluding session'. This has now been incorporated into session 10 of the core course, with an expectation that each incumbent will then work with their participants on discerning the shape of their ministry from that point on, and recommend them for commissioning if that is appropriate.

## Safeguarding

### 1 DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service clearance

1. Make sure a registration form for each participants has been sent to the Lay Ministry Administrator so that participants can complete a DBS **Enhanced Child and Adult workforce with a check against the Child and Adult Barring Lists** application online.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If the applicant is on the Update Service, or has an existing DBS at the correct level with Salisbury Diocese with at least a 6 months until renewal at date of commissioning (DBS lasts for 3 years), OR will be processing their application locally with their Parish Safeguarding Representative, please let the Lay Ministry Administrator know.**

2. If people do not have access to a computer, then they will need to ask someone from their parish to assist them in the application such as the Parish Safeguarding Representative or Parish Secretary.
3. Commissioning cannot take place until DBS clearance is in place and safeguarding training has been undertaken (see below).
4. Some people may ask if their current clearance from either the diocese or another organisation will be OK. Sadly the answer is 'No'. For any queries relating to DBS/Safeguarding please contact the [safeguarding.admin@salisbury.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding.admin@salisbury.anglican.org).

### 2 Safeguarding Training

LPA's must do the **Basic awareness (C0)** and **Foundation (C1)** and **Awareness of Domestic Abuse** training online at <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org> before commissioning. It will help them approach some of the case studies in the course as well as prepare them for their ministry, so the sooner these can be done the better.

Once a person has been commissioned, the responsibility for ensuring DBS checks and safeguarding training are kept up to date lies in the parish with the PCC and the incumbent.

### 3 Safer Recruitment requirement

Please be aware of the House of Bishops' and Diocesan requirements in relation to the Safer Recruitment of volunteers and that every person must be safely recruited if going forward for commissioning. This is the responsibility of their incumbent – see <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-andpeople-management-guidance> for further information.

## Lay Ministry Team

Lay Ministry Administrator: [Venetia Tucker](#)

Lay Ministry Development Officer: [Karen Hutchinson](#)