

# Pastoral Supervision Policy for Ministers

## PAPER H4 GA 2023

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Scope

1.1.1. This Pastoral Supervision Policy provides a framework for, and an outline of, the requirements for all Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers (thereafter known as ministers) in categories 1-3 of the Active Ministers Policy within the United Reformed Church.

1.1.2. It draws on the work of the Ministries Pastoral Supervision Task Group and the Guidelines for Pastoral Supervision adopted at General Assembly 2020.

1.1.3. It is intended that this policy be reviewed every 5 years in light of further experience of the practise of pastoral supervision. It is important to review its

providing skilled and intentional space to reconnect with ministry vision and discerning what God is speaking in your particular context.

### **3. The purpose and function of pastoral supervision**

3.1 Pastoral supervision within the URC has three main functions:

- To support and affirm the well-being and development of those who minister;
- To safeguard the interests of those amongst whom ministry is exercised;
- To ensure that ministry offered in the name of the URC is accountable and

3.2 Pastoral Supervision within the United Reformed Church has three main pillars<sup>2</sup>:

- Normative attentive to accountability by having aims that accord with the Basis of Union, physical, mental and ministerial fitness to work; an ability to set boundaries and to challenge inappropriate behaviours or expectations;
- Formative - ugh reflecting on their practice and that of others, exploring creative approaches to the demanding issues of ministry and relationships as they arise;
- Restorative ensuring that the vocation and work of the minister is shared, valued and nurtured; exploring healthy habits and ensuring wellbeing issues for the minister are monitored and addressed.

This policy reinforces that supervision is , giving ministers support

4.5 It is important therefore, that care is taken to ensure that supervisor and supervisee feel able to work together to achieve the purposes outlined in 3.1 and 3.2 and are willing to collaborate in order to create an ethos that is

prayerful and non-anxious,  
playful and reflection  
collegial and non-coercive  
embodied and dialogical  
excentric and missional  
compassionate and courageous  
intentional and boundaried  
and accountable<sup>3</sup>.

This list is not exhaustive.

## **5. The supervisory relationship**

5.1 Each supervision should provide opportunity for

reconnecting with God, self and the supervisor  
an update on any agreed actions from previous supervisions  
substantial attention to at least one issue  
attention to risk in relation to potential harm to self or others or the mission of the church  
a written record of explicit actions in relation to safeguarding, fitness to practice and any other matters for referral.

5.2 Boundaries and expectation of the supervisory relationship

5.2.1 Safe practice in supervision relies on the clear boundaries and expectations. These are established between the supervisor and supervisee as they come together but rests on the boundaries and expectations set by the Marks of Ministry or Core Competencies.

5.2.2 In this policy the United Reformed Church sets boundaries for the supervisory relationship and expectation concerning the scope and purpose of supervisions and practical matters like the frequency and duration of the meeting.

5.2.3 The main burden of the supervision agenda rests on the supervisee who should identify significant practice issues to bring to supervision that, over time, reflect the breadth and depth of their vocation and work.

### **5.3 Who may supervise?**

5.3.1 The approved list includes those affiliated to

APSE (Association for Pastoral Supervision and Education)  
BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy)  
the Association of Christian Counsellors;  
those trained by the United Reformed Church on the URC Pastoral Supervision course.

5.3.2 The request to use a pastoral supervisor from any other body than those listed above will need prior approval from the Synod Moderator who may consult with the Secretary for Ministries.

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<sup>3</sup> Jane Leach

#### **5.4 Who may supervise whom?**

- 5.4.1 Those trained by the United Reformed Church on the URC Pastoral Supervision course will be expected to supervise fellow URC ministers under the training agreement.
- 5.4.2 Best practice dictates that a URC trained pastoral supervisor should not normally pastorally supervise anyone in their own Synod or whom they know as a friend rather than a colleague.
- 5.4.3 However, the policy recognises the need for some flexibility in 5.4.2. For those supervisors who have dual roles, care needs to be taken to establish clear boundaries. Advice on conflict of interests should be sought from the Synod Moderator in consultation with the Secretary for Ministries.

#### **5.5 Whom must be supervised?**

- 5.5.1 All ministers in EM3 in categories 1- H5 Assembly Executive 2021).
- 5.5.2 For those avoidance of doubt these categories are:
  - Category 1: in a pastorate or post for which they are receiving a stipend (either full or part) from the United Reformed Church (e.g. deployed post, SCM post, Assembly appointment) under the Plan for Partnership;
  - Category 2: in non-stipendiary service in a recognised ministry post (e.g. model 1, 2, 3 or 4 or Local NS CRCW);
  - Category 3: exercising a ministry with another organisation within the gift of the church to the wider church to which they have been inducted by the URC where possible (e.g. chaplaincy, educational establishment, ecumenical body) and for which they receive a stipend, salary or serve in a voluntary capacity;
- 5.5.3 It is recognised that ministers in category 3 may have professional pastoral supervision as part of their work. In these cases, they should inform their Synod

### *6.3 Mode of supervision.*

Whilst the United Reformed Church expects all ministers to have no less than 6 sessions throughout the year, Ministries had originally required that half those sessions would be in person. The pandemic meant that this was not possible. Whilst the ideal would be all six sessions in person, Ministries accepts that effective pastoral supervision can be done online. This will also help with the capacity issue in some areas. There is therefore now no requirement for in person supervision, though some such sessions are encouraged.

### *6.4 Sabbaticals*

6.4.1 Any minister on sabbatical is entitled to receive her full quota of supervision but may, by

6.9.2 Upon receipt of the information the Synod will be responsible for updating both the

6.9.3 The Synod will, in turn, report this to the Secretary for Ministries, who will keep a denomination-wide record.

#### *6.10 Claiming for Supervision*

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