



Guidelines on the

Schedule A paragraph 19 and 20 (page 6) of The Basis of Union
https://urc.org.uk/images/the_manual/A_The_Basis_of_union_23_01_2020.pdf

- 2.2 Among the offices so recognised by the United Reformed Church is that of a lay preacher.
- people of God. In order that this may be clearly seen, the United Reformed Church shall (a) take steps to ensure that so far as possible ordained ministers of the Word and sacraments are readily available to every local church; (b) provide for the training of suitable men and women, members of the United Reformed Church, to*

Schedule A paragraph 25 (page 6) of The Basis of Union
https://urc.org.uk/images/the_manual/A_The_Basis_of_union_23_01_2020.pdf

- 2.3 The provisions of paragraph 25 are intended to establish the principle that worship should be led by representative persons recognised by the wider church as well as by the local church to do and to bear his will all the days of their life.
- 2.4 Schedule B (page 4) of the Manual Details the functions of the elders' meeting which can be found at https://urc.org.uk/images/the_manual/B-The_Manual_-_Section_B-2019.pdf
- 2.5 Lay preachers, in addition to their promises as members of a United Reformed Church, at their commissioning service reaffirm their faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and undertake to exercise their ministry in accordance with the Statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church.
- 2.6 Those thinking of becoming an Assembly Accredited Lay Preacher should, where possible:
- a) attend an Enquirer's Event organised by the Ministries Office and normally held in February and October each year via Zoom;
 - b) be a church member for at least one year;
 - c) be given copies of the leaflet 'Become a Worship Leader, even a Lay Preacher'
- <https://urc.org.uk/your-church/taking-a-role-in-your-church/become-a>

- 3.4 **A Locally (Synod) Recognised Lay Preacher** appointed before March 2021, is commissioned by the Synod to preach at any church within their local area which invites them (normally the area served by the old district Council; is not authorised per se to preside at the sacraments; their local recognition may not be recognised ecumenically; their recognition is not transferable to another Synod.
- 3.5 **A Locally (Synod) Recognised Lay Preacher** shall exercise their ministry in accordance with the Marks of Ministry for Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers and Locally Recognised Worship Leaders, the Standards for Worship Leaders and Lay Preachers in the United Reformed Church, the Guidelines on conduct and behaviour for Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers and the Disciplinary Policy of Office Holders.
- 3.6 All Locally Recognised (Synod) Lay Preachers are required to do mandatory safeguarding training to foundation level.

4. **Safer Recruitment of A Locally Recognised Worship Leader** (from March 2021)

- 4.1 The United Reformed Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all within our church communities. The United Reformed Church recognises the importance of carefully selecting, training and supporting all those with any responsibility within the Church.
- 4.2 Those thinking of becoming an a Locally Recognised Worship Leader should, where possible:
- a) attend an Enquirer's Event organised by the Ministries Office and normally held in February and October each year via Zoom;
 - b) be a church member for at least one year;
 - c)

- d) The application form
- e) A Church meeting minute that the church meeting approves of the candidate going forward;
- f) Two references – one being the minister of the church or the interim moderator where there is no minister;

- 4.5 Should these not give cause for concern then the Synod Office would organise the appropriate criminal record checks. For applicants in England and Wales this will involve a DBS check and for applicants in Scotland this will require a Level 1 (Basic) Disclosure; if there is a blemish this is followed up by the Secretary for Ministries and the URC Designated Safeguarding as per the usual process.
- 4.6 Any concerns during training should be directed to the Synod Moderator where the concerns would be dealt with.
- 4.7 A Locally Recognised Worship Leader shall exercise their ministry in accordance with the Marks of Ministry for Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers and Locally Recognised Worship Leaders, the Standards for Worship Leaders and Lay Preachers in the United Reformed Church, the Guidelines on conduct and behaviour for Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers and the Disciplinary Policy of Office Holders.
- 4.8 All Locally Recognised Worship Leaders are required to do mandatory safeguarding training to foundation level.
- 4.9 A Locally Recognised Worship Leader is commissioned by the Synod
- a) to preach in their own church or pastorate¹;
 - b) to preside only if they are an Elder and have been recognised by the appropriate Synod Committee as an Authorised Elder;

5. Regular Preachers/Speakers/Worship Leaders from other Denominations or organisations who are in a preaching/speaking/worship leading role

- 5.1 Some churches may wish to invite preachers from other denominations/organisation to preach on a more regular basis. For the purposes of clarity regular shall mean 4 times or more per year.
- 5.2 In an LEP, a Methodist local preacher is subject to -UStt/F3 12 Tf1 0 0 1 224.1r87 0 595.2epe7

membership. This should be done preferably by email so that there is a record of their status (see Appendix 1);

b) has a current criminal record check. In England and Wales this will require a DBS. In Scotland this will require a Level 1 (Basic) Disclosure. The lead denomination shall be asked to provide details of the certificate number and the level of DBS check.

5.4 Any concerns should be directed to the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator to be passed onto the lead denomination/organisation.as any disciplinary would fall under the jurisdiction of the lead denomination/organisation.

6 Regular preachers/speakers/worship leaders not in that role within their own denomination or organisation

6.1

- 7.2 An elder shall be designated to accompany the preacher/speak/worship leader whilst they lead worship.
- 7.3 Any concerns should be directed to the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator to be passed onto the lead denomination or organisation as any disciplinary would fall under the jurisdiction of the lead denomination/organisation.

8 Preachers/speakers/ worship leaders who no longer attend any church or who are no from an organisation

- 8.1 On occasions local churches have been known to invite someone to preach who