# Guidelines recommended by the Appointments Committee

# for appointments to Church decision-making bodies

**Purpose**

1. The Appointments Committee has prepared these guidelines to inform its work of making appointments to Boards, Councils, working parties, conferences etc. It also recommends them to others in the Church as an input – suitably adapted – into their own processes of making decisions about similar appointments. Comments on the guidelines and suggestions about how to improve the process would be warmly welcomed.

# Principles

1. Appointment to a synodical, ecumenical or other Church body offers an opportunity to serve God and the Church. Through God’s grace, the Church possesses all the gifts needed to undertake God’s work. The task of those making appointments is to seek to identify the particular gifts required to carry out each aspect of that work; to identify the gifts manifested in individuals; and to bring together needs and individuals in a way which best furthers that work.
2. In undertaking this task, care must be taken to ensure that the processes used ensure the optimum allocation of skills to the task, reflect the best possible standards, are just and fair and can be shown to be so. Appointments should be as representative as possible in order to draw upon and reflect all the rich diversity of gifts in the Church.

# Process of appointments

1. The process of making appointments in this context should always be:
   1. **open** – the procedure to be followed should be clear and known. Expressions of interest from prospective candidates should be welcomed and, where appropriate, specifically sought;
   2. **confidential** – information should not be divulged about particular individuals;
   3. **sensitive and considerate** – to the individuals (including staff) who may be affected.
2. An important element in the process of appointment is the prior collection of information about individuals’ gifts, experience and interests. It crucial that such information is gathered systematically before an appointment is considered. Various sources of information are available and the Appointments Committee conducts a number of exercises specifically aimed at gathering such details. Further details can be obtained from the Secretary to the Appointments Committee.

# Criteria for making appointments

1. The key test is that the appointments made should, taken together, best ensure the most effective completion of the jobs to be done. This means first attending to **the particular skills required**. What expertise, aptitudes, skills or experience are needed to advance the work? Who most possesses them? What sources of information are available to those appointing to ensure that they have as wide a choice as possible and that they can base their decisions on objective criteria? How can the available information about candidates be improved? What additional advice can be sought?
2. After the question of skills has been considered, **the balances within the group** should also be looked at. Is the proposed membership of the group drawn from all parts of the Church? A well-balanced group with a wide range of expertise is more likely to be alive to new ideas and possibilities and how policies will impact upon all parts of the Church than a more homogeneous group.
3. If the group’s work is to be well received, it is helpful if the group is seen to reflect various other balances which together will help ensure its credibility. Are there ways of making the membership of a group more diverse without compromising on the provision of the requisite skills?
4. The balances which *may* be relevant in a group include (in alphabetical order):
   1. **age** – are younger people as well as older ones represented in the group?
   2. **bishops, clergy and laity** – is there an appropriate mix of bishops, clergy and lay people?
   3. **church tradition** – are the main strands of liturgical, theological and other traditions represented and, if so, for synodical bodies, how do the balances in these respects on the group relate to those balances in the Synod?
   4. **people with disabilities** – does the membership of the group include people with disabilities?
   5. **ecumenical involvement** – is it appropriate for all the members of a group to be Anglican? If so, is there nonetheless a role for a representative of one of our ecumenical partners as, say, an observer to the group?
   6. **ethnicity** – are people known to identify as being from minority ethnic groups adequately represented?
   7. **gender** – is there an appropriate mix of women and men?
   8. **geography** – is there a proper balance between the two Provinces? Urban and rural? Areas of deprivation?
   9. **synodical and non-synodical representation** – is the proportion of General Synod members on the group appropriate?
5. With each group and task it is important to weigh up which balances are important. In the case of Church tradition, for example, the Appointments Committee’s view is that, in the majority of appointments, this is a factor which should *not* be taken into account at all. But there are exceptions e.g. it might well be relevant in deciding the membership of a group looking at the law relating to the patronage of livings.
6. The task of the Committee is, then, to decide in each case which balances matter and to find a suitable mix of people with the skills in question.

# Ensuring adequate expertise by means other than full membership of a group

1. It is often impossible to accommodate all the expertise needed on a group within its permanent membership without increasing its size and thereby running the danger of reducing the effectiveness of meetings and other aspects of its work. But it is often possible to compensate for a deficiency by drawing people into the work by taking evidence from them, appointing them as corresponding members or consultants, observers and so on. The Appointments Committee may wish to recommend that people with particular skills have an opportunity to contribute to the work in such ways.

# Restrictions on appointments

1. (a) There are a number of restrictions under the National Institutions Measure 1998 and the General Synod’s Standing Orders which prevent members of Synod from current membership of more than one of a number of bodies;
2. the constitutions of the bodies themselves often impose restrictions on who can be appointed (eg restricting membership to two consecutive five-year terms or prohibiting cross-memberships);
3. the Appointments Committee has a number of conventions concerning appointments, including:
   1. where some posts on a body are elected and some appointed, a candidate who was not elected would not then *normally* be appointed to the same body unless they had particular expertise which was required for the work in question and no other suitable candidate was known to the Appointments Committee;
   2. normally, former members of staff of the National Church Institutions who have become members of General Synod should not be appointed in at least their first five years to serve on a body in the area in which they formerly worked;
   3. where a person indicates that he/she is unable to offer to complete the required term of office, this would be a factor to take into account in deciding whom to appoint.

# Methods of working

1. Bodies should regularly review their methods of working to ensure that these do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, either against the appointment of or full participation by particular members or groups of members. Matters to be considered include:
   1. **adequate induction** – have new members been given a proper welcome and the information they need to function effectively?
   2. **the times of meetings** – do early start times, for example, exclude people who come from further afield?
   3. **the dates of meetings** – where possible, dates should be set with reference to the diaries of all who need to be present. Have dates been set which are inconvenient for particular members of the group?
   4. **location of meetings** – are meetings held in places convenient for all members? How often should a body meet in and outside London, for example? Is it more effective to meet online?
   5. **the meeting room itself and other practicalities** – is the meeting room accessible to all the members of the group? Does the venue have, for example, an induction loop, adequate lighting, a suitable table lay-out, car parking facilities etc, such that members with hearing, sight or mobility impairments can play a full part in the business? Are these facilities known to all? Can any presentation be seen and heard by all? If a meeting is residential, is the accommodation suitable for everyone to play a full part?
   6. **the style of work** – do some members of the group use jargon, acronyms and the like? Is there a danger that, without proper induction, those who are unfamiliar with those terms will feel disempowered?
   7. **the distribution of tasks** – are all members being involved in discussion and in the follow-up to it?

# Advice

1. The Secretary to the Appointments Committee will always gladly advise on any aspect of an appointments process and any questions can be directed to the relevant staff member where necessary.