# Self-Reflection

## Part of the Ministerial Development Review

Dear Colleague

**“Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock” Acts 20.28**

A key part of Ministerial Development Review is the opportunity to reflect on the period of ministry since your last review as part of your preparation for the review conversation.

These questions are offered as a framework and guide to that process of reflection. Please use them as exactly that. Feel free to respond to them in the way that feels most helpful or to substitute other questions and responses.

The Anglican understanding of ordained ministry is rooted in both Scripture and Tradition. As part of your self-reflection please return again to the scriptures and to the passages which have meant most to you in exploring your vocation. Please read the Common Worship ordinal for deacons and priests and note any phrases or parts which particularly strike you [(link to Ordinal)](https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/ministry/common-worship-ordination-services). You should also reflect on the Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of Clergy, which contain practical wisdom for ministry and a helpful summary of what the Church now expects of its ordained ministers [(link to Guidelines)](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/guidelines-professional-conduct-clergy). Please look again at any documents relating to your appointment (such as the original parish profile; your role description and your last ministerial review). You will also want to consult the objectives set and agreed upon in your previous MDR (if you can’t locate these so ask my chaplain who ought to be able to find a copy in your clergy file, scan them, and email them to you. Of course, this won’t apply if this is your first MDR).

This exercise in self-reflection is supported by an exercise which seeks written feedback from others. You may want to supplement this by having a conversation with trusted lay or ordained colleagues which gives people the opportunity to alert you to anything you should be paying attention to at this stage in your life and ministry.

The MDR process requires some time, which can make it feel like another demand on us. Yet it can also be a gift: an opportunity to step back, notice what is going on, identify what to celebrate and clarify what needs attention. I hope that will be your experience as you engage faithfully and imaginatively with your Ministerial Review.



**+Pete**

Bishop of Sheffield

The Diocese of Sheffield is called to grow a sustainable network of Christ-like, lively and diverse Christian communities in every place which are effective in making disciples and in seeking to transform our society and God’s world.

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| **Name** |  |
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| **E mail** |  |
| **Telephone Number** |  |
| **Name of Reviewer** |  |
| **Date of Review** |  |

The following questions offer a guide to help you reflect; other questions may also be helpful.

1. **The story of your ministry**

What has been the story of your faith, vocation, development and ministry in the period since the last review? What have been the dominant themes and the shaping events? What have been the chief joys and sorrows?

What would be the most helpful things arising from those experiences to explore in the review conversation?

1. **Watching over yourself**

How are you?

What are your current patterns of prayer, retreat and spiritual support? Are they life-giving and do they need to be reviewed?

How are you spending your time and how does that fit with your priorities? (You may find the Two Week Diary tool helpful here).

Are you content with the place of work in your current life balance?

Are you able to protect a weekly rest day and were you able to take your full allocation of annual leave in the last 12 months?  Have you been able to experiment with the Bishops’ proposal that we take a double rest day in any month in which we are due no annual leave?

What do you do to be refreshed and restored?

How have you developed your own learning? What courses, conferences, reading and conversations have been important? Have you learned anything through engaging with people who are different from you?

1. **Your Role**

As part of your preparation for review, think about your Role Description or Working Agreement. In what ways is it consistent with the role you inhabit? Would you like to make any changes in it?

What are you learning about your part in releasing the whole people of God for the whole mission of God? You might like to think about:

* Lights for Christ
* Equipping and enabling others, particularly in developing Focal Ministry
* Fostering generosity, including financial giving
* Developing new congregations

Have you learned anything in particular from things that have been encouraging in ministry or from ministry experiences which have felt disappointing?

What are the mission priorities for your role in the context where you serve over the next two years? Are these priorities reflected in your agreed Mission Action Plan?

How is Safeguarding for you?  How are the latest policies and practices in regard to Safeguarding affecting your ministry?

1. **Reviewing and Setting Objectives**

**Looking back, reflect on and review the objectives from your last MDR**

Where have your Objectives led to fruitfulness? What can you celebrate?

Where have the Objectives led to difficulties, lament? What is incomplete? What do you regret?

What can you learn about God, about faith, about your ministry as you reflect on those previous objectives?

**Looking ahead, what will be your main objectives for the next two years?**

Below is a template to help you think about your Objectives. Please see these as a work-in-progress that can be shaped further by your review conversation.

Aim for between three and six objectives. Try to identify at least one **Self-care** Objective, one **Learning & Development** Objective and one **Ministry & Mission** Objective. (There are worked examples of these Objectives below, which may help clarify the differences.)

Remember to ask yourself (and perhaps other people) what additional training or support you may need in order to fulfil these objectives.

## Objectives: My Initial Thoughts

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| **Self-care Objective 1**  What?  Why?  How?  First Step?  Training &/or support? |
| **Self-care Objective 2**  What?  Why?  How?  First Step?  Training &/or support? |

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| **Learning & Development Objective 1**  What?  Why?  How?  First Step?  Training &/or support? |
| **Learning & Development Objective 2**  What?  Why?  How?  First Step?  Training &/or support? |

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| **Ministry & Mission Objective 1**  What?  Why?  How?  First Step?  Training &/or support? |
| **Ministry & Mission Objective 2**  What?  Why?  How?  First Step?  Training &/or support? |

### Worked examples of Objectives: Self-Care

What – Get more exercise

Why – I spend too much time sitting in the study, car and meetings. This is becoming detrimental to my health and to the rest of life.

How – go swimming once a week; walk or cycle more often to local meetings.

First step – check local pool times; put weekly swim in diary for the next four weeks. Phone local shop to book a service for my bike.

Support – ask a colleague or family member if they want to join me regularly for the swim or walk.

### Worked examples of Objectives: Learning & Development

What – Experience a spiritual tradition which is unfamiliar to me

Why – To enrich my prayer life and resource myself as I lead quiet days and explore the possibility of becoming a Spiritual Accompanier.

How – Look out for a suitable guided retreat or course and ask colleagues.

First step – consult St Peter’s College website for likely courses and resources; ask Associate Archdeacon for her suggestions.

Training and Support – contact OMD officer about grants for a suitable course/retreat once identified.

### Worked examples of Objectives: Ministry & Mission

What – Develop Focal Ministry team in a particular congregation

Why – Our Mission Action Plan has identified and agreed this as a priority. So I need to commit time to it.

How – Continue to prioritise ongoing conversations with PCC and with those we are identifying as potential Focal Ministers.

Next step – Phone X and Y to arrange meeting for coffee or a Zoom call.

Training and Support – continue consulting Director of Focal Ministry and Parish Support Team about the process.