



THE DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Director of Vocations/DDO
EMPLOYER:	Sheffield Diocesan Board of Finance
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Bishop of Doncaster
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	Assistant Diocesan Director of Vocations Vocations Support/Environment Coordinator MES Warden MES Coordinator
STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT OF:	Assistant Directors of Ordinands (ADDOS) Vocations Advisers Bishops' Advisers for the Shared Discernment Process Young Vocations Champions GMH Champions

Job Purpose

To lead the Diocese of Sheffield in developing a culture in which all God's people are encouraged to discern and develop their gifts and calling, building on the vocation of all Christians to shine as Lights for Christ in the world. The Director of Vocations provides strategic leadership for lay and ordained vocations across the Diocese, working closely with the Assistant Director of Vocations, the Lead Lay Ministry Enabler and colleagues across the Diocese.

A particular and urgent priority is to respond to the serious challenge of sustaining and growing vocations to ordained ministry, ensuring that the Diocese is actively identifying, calling, encouraging and accompanying a new generation of candidates for priestly and diaconal ministry, from the full breadth of our churches and communities, given the alarming current projections of the National Ministry Board across the Church of England to 2031.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. Strategic Leadership for Vocations and Missional Leadership

- Develop and implement the diocesan vocations strategy.
- Give focused and urgent strategic leadership to increasing vocations to ordained ministry, recognising the current challenge to the future supply of clergy and making the identification, encouragement and development of potential ordinands a clear diocesan priority.
- Promote a culture of vocation, discernment and calling across the Diocese.
- Encourage prayer for vocations and support parishes, deaneries and chaplaincies in fostering new vocations.
- Ensure diocesan vocations work reflects and contributes to the vision of the Diocese of Sheffield and the *Lights for Christ* strategy.
- Encourage participation in all pathways and projects from under-represented groups, including younger people, women, those from GMH communities, people with disabilities, and those from urban and estate contexts.
- To oversee the development of work with clergy and other church leaders, to enable a prayerful, more effective discernment and confident nurturing of new vocations.
- Foster vocations to missional leadership, pioneering ministry, church planting and fresh expressions.
- Ensure coherent discernment pathways for licensed lay and ordained vocations within the diocese (eg the discernment element of the Foundations Course).
- Contribute to regional and national conversations and developments relating to vocation and ministry, including strategic projects like Step Forward.

2. Licensed Lay Vocations

Working collaboratively with the Assistant Director of Vocations and the Lead Lay Ministry Enabler:

- Encourage and develop a wide range of lay ministries and vocations.
- Support pathways into authorised, licensed and other forms of lay ministry.

3. Leadership of the Vocations Team

- Lead and develop the diocesan vocations team.
- Line manage designated staff and support their professional development.
- Provide leadership, support and appropriate delegation to ADDOs, Vocations Advisers and other voluntary role holders.
- Ensure effective administration and governance of diocesan vocations processes.

4. Ministry Experience Scheme

- Provide strategic oversight of the diocesan Ministry Experience Scheme, working through the MES Project Coordinator and MES Warden.
- Ensure that MES is integrated into the Diocese's wider approach to vocation, discernment and the development of future Christian leaders.
- Support the continuing development of MES as part of the Diocese's commitment to encouraging vocations and forming people for ministry and mission.

5. Director of Ordinands

The Director of Vocations serves as Diocesan Director of Ordinands and holds responsibility for the overall discernment, sponsorship and formation of candidates for ordained ministry.

Working directly where appropriate, and through the Assistant Diocesan Directors of Ordinands and wider vocations team, the postholder will:

- Proactively seek, identify and encourage potential candidates for ordained ministry, working with clergy, lay leaders, parishes, deaneries, chaplaincies and diocesan networks to widen the pool of those prayerfully considering ordination.
- Oversee discernment processes in accordance with Church of England guidelines.
- Advise the Sponsoring Bishop regarding candidates for national discernment, training and ordination.
- Ensure candidates receive appropriate guidance, pastoral support and preparation throughout the discernment process.
- Oversee administrative, safeguarding, psychological assessment and all other requirements associated with discernment.
- Ensure appropriate follow-up and pastoral care is offered to those who are not recommended for training.
- Lead on the Visa Sponsorship process with the support of HR when required.

6. Ordinand Formation and IME

- Oversee relationships with theological education institutions.
- Monitor and support the progress of ordinands through IMEI in partnership with colleges, courses and diocesan colleagues.
- Provide pastoral oversight and support to ordinands and their families.
- Organise diocesan engagement with ordinands, including meetings and gatherings with the Bishops.
- Oversee financial matters relating to ordinands in training.

7. Curacy and Early Ministry

Working alongside the IME2 Officer:

- Support the identification and development of suitable training contexts and training incumbents.
- Contribute to decisions regarding curacy placements and deployment.
- Lead on the Visa Sponsorship process with the support of HR when required.
- Support the transition from training through ordination into licensed ministry, including ordination retreat and ordination services.
- Collaborate in the development of training provision for curates and training incumbents.

Key Relationships

Assistant Director of Vocations, ADDOs and Vocations Advisors, Vocations and Environment Administrator, MES Project Coordinator, MES Warden, IME2 Officer, Director of Mission and Ministry, RMM team and the sponsoring Bishop and Lead Lay Ministry Enabler.

This role description provides a guide to the duties and responsibilities of the post and is not an exhaustive list. The post holder may be asked to undertake any other relevant duties appropriate to the post. The role description will be amended over time, in full consultation with the post holder, to meet the needs of the Diocese.

PERSON SPECIFICATION: DIRECTOR OF VOCATIONS (DDOV)

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Qualifications	• have six or more years in ordained ministry, having fully completed IME1 and IME2 with Bishop's recommendation for Common Tenure Primary Responsibility/Assistant Ministry • hold a Foundation Degree/DipHE or equivalent experience	• A theology Degree.
Experience	• be secure in their own faith and calling, nourished by a rooted spirituality, with a commitment to lifelong learning including Continuing Ministerial Development and open to new ways of working • become well integrated into the life of a regular worshipping community in the Diocese of Sheffield and also willing to be out in the Diocese preaching on vocation and visiting other churches as needful for the role • have proven experience of discerning and fostering lay and ordained vocations • have a commitment to the contribution of theological education and training in formation for mission and public representative ministry; • a track record of working collaboratively, delegating	• have experience of line management of colleagues and basic understanding of HR processes. • Experience of the shared discernment process.

	and sharing responsibilities with a team.	
Skills & Knowledge	• have excellent oral and written communication skills • be able to contribute at strategic level to diocesan policy around vocations and ministry; • be someone who is willing and able to relate to all traditions in the Church of England, appreciating the theological integrity of others • be able to work cross-culturally with a passion to see diversity in all ministries • have competent IT skills (in particular the use of Word, Outlook and databases) • be able to deal effectively and thoroughly with paperwork and administration which form a significant part of the discernment and assessment processes.	
Personal	• be committed to the whole breadth of the Church of England in the Diocese of Sheffield. • be prepared and willing to work outside of normal office hours, including evenings and weekends as necessary • be committed to the safeguarding policy and practice of the C of E, including regular participation in training.	

	• have a heart for mission and be committed to the vision and strategy of the Diocese of Sheffield.	
--	---	--

This post carries an Occupational Requirement under the provisions of the Equality Act for the postholder to have a committed Christian faith.

Please note this role is subject to an Enhanced DBS check in accordance with Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding provisions. For further information, please do not hesitate to contact the HR Team at HR@sheffield.anglican.org

Please Note; Sheffield Diocesan Board of Finance (SDBF) does not hold a Home Office sponsor license and are therefore unable to sponsor Skilled Worker or other work visas. Applicants must have the legal right to work in the UK at the time of application and for the duration of their employment.

Last updated 30th September 2026