

Stage 1: Carousel Conversations

Notes for Bishops' Advisers

(Version: October 2021)

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THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

1. Introduction and Outline of the Stage 1 Carousel Conversations

Thank you for being a Bishops' Adviser in the Shared Discernment Process. It is an important role in the Church of England's discerning of those whom God is calling to serve as an ordained minister in his Church. Through it, and the advice you give, you will be assisting in the Bishops' ministry of discernment.

What is the Shared Discernment Process?

The Shared Discernment Process for recommending candidates for training for Ordained Ministry is the overarching name for the national process of discerning those whom God is calling to start training as ordained ministers in the Church of England.

The whole process has three elements:

- **Discernment** in the sponsoring diocese
- **Feedback and Advice** from panels in the national Shared Discernment Process
- **Decision** by the sponsoring bishop to sponsor for training

The second element, **Feedback and Advice** from panels in the national Shared Discernment Process, falls into two stages: the Stage 1 Carousel Conversations; and the Stage 2 Panel.

These notes for Advisers are concerned with the Stage 1 Carousel Conversations. Separate notes for Advisers are provided for the Stage 2 Panel.

The Stage 1 Carousel Conversations

The focus of the Stage 1 Carousel Conversations will be a set of six short one-to-one Conversations that Candidates have with Advisers, within an online Carousel process. It's described as a 'carousel' because Candidates move-on quickly from one Conversation to the next. The Conversations will cover aspects of four of the new discernment Qualities (*Love for God, Call to Ministry, Love for People and Fruitfulness*), and will have a particular focus on the *Church and World Domains*¹. The outcome of the Stage 1 Carousel Conversations will be reported to Dioceses in terms of feedback and advice to help inform the Diocese's decision regarding a Candidate's readiness to proceed to Stage 2 of the Shared Discernment Process. It is for the Diocese to decide when (or whether) to send the Candidate to a Stage 2 Panel. It will not be possible to come to Stage 2 Panel if a Stage 1 Carousel Day has not been completed.

Why Carousel Conversations?

The development of Carousel Conversations as a tool in the Shared Discernment Process has been influenced by the use of Multiple-Mini-Interviews (MMIs) in medical professions to replace interview panels in their selection processes over the last 15 years. A series of short, focussed, interviews in a circuit as a means of assessing whether someone should train as a doctor, dentist, nurse or other

¹ For further information about the Qualities please see the document 'Qualities for Discernment Priest and Distinctive Deacon (including Safeguarding and Discernment)'.

practitioner has been well-received by both interviewees and medical schools. They have been found to be efficient, potentially provide a higher level of mitigation of the effects of unconscious bias due to the greater number of interviewers involved, and are judged to have good 'predictive validity'; an interviewee's qualities as discerned at MMIs are generally well borne out when they enter their profession. Candidates often appreciate the greater chance afforded by MMIs to make a 'fresh start' or 'first impression'.

Online Process, Timing and Staffing

The Stage 1 Carousel Conversations will take place online, using the Zoom platform. Most will be held from November to February, with a few scheduled for other points in the year (after year 1). Each Carousel will be overseen by a member of the National Discernment Team, who will also be responsible for the subsequent reporting to the Diocese. Each Adviser will look after one 'station' throughout the Carousel process with Advisers being trained in all of the stations.

Information about Candidates provided in Advance for Advisers

The DDO and Candidate will jointly complete an online form in preparation for the Stage 1 Carousel Day which will include basic personal information about the Candidate and provide an opportunity for a Candidate to introduce themselves to the Carousel Advisers. DDOs can add any additional comments, and will also confirm that all DBS & Safeguarding/Safeguarding Training requirements have been met, as well as requirements related to *Issues in Human Sexuality*, the *Five Guiding Principles* and *Promoting a Safer Church*.

The Carousel Day

After an initial briefing, Candidates will participate in the Carousel Conversations, which will involve six 15-20 minute stations, with some additional breaks over the course of the event. Worship and prayer will be offered by a member of the National Discernment Team before the Carousel starts.

Carousel Conversations Topics

The six Conversation topics are:

1. **Priesthood/Diaconate:** exploring the Candidate's ability to describe what attracts them to ordained ministry and reflect with the Adviser on how their vocational exploration and experiences have helped clarify this calling.
2. **The Church of England:** exploring the Candidate's ability to reflect on the Church of England's mission and ministry within an ever-changing world, and to discuss the role their church or fresh expression plays in their locality, though its activities and distinctive character.
3. **Communicating Christian Faith:** exploring the Candidate's ability to express and articulate the Christian faith and their understanding of basic themes in scripture and the creeds. They are also asked to show how they can communicate their personal faith in a way that is understandable and attractive to others.
4. **Practical and Pastoral Care:** exploring the Candidate's ability to show how they exercise pastoral wisdom and compassion in real-life human situations, and that they understand the importance of appropriate boundaries in such situations.

5. **Living as a Disciple:** exploring the Candidate's ability to describe how they resource and develop themselves, and others, as a Christian disciple.
6. **Engaging with the World:** exploring the Candidate's ability to relate their Christian faith to the life of the world and to reflect on what mission means in their own context.

Each candidates will start at a different point of the Carousel, according to their timetable. Conversations will take different approaches and use a range of starting points including visual images, objects brought by the Candidate, a brief talk by the Candidate, hymns/worship songs/music chosen by the Candidate, video scenarios, recent current affairs stories including those involving the church, scriptural passages, books read/films and TV shows seen by the Candidate. For some Conversations the Candidate will be invited to do some preparation (for example drafting the brief talk and choosing an object they are invited to bring); in others they can show how they deal with the unexpected and think on their feet. No writing will be required of Candidates.

Assessment, Reporting And 'Red Flags'

At the end of each Carousel Conversation, the Adviser will award a score from 1 to 7, and write a few sentences about the Candidate's performance, in relation to the aspects of the Qualities explored in the Conversation. The assessment will be made in terms of helping inform the Diocese's decision regarding a Candidate's readiness to proceed to Stage 2 of the Shared Discernment Process. A score of 1 (the lowest score) would indicate that there is 'substantial work still to do', a score of 7 (the highest score) would indicate that the Candidate's 'strengths are very evident'. If a serious concern emerged, or 'Red Flag', Advisers will be asked to record this in greater detail. After the Carousel Conversations have been completed the member of the National Discernment Team overseeing the Carousel will prepare a summary report for the Diocese. The report, which would normally be on a single side of A4, will include the Candidate's scores from each Conversation, also represented graphically, and a summary of the Advisers' comments. If appropriate, suggestions for how the Candidate might address areas where the most work remains might be made. Any 'Red Flag' concerns would be explained in detail.

Stage 1 and Stage 2

The Report to the Diocese from Stage 1 will give the Diocese an independent assessment to help inform the Diocese's decision regarding the Candidate's readiness to proceed to Stage 2. The aspects of the Qualities explored in the Stage 1 Carousel Conversations will not be assessed again directly at Stage 2. However, the Stage 2 Advisers will have received the Stage 1 report, and the strengths and areas requiring greatest development identified in the report will influence how Stage 2 Advisers shape the in-depth Interviews of Stage 2 and the deeper assessment of the Qualities that Stage 2 Interviews will involve. In the paperwork submitted for Stage 2 the Candidate (and DDO) will have an opportunity to describe the work undertaken between the Stages and how their understanding of their vocation has continued to develop.

2. Qualities, Domains and what is assessed at the Stage 1 Carousel Conversations

In the Shared Discernment Process Candidates are assessed in relation to how they inhabit six *Qualities* that the Church of England understands underpin all Christian Ministry. To help make this assessment each Quality is approached across four *Domains* or contexts.

The Six Qualities are:

- Love for God
- Call to Ministry
- Love for People
- Wisdom
- Fruitfulness
- Potential

The Four Domains are:

- Christ
- Church
- World
- Self

These are presented as a grid for the purposes of the discernment process:

	<i>The Four Domains</i>				
	Christ	Church	World	Self	
<i>The Six Qualities</i>	Love for God				
	Call to Ministry				
	Love for People				
	Wisdom				
	Fruitfulness				
	Potential				

The Stage 1 Carousel Conversations focus on aspects of *four* of the Qualities. The remaining aspects, and the other two Qualities, are assessed at a Stage 2 Panel (along with the progress a Candidate has made between the two stages).

For full details of the Qualities and Domains, and which aspects are assessed at each Stage, please see the document *Qualities for Discernment Priest and Distinctive Deacon (including Safeguarding and Discernment)*. Within that document, the aspects of the Qualities you are assessing at Stage 1 are indicated in **BLUE** text. But to summarise them briefly here, they are:

LOVE FOR GOD. The Candidate:

- Communicates their own faith clearly and attractively [in deed as well as word]; (*Christ*)
- Can speak of, and show commitment to, the key beliefs of the Church as expressed in the Scriptures and the creeds; and can evidence effective and appropriate involvement in the leading (of aspects) of worship; (*Church*)

- Can talk about the loving and saving purposes of God in Christ for the whole of creation; and can draw on Biblical and theological ideas to discuss people's questions about life and faith and to reflect critically on their own faith; (*World*)
- Shows how Bible study forms their personal discipleship. (*Self*)

CALL TO MINISTRY. The Candidate:

- Can use the description of a Deacon [and Priest, if exploring a vocation to priesthood] in the ordinal to explore images that resonate for them; and can recognise and explain a range of different traditions in the Church of England and reflect on how their tradition sits within the breadth of traditions; (*Church*)
- Can show knowledge and understanding of the place of the Church of England in the life of the nation; and can explore how the Church proclaims afresh in each generation the Good News of Jesus Christ as society and culture change; (*World*)
- Can describe how they have practically tested their inner sense of call; for example, through undertaking new experiences or opportunities. (*Self*)

LOVE FOR PEOPLE. The Candidate:

- Can evidence good listening skills and empathy; and can evidence having shown compassion and/or exercised pastoral care in appropriate and sensitive ways. (*Church*)

FRUITFULNESS. The Candidate:

- Can reflect on the impact of enabling others to live out their faith and grow their discipleship; (*Christ*)
- Can reflect on how worship, especially sacramental worship, helps them and others to be more effective and faithful disciples; and can reflect on how Scripture helps them and others to be more effective and faithful disciples; (*Church*)
- Can communicate faith to people, including children and young people, in different contexts and situations; can story-tell in a creative way; can use current affairs and contemporary culture to draw out Gospel themes; and shows a wide and inclusive understanding of mission based on the Five Marks of Mission and how they might be lived out in a given context. (*World*)

Broadly, the aspects of these four Qualities listed above that are assessed at Stage 1 are those that can be described as relating to the Candidates 'knowing and doing'. (At Stage 2 there will be a more direct exploration of the Candidate's 'being and growing'.)

As an Adviser at the Stage 1 Carousel Conversations, you will know if a Candidate is seeking to discern a vocation to the Distinctive Diaconate or the Priesthood, and so can nuance the Conversation accordingly. It is at the Stage 2 Panel where it is explored whether a Candidate has the potential to offer ministry at Assistant or Incumbent level, or as an ordained pioneer minister or other expression of ministry.

3. The Carousel Conversations

A description of each of the Carousel Conversations is given below. There is a summary of the aim of the Conversation, details of the aspects of the Qualities the Conversation is assessing, the resource or ‘conversation starter’ that will be involved, what you as an Adviser will be looking for in this Conversation, and any additional information that is relevant.

Some Conversations explore aspects of several Qualities (for example *Conversation 3: Communicating Christian Faith* includes aspects of the *Love for God* and *Fruitfulness* Qualities). Two Qualities (*Wisdom* and *Potential*) are not assessed until Stage 2.

Though you could be called upon to look after any of the six Qualities at a Stage 1 Panel, you will be looking after just one of the Conversations at a given Carousel, and meeting each Candidate in turn for that Conversation.

Please keep the focus on the aspects of the Qualities the Conversation is seeking to explore, and resist the temptation to wander into other areas – the time available for each Conversation is tight enough as it is.

Conversation 1: Priesthood/Diaconate

Aim of Conversation

The aim of this Carousel Conversation is for the Candidate to describe what attracts them to ordained ministry as a Priest or a Distinctive Deacon. In the course of the Conversation, Candidates will be invited to reflect with the Adviser on how their vocational exploration and experiences have helped to clarify their calling.

Qualities Grids

The aspects of the Qualities Grids that this Conversation is seeking to explore are:

- The Candidate can use the description of a deacon and priest in the Ordinal to explore images that resonate for them (from Call to Ministry/Church)
- The Candidate can describe how they have practically tested their inner sense of call; for example, through undertaking new experiences or opportunities (from Call to Ministry/Self)

Conversation Starter

As a starting point for the Conversation, the Candidate will be invited to talk about an **image** (or **images**) related to priesthood and diaconate, that will be made available to them (and to you) via an internet link, which they can choose in their own time before the Conversation starts. Most of the images will be visual images, but there will also be a few Biblical images, in the form of short Biblical passages, for Candidates who would prefer a literary image. If a Candidate would rather talk about their vocation without using any image, then that is fine as well. Candidates will not be assessed on their choice of image (or their decision not to use an image).

What Advisers are assessing in this Carousel Conversation

In this Conversation you will be looking for evidence of the Candidate's capacity to:

- Show what it is about the ordained ministry to which they are drawn that excites them
- Reflect on images of priesthood or diaconate contained in the Ordinal that resonate with them
- Talk about the ways in which they have explored and tested their vocation and how this has deepened their understanding of their calling

Additional Information

If a Candidate would prefer to use a short personal story to illustrate what attracts them to ordained ministry, rather than one of the images offered, they are welcome to do so.

You will know the *Category of Ministry* for which the Candidate is being sponsored (i.e Priesthood or Distinctive Diaconate) and can focus the Conversation accordingly. Stage 1 does not require information about the anticipated *Focus of Ministry* for the Candidate (i.e Incumbent Level or Assistant Level, or whether it is envisaged the Candidate might offer ministry as a pioneer minister or other expression of ministry).

Conversation 2: The Church of England

Aim of Conversation

The aim of this Carousel Conversation is for the Candidate to reflect on the Church of England's mission and ministry within an ever-changing world, and to discuss the role their church or fresh expression plays in their locality through its activities and distinctive character.

Qualities Grids

The aspects of the Qualities Grids that this Conversation is seeking to explore are:

- The Candidate can recognise and explain a range of different traditions in the Church of England and reflect on how their tradition sits within the breadth of traditions (from Call to Ministry/Church)
- The Candidate can show knowledge and understanding of the place of the Church of England in the life of the nation (from Call to Ministry/World)
- The Candidate can explore how the church proclaims afresh in each generation the Good News of Jesus Christ as society and culture change (from Call to Ministry/World)

Conversation Starter

As a starting point for the Conversation, the Candidate will be invited to use a **recent story** in local or national media that relates to the Church of England, or is from the Church's daily news feed. The story will be given to the Candidate by you at the start of the Conversation, and you should not start the Conversation until the Candidate has had time to read the story. As well as discussing the general implications of the story for the Church's mission and ministry to the nation, you should enable the Candidate to talk about any ways in which the story is relevant to the life of their own

church. If the Candidate has experience in the wider Anglican Communion they are welcome to draw on this in the Conversation.

You will need to be able to share the Church news story (supplied to you in advance of the Carousel) with the Candidate and can do so via the Share Screen button on the Zoom interface. Have the document open already on your computer before starting the interview, then select it after you have hit the Share Screen button and the list of open documents appears. Give the Candidate sufficient time to read it (read it yourself slowly at the same time as them), then check they have read it and are happy to proceed with the Conversation before closing the screen sharing. (You might want to practice the mechanics of this beforehand.)

What Advisers are assessing in this Carousel Conversation

In this Conversation you will be looking for evidence of the Candidate's capacity to:

- Talk about the role of the Church of England within the life of the nation
- Reflect on the way the Church needs to change and adapt as it speaks of Christ afresh to the world
- Show that they understand what is distinctive about their own church tradition and how it enriches the broader life of the Church
- Show that they have some understanding of at least one other tradition within the Church of England, and that they are willing to work within the Church's diversity
- Show some understanding of how their church or fresh expression relates to their local context

Additional Information

Candidates are welcome to draw on any experience they might have in the wider Anglican Communion, or any other denominations of which they have experience, as they discuss with you the role of the Church of England locally and nationally.

Conversation 3: Communicating Christian Faith

Aim of Conversation

The aim of this Carousel Conversation is for the Candidate to demonstrate their ability to express and articulate the Christian faith and their understanding of basic themes in scripture and the creeds. They are also being asked to show how they can communicate their personal faith in a way that is understandable and attractive to others.

Qualities Grids

The aspects of the Qualities Grids that this Conversation is seeking to explore are:

- The Candidate communicates their own faith clearly and attractively (from Love for God/Christ)

- The Candidate can speak of and show commitment to the key beliefs of the Church as expressed in the Scriptures and the creeds (from Love for God /Church)
- The Candidate can talk about the loving and saving purposes of God in Christ for the whole of creation (from Love for God /World)
- The Candidate can communicate faith to people, including children and young people, in different contexts and situations (from Fruitfulness/World)
- The Candidate can story-tell in a creative way (from Fruitfulness/World)

Conversation Starter

As a starting point for the Conversation, the Candidate is invited to use **either**:

- An **object** or **image** that they have brought with them that would help them speak about their faith to another person.

or:

- The **words of a hymn** or **worship song** that they have brought with them, or other piece of **music** they can describe, that would help them speak about their faith to another person.

If the object the Candidate wishes to use is large, they are welcome to show a photo of the object instead. If using the words of a hymn or worship song they can narrate these to you rather than providing a text.

What Advisers are assessing in this Carousel Conversation

In this Conversation you will be looking for evidence of the Candidate's capacity to:

- Communicate the Christian faith, and their personal faith, in a way that is understandable, engaging and attractive for others
- Show they have an understanding of some key Biblical and theological themes, including those relating to creation, salvation and God's activity in the world
- Draw upon Biblical imagery and theological ideas in giving an account of their Christian faith

Additional Information

After welcoming the Candidate to this Carousel Conversation you should invite the Candidate to demonstrate how they might use the object, or words of the hymn/ worship song, or chosen piece of music, to communicate their Christian faith.

It is envisaged that if the Candidate chooses to use an object as the starting point for this station then it would be something other than the Bible or a cross (although both may be referred to in the course of the Conversation).

This Conversation is focussed on the Candidate's faith, both in terms of their personal commitment to and embodiment of their Christian believing, and their understanding and confession of the Christian faith as held and taught by the Church. You should make ensure the Conversation covers both areas, as you assess how the Candidate communicates Christian faith.

You will need to explore some basic doctrinal themes with the Candidate, and can assume they have some familiarity with the creeds as part of their life as a disciple, but you should not assume that the Candidate has undertaken any formal theological studies.

Conversation 4: Practical and Pastoral Care

Aim of Conversation

The aim of this Carousel Conversation is for the Candidate to show how they exercise pastoral wisdom and compassion in real-life human situations, and that they understand the importance of appropriate boundaries in such situations.

Qualities Grids

The aspects of the Qualities Grids that this Conversation is seeking to explore are:

- The Candidate can evidence good listening skills and empathy (from Love for People/Church)
- The Candidate can evidence having shown compassion and/or exercised pastoral care in appropriate and sensitive ways (Love for People/Church)

Conversation Starter

As a starting point for the Conversation, the Candidate will be invited to discuss with you a short **video clip** involving a pastoral situation that they will have watched in advance. The Candidate (and you) will have watched the video clip before they come to this Conversation. The same video clip will be used for all Candidates at the Carousel.

In the course of the Conversation the Candidate will be given, by you, a brief **email** to read. The email will represent a development in the situation presented in the video, and should be given to the Candidate at an appropriate point in the Conversation.

The text of the email will be given to you in advance of the Carousel. Have the document open already on your computer before starting the interview, then select it after you have hit the Share Screen button and the list of open documents appears. Give the Candidate sufficient time to read it (read it yourself slowly at the same time as them), then check they have read it and are happy to proceed with the Conversation before closing the screen sharing. (You might want to practice the mechanics of this beforehand.)

Also given to you in advance will be some scenario notes about the video clip, drawing out and explaining some of the themes it involves, and including some suggestions about aspects of the scenario you might want to explore with the Candidate.

What Advisers are assessing in this Carousel Conversation

In this Conversation you will be looking for evidence of the Candidate's capacity to:

- Show good listening skills and empathy
- Show compassion, or exercise pastoral care, in appropriate and sensitive ways

Additional Information

The video will be about 3 minutes in length and will feature a situation that is typical in day-to-day Church life. The issue will be clear, although there will be some levels of complexity involved.

Please ensure the Candidate has an opportunity in this Carousel Conversation to discuss some of their own experiences of offering pastoral care and the understanding they have gained as they have done so.

Conversation 5: Living as a Disciple

Aim of Conversation

The aim of this Carousel Conversation is for the Candidate to describe how they resource and develop themselves, and others, as a Christian disciple.

Qualities Grids

The aspects of the Qualities Grids that this Conversation is seeking to explore are:

- The Candidate can evidence effective and appropriate involvement in the leading of (acts of) worship (from Love for God/Church)
- The Candidate shows how Bible study forms their personal discipleship (from Love for God /Self)
- The Candidate can reflect on the impact of enabling others to live out their faith and grow their discipleship (from Fruitfulness /Christ)
- The Candidate can reflect on how worship, especially sacramental worship, helps them and others to be more effective and faithful disciples (from Fruitfulness /Church)
- The Candidate can reflect on how Scripture helps them and others to be more effective and faithful disciples (from Fruitfulness /Church)

Conversation Starter

As a starting point for the Conversation the Candidate is invited to give you a **short talk of up to 4 minutes** about *either* how they have enabled themselves to grow as a disciple, *or* how they have encouraged growth as a disciple in others. You will then explore with them aspects of the talk, and their life as a disciple.

The Candidate is welcome to show a single object or picture to illustrate their talk, if helpful, but it is fine if they prefer not to do this.

Please time the talk and tell the Candidate when 30 seconds remain before it should end. If the talk continues beyond 4 minutes, please gently ask the Candidate to stop.

What Advisers are assessing in this Carousel Conversation

In this Conversation you will be looking for evidence of the Candidate's capacity to:

- Explain how they seek to live out their discipleship day to day

- Reflect on how participation in worship (including sacramental worship) and engagement with Scripture has shaped and changed them
- Explain how they have enabled others to grow as disciples and what they have learnt through this

Additional Information

You will need to ensure the Conversation covers both how the Candidate has enabled themselves to grow as a disciple and how they have encouraged growth in others. Please therefore guide the Conversation to include the element that the Candidate has not spoken about in the short talk.

Whilst this Conversation is focused on resourcing discipleship, the Candidate's understanding of the nature of Christian discipleship will naturally be expressed during the course of the Conversation.

As well as exploring how participation in worship (and sacramental worship) resources the Candidate, please explore the pattern of personal prayer in the Candidate's life as a disciple.

Conversation 6: Engaging with the World

Aim of Conversation

The aim of this Carousel Conversation is for the Candidate to relate their Christian faith to the life of the world and to reflect on what mission means in their own context.

Qualities Grids

The aspects of the Qualities Grids that this Conversation is seeking to explore are:

- The Candidate can draw on Biblical and theological ideas to discuss people's questions about life and faith and reflect critically on their own faith (from Love for God/World)
- The Candidate can use current affairs and contemporary culture to draw out Gospel themes (from Fruitfulness /World)
- The Candidate shows a wide and inclusive understanding of mission based on the Five Marks of Mission and how they might be lived out in a given context (from Fruitfulness /World)

Conversation Starter

As a starting point for the Conversation the Candidate is invited to choose to **either:**

- Discuss a **news story** they have brought that is relevant to one of the Five Marks of Mission. This could be from any newspaper, magazine or website but *must be less than 6 months old*.
- *or* discuss a **film** or **TV programme** they have seen, or a book they have read, *within the last 6 months*, that is relevant to one of the Five Marks of Mission. It could be any type or style of film, TV programme or book.

or:

- Discuss a short and current (*within the last 6 months*) **news story** or **headline** from a newspaper, magazine or website that is relevant to one of the Five Marks of Mission, offered to them by the Adviser.

If the Candidate chooses to bring a news story they have read, they should be prepared to summarise its content for you. Similarly, they should be able to introduce a film or TV programme to you in a way that indicates why they have chosen it as a starting point for this Conversation.

If the Candidate chooses that you offer them a news story or headline, please use the story provided in advance of the Carousel.

You will need to be able to share the provided news story with the Candidate, if they chose this option. You can do so via the Share Screen at the bottom of the Zoom interface. Have the document open already on your computer before starting the interview, then select it when you have hit the Share Screen button and the list of open documents appears. Give the Candidate sufficient time to read it (read it yourself slowly at the same time as them), then check they have read it and are happy to proceed with the Conversation before closing the screen sharing. (You might want to practice the mechanics of this beforehand.)

What Advisers are assessing in this Carousel Conversation

In this Conversation you will be looking for evidence of the Candidate's capacity to:

- Make connections between the Gospel and the life of the world around them
- Draw on Biblical and theological ideas to engage with the questions people ask about life and faith
- Reflect on their own faith
- Show some understanding of the principles of mission, as expressed through the *Five Marks of Mission*

Additional Information

If the Candidate chooses a news story as a starting point for this Conversation, whilst there might be some overlap with Carousel Conversation 2 (The Church of England), which also uses a news story, the focus on this Conversation should be more broadly on the cultural and missiological opportunities and challenges facing Christians in engaging with the wider world, rather than on the Church of England's distinctive identity and role locally and nationally.

If the Candidate chooses as a starting point a film or TV programme they have seen, or a book they have read, it can be of any type or style, including those for children and young people.

4. Approach to the Conversations

Whilst you will be assessing the Candidate in terms of how far they currently inhabit the aspects of the Qualities with which the Conversation is concerned, it is important that your time with them remains one where a genuine conversation is taking place, and does not simply feel like a 'cross-examination' or a test where all the sharing is one-way. The tone should be one of a mutual exploration of fundamental aspects of what it means to be a disciple of Christ and someone who is seeking to hear where God is leading, and how these things relate to the particular circumstances of a Candidate's life and sense of vocation. Whilst 15 minutes is not a long time, experience suggests that it is sufficient to travel a surprising distance in exploring these matters, and that deep engagement is possible. The various 'Conversation Starters', all of which are focused on the experiential and non-theoretical, have been designed to open up relevant areas quickly. We hope you will find enough time for the discussions to develop with some freedom, even whilst it is important that all the aspects of the Qualities the Conversation is exploring with the Candidate are covered as these aspects will not be directly assessed again at Stage 2. This is explored further in the training Advisers receive.

5. The Carousel Day

All aspects of Stage 1 take place online, using Zoom (which is available at <https://zoom.us/>). Ahead of the Carousel day, the Panel Secretary overseeing the event will send you two Zoom links with password/login details:

- A Zoom link to the **Plenary Group Meeting**, where all the Candidates and Advisers will meet at the start of the Carousel for the initial meeting and worship. The meeting for all at the end of the Carousel will also take place using this Zoom link. Similarly, this is the link that will be used for the moderation meeting after the Carousel has ended and the Candidates have left. The Panel Secretary will be available at this link through the Carousel.
- A Zoom link for your **Carousel Conversation**. This meeting will persist throughout the duration of the Carousel and Candidates will come in and out of it at the time of their Conversation with you. You will be the ‘host’ of this meeting and Candidates will join a ‘waiting room’ until you are ready to let them in so the Conversation can begin.

If your Conversation involves you sharing resources with the Candidate during its course, the Panel Secretary will send you details about how to access these resources ahead of the Carousel.

Carousel Conversations will take place either in the morning and afternoon, or the afternoon and evening, of the same day and follow the respective indicative timetable below.

Adviser Timetable for a morning/afternoon Carousel

These Carousels will run with a maximum of 8 Candidates.

TIME	ACTIVITY
9.00	Initial meeting for Advisers and Panel Secretary
10.00	Welcome, introduction and prayer
10.30	Carousel Conversation 1
11.00	Carousel Conversation 2
11.30	- Break -
12.00	Carousel Conversation 3
12.30	Carousel Conversation 4
13.00	- Lunch Break -
13.45	Carousel Conversation 5
14.15	Carousel Conversation 6
14.45	- Break -
15.15	Carousel Conversation 7
15.45	Carousel Conversation 8
16.15	Farewell and closing prayer
16.30	Finish for Candidates Moderation Meeting for Advisers and Panel Secretary

Adviser Timetable for an afternoon/evening Carousel

These Carousels will run with a maximum of 6 Candidates.

TIME	ACTIVITY
14.00	Initial meeting for Advisers and Panel Secretary
15.00	Welcome, introduction and prayer
15.30	Carousel Conversation 1
16.00	Carousel Conversation 2
16.30	- Break -
17.00	Carousel Conversation 3
17.30	Carousel Conversation 4
18.00	- Dinner Break -
18.45	Carousel Conversation 5
19.15	Carousel Conversation 6
19.45	Farewell and closing prayer
20.00	Finish for Candidates Moderation Meeting for Advisers and Panel Secretary

6. Preparing for the Carousel Conversations

Ahead of the Carousel Day, the Panel Secretary will provide you with brief information about each Candidate you will be meeting. This information is intended to give the Candidate an opportunity to introduce themselves to you in advance, and, optionally, for the Candidate's (A)DDO to offer any additional information they think might be helpful to you. The Candidate will have seen, and agreed, everything that is shared with you.

This information has been kept to a minimum, so as to provide you with just the information you will need to have a sense of the Candidate before you meet them. All of the information is introductory, and it is not intended to (nor will it be able to) help you in assessing the Candidate in relation to the Qualities.

The information you will receive about each Candidate is:

- the Candidate's forename and surname
- the Candidate's gender as described by them
- the Candidate's Diocese
- the Candidate's (A)DDO
- whether it is envisaged by the Diocese that the Candidate's ministry will be that of a Priest or a Distinctive Deacon
- the introductory information about themselves the Candidate wishes to share with you
- information from the Candidate about any relevant disability
- [optional] any additional information the (A)DDO thinks will be helpful to you

Your Carousel Conversation

Ahead of the Carousel Day, please take time to ensure you are clear about what your Conversation involves, in terms of:

- the 'starting point' and methodologies the Conversation will involve
- the topics and aspects of the Qualities you will be covering in the Conversation, and what might be some helpful approaches/questions for opening these areas up
- any resources you will need to share with the Candidate in the course of the Conversation

We suggest that mentioning a detail or two from the Candidate's self-introduction might help you put them at ease at the start of the Conversation.

7. Assessing each Conversation

After each Conversation is completed and the Candidate has left, you are asked to record a short 'summary comment' of how far you believe the Candidate inhabits the relevant aspects of the Qualities you have been exploring with them, and to give the Candidate a score on a scale of 1 to 7 that also indicates this.

You will need to submit your summary and score electronically, and the Panel Secretary will explain ahead of the Carousel how this can be done.

If anything arises during the Conversation that gives you significant concerns of a safeguarding or similar nature (i.e. a 'Red Flag' concern), please notify the Panel Secretary immediately after the Conversation ends, and they will explain what to do.

The Summary Comment

This should be brief, rooted in what the Candidate has said, related to the aspects of the Qualities the Conversation is exploring, and giving something of a feel of the way the Conversation unfolded and why the particular score was given. However, if there are areas where a focus is needed before a Candidate might be ready to come to Stage 2, a more extended comment could be necessary.

Some example comments are as follows:

XXX's Conversation about what excites her about her calling was sophisticated and wide-ranging, and her reflections on images showed considerable insight. Exploring images of 'shepherd' and 'messenger,' and how placement experiences had enabled her to see how these models can be expressed in actual ministry, revealed a subtlety of thought and spiritual maturity to her vocational journey. We saw evidence that XXX is already inhabiting her calling. (Priesthood/Diaconate. Score 7)

XXX demonstrated a good understanding of how the Church of England reaches out and serves the community and the nation, and he spoke about how the Church of England is judged more rigorously because of its Established nature. XXX demonstrated his flexibility to adapt to changing culture whilst maintaining his evangelical core beliefs. XXX did acknowledge he had less experience of the liberal Catholic tradition but he was clearly open to learn from others. (Church of England. Score 6)

XXX showed she had listened to what lay behind the responses evident in the video scenario showing good insight into the situation and effective approaches to reaching resolution. Drawing on personal experience, which she acknowledged was, at this stage, somewhat limited, she showed wisdom, empathy and sensitivity in offering care for others. (Practical and Pastoral Care. Score 5)

The Score

Each Candidate should be given a score ranging from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest), depending on how the Conversation developed, following the descriptors explained in the table on the next page. Each score represents a band, rather than being a fixed point (so, for example, a Candidate might just have scored a 'six', or they might be a 'strong six, but not quite a seven').

As the outcome of Stage 1 is a summary for the Diocese of *how far* the Candidate currently inhabits the relevant aspects of the Qualities under assessment at the Carousel, there is no 'line' representing a 'yes/no'. However the scores highlighted in green in the table indicate that the Candidate inhabits the relevant qualities at a level that is at least commensurate for this stage of their vocational development. The scores highlighted in red indicate the Candidate has not yet reached a level where they sufficiently inhabit the qualities to proceed to a Stage 2 Panel and it is evident that significant work is needed first. The scores highlighted in the shades of orange indicate that the Candidate partly inhabits the Qualities at a commensurate level, and the Diocese should consider what further work may be necessary before the Candidate is ready for Stage 2.

Band Descriptors for Stage 1 Carousel Conversations

Band	Characteristics of Band
7	<p>Strengths very evident across the topic - exceeding what might be expected at this stage of development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows sophisticated and wide-ranging understanding or insight, or ability to articulate matters relating to the topic in depth. May show nuance or depth or may synthesise thoughts and ideas creatively May show that they can be innovative, original or inspiring Shows very significant inhabiting of the relevant quality.
6	<p>Strengths evident across the topic - some aspects exceed what might be expected at this stage of development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very good understanding or insight. Very clear capacity to articulate matters relating to the topic. Able to make very good connections which show breadth. May show creativity and good reflective ability Shows very good inhabiting of the relevant quality
5	<p>Competence clearly evident across topic - commensurate with this stage of development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good understanding and a reasonable capacity to articulate matters relating to the topic. In some questions may show the capacity to make connections or reflect, though not in depth. Shows competent inhabiting of the relevant quality.
4	<p>Reasonably competent in most aspects of the topic, though there may be limitations in some areas, or gaps in understanding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some capacity to articulate matters relating to the topic, though may be uneven. Some reflective capacity or ability to make connections but it is likely to be under-developed Inhabits the relevant quality reasonably well, probably with some gaps.
3	<p>Limited or superficial responses in most aspects of the topic though still relevant. Focussed and structured work needed to be ready for Stage 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some capacity to articulate some matters related to the topic, but patchy. Ability to reflect is significantly under-developed Suggests that they don't yet inhabit significant aspects of the quality so focused work may be needed before Stage 2.
2	<p>Responses suggest significant lack of understanding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity to articulate matters relating to the topic is limited Responses are often simplistic or not relevant and show little capacity to reflect. Definitely not yet inhabiting the relevant quality. Significant work needed before Stage 2
1	<p>Responses show substantial work still to do and show little understanding. There may be causes for concern.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses show significant weaknesses or reflect serious errors of understanding or perception. Responses show very little ability to reflect. Definitely not inhabiting the quality. Substantial work needed before Stage 2

8. Moderation

After all the Carousel Conversations have been completed, and the final meeting with the Candidates has taken place, the Panel Secretary will meet with you to moderate the outcomes for each Candidate. To do so, they will need copies of your summary sentences and scores in advance of moderation, and they will have explained to you how to send these to them.

It is not anticipated that moderation will normally be a lengthy process. However, it will provide the opportunity to discuss any inconsistencies between summary sentences and scores, or to deal with any other anomalies that might have arisen.

9. When Technical or other Problems arise, or there are Disclosures of a Safeguarding Nature

If any issues arise of a technical nature, contact your Panel Secretary immediately (via email or the telephone number they will have given you) and they will work with you and the Candidate(s) to resolve the problems. It is the Panel Secretary's responsibility to find a resolution, including stepping-in in an emergency.

If a problem of a non-technical nature occurs during a Conversation, please *if at all possible* complete the Conversation, and contact the Panel Secretary as soon as possible afterwards.

If a Candidate makes a disclosure of a safeguarding nature *that they have not previously made to another person*, please follow the guidance set out on the next page, and contact the Panel Secretary immediately after the Conversation has concluded. Similarly if you have any safeguarding concerns regarding a Candidate's situation, please contact the Panel Secretary immediately.

Responding to Disclosures

5 steps to follow



