

Job Description

Job Title	Head of Ministries Learning and Development
Area/Department	Ministries
Reporting to	Deputy General Secretary (Ministries)
Direct Reports	None
Location	The Office of General Assembly, 86 Tavistock Place, London, WC1H 9RT
Travel	Occasional travel in UK
Working Hours	35 hours per week OR Ministerial Working hours as agreed by the General Assembly
Job Summary: The Head of Ministries Learning and Development is responsible for ensuring, under the authority of the Ministries Committee, that appropriate Education and Learning is in place to support formation and training for the range of accredited, commissioned and ordained ministries of the church (excluding Education for Ministry 1 for Ministers of Word and Sacraments and CRCWs). The role holder will lead and support the work of the Ministries and Learning Forum in co-ordinating the development and delivery of learning and development across the United Reformed Church. Working collaboratively with, and accountable to, the Deputy General Secretary (Ministries) the role holder will support the wider work of the Ministries Committee and its sub-committees and deputise for the Deputy General Secretary (Ministries) as required. The Head of Ministries Learning and Development is a leadership role and leadership in the URC is distinct in its character because in a conciliar church, authority resides collectively in the Councils of the Church, reflecting the belief that decisions are best made together as the Body of Christ. Leadership is viewed as a spiritual gift meant to support and enable these councils in their deliberation and decision-making. Effective personal leadership, rooted in theological and spiritual insight, and built in relationship, serves to: • Guide councils in engaging scripture and theology; • Help understand the church's current context, opportunities, and the wider world; • Provide insight and expertise to inspire vision and discernment; • Foster inclusive and diverse participation across generations, cultures and theological perspectives; • Ensure the decisions of council's are effectively enacted; • encourage positive relationships between local churches, synods and the wider denomination; • Ensure transparent and responsible stewardship of all resources. Leadership empowers church councils to exercise their authority faithfully and wisely.	

Background: The URC is activist, dissenting and motivated by social justice. It is also committed to theological and cultural diversity. The URC is conciliar which is a core part of its ethos and polity and shapes how the Councils of the Church make decisions.

As the team serving General Assembly, our collective task is to implement the decisions of General Assembly and Assembly Executive. The teams which make up the Office of General Assembly (Faith in Action, Ministries, Governance and Administration and Resources) are diverse in their tasks and areas of expertise but are united by a common purpose; in our different ways we exist to support and enable and support the wider church and its members in local churches and across synods.

The Ministries department is responsible for oversight of the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, Church Related Community Work, Assembly Accredited Lay Preaching, Assembly Accredited Lay Pioneers and Eldership. The Ministries Department plays a key role in supporting and monitoring Church Related Community Work Projects, Special Category Ministry and Pioneering posts. Through its main committee and sub-committees, it is concerned with facilitating the ministry of the whole people of God in the United Reformed Church through working to promote the policies of the church; advocating ministry in its widest sense; supporting ministry in its varied forms; and facilitating the formation, training and learning for accredited ministries of the church. Through the Safeguarding Committee, and the professional advice of the Head of Safeguarding, the policies, processes and procedures of the church to ensure the safety of all children and vulnerable adults are developed and operated.

The Head of Ministries Learning and Development supports the work of the Ministries Committee. The role works collaboratively with, and is accountable to, the Deputy General Secretary (Ministries). These two roles, together, support the work of the Ministries Committee and its sub-committees and it is expected that the precise responsibilities will be determined between the two roles as need requires.

Principal responsibilities and duties

Financial Responsibility:

1. Work with the Deputy General Secretary (Ministries) to manage the Ministries budget in line with current policies and procedures
2. Act within the current delegated authority frameworks and ensure that team members do likewise.

Education and Learning for Accredited Ministries of the Church

1. Offer leadership to, and support of the Ministries Learning Forum, acting as its Executive Secretary and facilitating the co-ordination of its work in collaboration with Faith in Action Committee representatives.
2. Ensure that the Ministries Committee is enabled to fulfil its function of ensuring appropriate Education, Learning and formation is available for Assembly Accredited Lay

Preachers, Locally Recognised Worship Leaders, Assembly Accredited Lay Pioneers, Special Category Pioneers and Elders.

3. Ensure appropriate lifelong learning for the accredited ministries of the church ensuring they are accessible, inclusive, integrated and involve cooperation and collaboration across the whole denomination.
4. Ensure appropriate learning and development is provided for active retired ministers.

Supporting Learning and Development relationships and networks

1. Foster and develop effective working relationships and networking between Synods, Resource Centres for Learning, the Pioneer Hub and other relevant stakeholders in the delivery of Learning and Development for Accredited, Commissioned and Ordained ministries.
2. Foster and develop ecumenical possibilities for Ministries Learning and Development, where appropriate; represent the United Reformed Church ecumenically as appropriate and agreed with the line manager/ministry support.

Support and development of particular ministries of the church

1. On behalf of the Ministries Committee, exercise concern for those in chaplaincies in industry, healthcare, higher and further education, prisons and in the armed forces and 'special category' ministry and how their service relates to the URC through the councils of the church; ensure appropriate development opportunities where necessary and/or appropriate.
2. Support Synods in the development of applications for Special Category Pioneer posts and Pioneer projects, and to advise the Accreditations Sub-Committee in the assessment of such applications.
3. Facilitate the Lay Preaching Advocates Network.
4. Encourage and foster study for higher and research degrees by Ministers, CRCWs and others, and facilitate the work of the Continuing Studies Fund.

Engagement on behalf of Ministries with other areas of work

1. Undertake project work required by the Committee and the Deputy General Secretary (Ministries) as necessary.
2. Keep abreast of developments in theological education, learning and development to advise the life of the church as appropriate.
3. Act as Deputy to the Deputy General Secretary (Ministries) as required.

Key collaborations (outside of role area/team)

1. Deputy General Secretary (Faith in Action) (responsibility for lay discipleship development).
2. Senior Leadership Team.
3. RCL Principals.
4. Synod Training and Development Officers.

Working with Committees [and Volunteers]

This section lists the type and level of interaction that this role has with committees and other groups. It will vary from time to time and as directed by the Deputy General Secretary (Ministries).

1. Ministries Committee: *meets 5 times a year; in attendance.*
2. Accreditations Sub-Committee: *meets 5 times a year; in attendance.*
3. Ministries Learning Forum: *meets 3 times a year; acts as Executive Secretary.*
4. College Connective: *meets 3 times a year; in attendance.*
5. Newbigin Pioneering Hub Oversight Group: *regular meetings to oversee relationship with Congregational Federation, CMS and Seedbeds.*
6. Attend Heads of Areas meetings which meets throughout the year as needed.

Expected Standards

This section refers to the way in which the job is done rather than the duties/responsibilities.

The [C] Core or [E] Enhanced specified after each standard denotes the clause required for the job:

1. Promote a culture of open and effective communication to enable constructive relationships with colleagues and internal and external customers [E].
2. Actively foster an environment which nurtures equality and cherishes diversity [E].
3. Promote, monitor and maintain best practice in health, safety and security [E].
4. Work collaboratively to develop a customer service culture which fosters continuous improvement [E].
5. Take responsibility for own personal development and support the development of others to enhance their skills and knowledge [E].
6. Promote, monitor and maintain best practice in data protection principles and practice [E].
7. Actively promote, manage and maintain best practice in Safeguarding [E].

This job description reflects the overall scope and responsibilities of the role. However, it is not an exhaustive list, and the job holder is expected to undertake any other reasonable duties that might be requested. All jobs change or evolve over time to meet organisational or departmental needs, and this job description will therefore be subject to periodic review and change if required.

Updated December 2025

Person Specification

Job Title: Head of Ministries Learning and Development

Requirements	Essential	Desirable	Measurement
Education and qualifications	1. Educated to degree level in theology	• qualification in education • post-graduate qualification	Application form
Experience	2. Co-ordination and delivery of education and learning for adult learners 3. Engagement with a range of lay, ordained and commissioned Christian ministries 4. Leading projects as part of a team	• working with volunteers and networks • British Higher Education • organising events	Application form/ Interview
Knowledge	5. Theological reflective practice 6. The practice of lay and ordained ministries 7. Contemporary approaches to Christian learning and development	• structures and governance of the United Reformed Church • understanding of the ecclesiology, culture and ethos of the United Reformed Church • theological education	Application form/ Interview
Skills and Abilities	8. MS 365, particularly Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, SharePoint – intermediate level 9. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills 10. Ability to advocate and inspire people	• maintaining, editing and developing web pages • collecting and interpreting data to inform practice	Application form/ Interview/Test

	11. Working collaboratively 12. Networking and building effective relationships 13. An effective administrator with good organisational skills 14. Prioritising and problem solving		
Other	15. A practicing Christian, in membership of a Christian Church in membership of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland or the World Council of Churches.* 16. Enthusiasm for lay and ordained ministries 17. Willing to work flexibly, including some evenings and weekends 18. Enhanced DBS		Application form/ Interview

In accordance with the Equalities Act 2010, Part 1, Schedule 9, there is a genuine occupational requirement for the post holder to be a member of a Christian church in membership of the United Reformed Church or member of a Church which belongs to one or more of World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council (DECC), the Council for World Mission (CWM) Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS), Churches Together in England (CTE), Churches together in Wales (Cytun), Free Churches Group (FCG) or Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI)