

Diocese of St Albans
Board for Mission and Ministry
Training and Learning Grants
2019

For some years now, the Ministry Development Office has administered Training and Learning Grants for licensed clergy and Readers in the St Albans Diocese. The purpose of these grants exist to promote on-going training, learning and professional development. They are available to all clergy and Readers. This leaflet outlines the diocesan policy regarding these grants.

Training and Learning Grants

Given that the grants fund is limited in its provision, the Board for Mission and Ministry has established criteria for the allocation of grants. The purpose of any allocated grant is to **broaden and deepen** the ministry of the individual, and to better equip him or her for ministry both in their current position and in the light of any likely future deployment. The provision of any grant should also take into account the individual's agreed learning needs – often, but not necessarily, arising from an MMDR – and the needs of the Diocese as expressed in *Living God's Love*.

This means that the Ministry Development Office reserves the right *not* to award a grant should the application not meet these criteria. Thus, grants would not normally be awarded towards acquiring professional skills unrelated to ministry (for example, in accountancy), nor to general “life skills” (for example, driving lessons).

However, the Ministry Development Office is keen for grants to be used in creative and imaginative ways. Thus, as well as the obvious areas of church growth, mission and so on, grants *would* be available towards singing lessons (when singing is a core part of the liturgical tradition of the church), courses in biblical languages and general management skills (such as setting priorities).

Further points to note are as follows:

1. The level of grants for clergy is £160 *per annum* for clergy and £80 *per annum* for Readers.
2. In a change from previous practice, unspent grants may not be rolled over from one year to the next. However, should a clergyperson or Reader feel the need for a grant of more than the normal annual sum, the Director of Ministry (DOM) may at his or her discretion award larger grants, subject to the overall budget for grants.
3. St Albans Diocese charges a small amount for attendance at some training events. This will usually be in the region of £15 for a full day's training. Exceptions will be made for things which are deemed essential such as Safeguarding training and the New to the Diocese day. These costs may be claimed from individuals' Training and Learning Grants. Unless, sufficient notice is given, the charge will still be made even when an individual doesn't attend a course. This is to cover catering and other costs that may still be incurred by the Diocese.

4. Applications for Training and Learning Grants for events that are not run by the Diocese need to be made *in advance* and supported by appropriate confirmation of the event, its cost and so on. A copy of an invoice, receipt or booking confirmation would be ideal.
5. The Diocese recognises that “festivals” such as New Wine and Spring Harvest can be some help in developing an individual’s ministry. However, we wish to encourage focused, intentional professional and ministerial development. Thus, grants for any particular “festival” event are limited to one year in three.
6. Grants may be used for retreats, provided that it is clear that the retreat would enhance the person’s ministerial effectiveness. Examples would include a led retreat on a particular theme (such as Christian poetry), a retreat which follows a recognised spiritual discipline (such as Ignatian prayer and spirituality), or an individually guided retreat (during which the person meets daily with a retreat conductor). Unless one of these elements were included, grants would not normally be given for time away reading, walking or simply being in silence.
7. For clergy, up to £45 of the annual Training and Learning Grant may be used to cover the purchase of books or be used towards subscriptions to scholarly journals. Grants may not be used for the *Church Times* and other “popular” publications. They may not be used to cover the costs of Bible, prayer books or liturgical resources. Claims for book purchases should be made *within two months* of any purchase, and a receipt should be provided.
8. Training and Learning Grants may not be used towards events which are primarily concerned with the business or governance of an organisation, or for attending events whose primary purpose is “campaigning”.
9. Training and Learning Grants may not be used towards travel and accommodation, unless: (a) these are directly relevant to a particular training course, (b) the costs are not excessive, and (c) the PCC is unable to fund such costs itself.

Procedure

Applications for a Training and Learning Grant are made to the Ministry Development Administrator who, in the case claims above £50 or where there is some uncertainty, will seek approval from the DOM. For these larger grant requests, the DOM will encourage each person to use their grant in a balanced and varied way, rather than always using it for similar types of event. In this way personal and professional development is maximised.

Applications for Training and Learning Grants should be made *before* the relevant training event and supported by appropriate confirmation of the event, its cost and so on. A copy of an invoice, receipt or booking confirmation would be ideal.

Claims for book purchases should be made *within two months* of any purchase, and a receipt should be provided.

Payments are normally made through BACS direct to the grantee’s bank account.

In any cases of dispute or uncertainty about the payment of a grant, either the individual or the DOM may refer the matter to the relevant Archdeacon.

The Responsibility of the PCC

PCCs are strongly encouraged to take the on-going training of their clergy and Readers seriously. As a result, for any training event PCCs should consider providing funding towards on-going clergy and Reader training. PCCs should be reminded of their obligations to support their ministers' development as set out in the Central Stipends Authority's booklet "*The Parochial Expenses of the Clergy - A guide to their reimbursement*". This particularly includes responsibility for travel, books, retreats and annual conferences.

The Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull
Director of Ministry
11th October 2018