

United Reformed Church

Education for Ministry Phase Three (EM3) Guidelines



EM3 is the third and lifelong learning phase of learning and development for recognised Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Church Related Community Workers in the United Reformed Church. Education for ministry (EM) occurs within the context of the learning of the whole people of God and is quite specifically, education to enable people to engage in recognised ministry in the United Reformed Church. EM1 is organised by Resource Centres for Learning as formal preparation for entering recognised ministry, whilst EM2 is a structured programme of development opportunities in the first phase of recognised ministry, organised by Synods, Assembly offices and supported by EM2 Pastoral Advisors. EM3 is the third stage of training and support for ministry and lasts until ministers finish their URC recognised ministry. EM3, is the least structured phase, though some EM3 courses are mandatory. All three phases of Education for Ministry are to empower those in positions of responsibility in the URC to carry out the responsibilities in which they are engaged. Fundamentally, the URC believes that continuing professional development is part of what it is to be a minister.

EM3 is predominantly an education and learning approach to that empowerment. EM3 events or resources are those which help ministers to grow whilst anticipating that the achieved growth will benefit their place of ministry, will support their lifelong faith journeys and will encourage collegiality. Though some EM3 is mandatory and EM3 learning is most often characterised in learning events such as courses or accredited learning, the URC has long seen that learning can be gained in many ways and has agreed costs of retreats, accommodation and books for reading weeks or other resources.

There is a clear link between learning and its application. Learning of itself, without some anticipated application to ministry is unlikely to be considered as URC EM3. Any EM3 request is seen within the 'application to ministry' context in order to understand if a proposed learning or resource is an education and learning spend or more simply, a cost of ministry appropriately reimbursed by a pastorate. Agreed EM3 funded learning events and resources are those authorised by Synod Training (or other relevant) Officers.

Synod Training and Development Officers usually work with EM3ers to create a personal development plan and to offer support considering development opportunities. Many EM3ers join the mailing lists of learning providers to find relevant EM3 events.

*Details about funding and
specific opportunities are
overleaf*

Funding

EM3 ministers are eligible for up to £350 per year to use on EM3 events, including Refresher Courses and mandatory training, but excluding Sabbatical years. In Sabbatical years, the allowance rises to £1200 for the Sabbatical. Additionally, if EM3 ministers substantially change their type of ministry, there is a further two weeks' time allowance and an additional £350 to fund Transitional Training.

After completion of a standard application form (G1) and authorisation by the relevant Training and Development Officer, funding can be paid in arrears based on a claim and can be paid in advance directly to a learning provider. There may be additional funding available if engaging in a 'Belonging to the World Church' opportunity or engaging in a higher degree such as a Masters or PhD/DPhil.

URC Organised Opportunities

Synod Schools	Synod Schools are organised by individual or joint Synods, usually cover a four day period and may be offered every year.
Refresher Courses	Refresher Courses are organised by and offered over five days at two URC Resource Centres for Learning every year - Westminster College and The Windermere Centre. Ministers agree attendance with Synod Training and Development Officers, book their attendance directly with the RCL and claim through their EM3 allowance. Ministers may attend any year, though at least once every seven years is recommended.
Sabbaticals	Sabbaticals are organised in dialogue with Synod Training and Development Officers, usually cover up to three months and are available to every minister every ten years of their ministry.
Church Leadership Programme	The CLP is organised by a cross Synod training team and is offered to ministers ideally in years five to nine of their ministry. The CLP consists of two residential weeks at the Windermere Centre, six months apart in separate calendar years with non-residential learning and activity between the residential weeks.
Belonging to the World Church visits and exchanges	Belonging to the World Church visits and exchanges are organised in conjunction with the World Church Department. Funding is normally available for one visit every five years with applications being made through Synod Training and Development Officers.
Mandatory Courses	There will be a small range of mandatory courses, presently being developed (Jan 2013)

Other Opportunities

Further degrees	Further degrees are organised in dialogue with Synod Training and Development Officers and relevant learning providers.
Conferences	Conferences may be regular conferences associated with particular types of ministry or events around particular issues. If the 'application to ministry' criteria apply, these may be funded within EM3.
Transitional Training	When a minister substantially changes their type of ministry (chaplaincy to pastorate, pastorate to leadership...), then further training time and funding is available. The first stop for discussion is the relevant Synod Training and Development Officer or equivalent.
Other events or support	Many other kinds of support or physical resource may be considered within EM3. The first point of contact for discussion is the relevant Synod Training and Development Officer or equivalent.