

LAY CANDIDATES

36. To be eligible to stand for election to the House of Laity of the General Synod, a person must meet each of the following conditions⁵⁹ (but see also paragraph 37 below).

(1) The person has received Holy Communion in accordance with the practice of the Church of England, or a Church in communion with it, at least three times in the twelve months before the date of the dissolution of the General Synod.⁶⁰

(2) The person is confirmed (or ready and willing to be) or is a communicant member of a Church which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity⁶¹.

(3) The person is aged 18 or over on the date of the dissolution of the General Synod.

37. A candidate for the House of Laity must also meet one of the following conditions⁶².

(1) The person's name is on the roll of a parish in the diocese or, if not, is on—

- (a) the community roll of the cathedral church of the diocese, or
- (b) in the case of the diocese of London, the roll of a guild church⁶³, or
- (c) in the case of the diocese in Europe, the roll of a chaplaincy⁶⁴.

(2) If the person is in the diocese of London, the Dean of Westminster has declared the person to be a habitual worshipper at Westminster Abbey⁶⁵.

(3) If the person is in the diocese of Oxford—

- (a) the Dean of St. George's Chapel, Windsor has declared the person to be a habitual worshipper there, or
- (b) the Dean of Christ Church, Oxford has declared the person to be a habitual worshipper there⁶⁶.

⁵⁹ CRR Rule 50.

⁶⁰ Under CRR Rule 50(2), this condition is waived if the only reason for not complying is related to Covid in some way – for example, a need for self-isolation because of Covid.

⁶¹ Canon B15A, paragraph 1(b).

⁶² CRR Rule 50.

⁶³ CRR Rule 83(7) and (8).

⁶⁴ CRR Rule 82(1)(b).

⁶⁵ CRR Rule 50(6).

⁶⁶ CRR Rule 50(6).

(4) The leader of a mission initiative in the diocese has declared the person to be part of the worshipping community involved in the mission initiative⁶⁷.

34. Where a person in the category set out in paragraph 31(2) above has left a post licensed by the bishop, the person will be eligible to stand, despite not being a member of a deanery synod in the diocese, if the person has written permission to officiate⁵⁷.

35. In the category set out in paragraph 31(3) above, an elector in the universities and TEIs constituency who chooses to stand for election in a diocese should inform both the presiding officer for the diocese and the presiding officer for the universities and TEIs constituency (a post held by the provincial registrar for elections, who is also the chief legal adviser in the Legal Office). The elector will then be entitled to seek nomination as a candidate in the diocese but will not be entitled to nominate another candidate, or vote, in the diocesan election. If the diocese is divided into electoral areas, a university or TEI elector must choose in which electoral area to seek nomination. The elector will still have a vote in the election in the universities and TEIs constituency but will no longer be qualified to stand as a candidate in that constituency.

38. Where a cleric has executed a deed of relinquishment from Holy Orders under the Clerical Disabilities Act 1870 and the deed has been recorded, the person is no longer to be regarded as a cleric and is therefore entitled to stand for election to the House of Laity⁶⁸.

39. The time and date at which a person qualifies to stand for election to the House of Laity is, in most cases, 6.00 a.m. on the date of dissolution of the Synod. But a declaration may be made for a person mentioned in paragraph 37(2) to (4) above in the month before or after the dissolution – so, assuming dissolution on Tuesday 14th July, from Monday 15th June to Wednesday 12th August 2026 inclusive.

40. A person is disqualified from being nominated as a candidate for a lay election if the person has any of the paid offices or employments referred to in paragraph 32 above. The exception there for certain Church Commissioners also applies to a laity election.

41. A person who is qualified as set out in paragraphs 36 and 37 above but whose name is also on the roll of a parish in another diocese, or on the roll of a guild church in the diocese of London, must choose in which one of the dioceses to stand as a candidate⁶⁹. Note as a general point that a person may be qualified for election in a diocese without being a qualified elector there.

⁶⁷ CRR Rule 50(7).

⁶⁸ CRR Rule 83(10).

⁶⁹ CRR Rule 50(8).

42. Where the diocese is divided into electoral areas, a person qualified to stand in the diocese, as a result either of being on the roll of a parish in the diocese or of being on the community roll of the cathedral of the diocese, can choose in which electoral area to stand. The person is, accordingly, not restricted to standing in the electoral area which includes the parish or cathedral whose roll includes that person. No one may stand in more than one electoral area at the same time⁷⁰.

⁷⁰ CRR Rule 50(11).