

Step Guide - This document describes Step 7 of the Members' Pathway. It takes the candidate from the successful conclusion of his interview through to his initiation. As it represents the beginning of the mentoring process when co-ordination of the Pathway passes from the Lodge Membership Officer to the Lodge Mentor.

Importantly all members of the Lodge share in the universal responsibility of welcoming, caring for and supporting the Candidate as he prepares for and becomes a Freemason. Notably the Candidate / Initiate will form lasting impressions of Freemasonry based on his early experiences. If the preparation for Initiation is rushed or progresses at a pace that is uncomfortable for the Candidate the consequence may be his **early resignation**. It is imperative that the date of Initiation is planned by balancing the Lodge's programme of ceremonies with the needs, circumstances and interests of the Candidate. Ensure that there is sufficient time before the planned date of Initiation for the Candidate to be proposed in open Lodge at one meeting and for his election by ballot to take place at the next meeting. While Rule 159 of the Book of Constitutions allows for Initiation on the same day as election, unless there are grounds similar to those allowed under Rule 160 to accelerate the process as a matter of urgency, the best interests of the Candidate, and those of the Lodge, are normally served if his Initiation is scheduled for a meeting after that at which he is elected.

Selecting a Personal Mentor - The role profile for Personal Mentors details the main activities that they undertake, as well as the skills and qualities that good Personal Mentors possess. Successful mentoring involves: - A one-to-one communication process based on a mutually respectful and positive relationship - The process is driven by and responds to the needs of the person being mentored - These needs can be described as imparting information, personal contact with the Brother, encouragement & support and importantly being shown to be valued & recognised. - People differ in what they need in these four areas, and on how they want their needs to be met.

Effective Personal Mentors identify, discuss and review these needs with Candidates and new members at regular intervals. They also involve the sponsors and other members of the Lodge in providing care and support for candidates and new members. Ideally the Lodge Mentor will select one of the Candidate's sponsors to be his Personal Mentor as normally these two will already have a positive relationship. In the event that neither sponsor has the time, Masonic experience or availability, or the appropriate skills and qualities, another member may be selected as Personal Mentor. If a sponsor is also a new member, the same Personal Mentor may be assigned to support both the sponsor and his candidate. Each mentoring relationship should be monitored and changes made if the pairing is not proving effective or satisfactory to the people concerned.

Discussing Initiation with the Candidate - When discussing the ceremony of Initiation with the Candidate, strike a balance between telling him too much and not telling him enough. Too much prior information may damage the experience. Too little may leave the Candidate with unnecessary or uncomfortable apprehensions. The candidate will already have some information that can be discussed with non-Masons. In addition, explain the basic structure of the meeting; Lodge business, ceremony, Festive Board, informal time. Avoid describing the ceremony in any more detail than that it involves his introduction and identification, confirmation that he meets the qualifications for Initiation, an obligation in which he promises to abide by our rules and customs and an explanation of the symbols of the first degree, after which he will be an "Entered Apprentice Freemason". Shortly before the day of his Initiation, brief the candidate on what will be expected of him during the meeting. If

consideration is being given to Initiating a number of Candidates at the same meeting, discuss the options and process with each of them and address any issues that arise.

Guidelines for the Personal Mentor and Sponsors at the Initiation Meeting - Arrange for one or more of you to collect the Candidate from his home, or elsewhere, and taken to the meeting, and for him to be taken home again afterwards. On arrival at the Masonic Centre, introduce the Candidate to the Worshipful Master and the Junior Deacon before introducing him to and delivering him into the care of the Tyler. The ideal state in which the Candidate approaches his Initiation is one of anticipation, heightened awareness and nervousness, but this should be surrounded by supportive and encouraging Freemasons who are looking forward to welcoming a new Brother into their Lodge. Avoid saying anything, even in jest, that might have the effect of creating extra concern, anxiety or even fear. Even though well intended, misinformation at this stage can have a very damaging impact. Arrange seating so that the newly Initiated Brother will be placed and sat next to one or more of you at the end of the ceremony. Have some cash for him for the alms collection and a copy of the words for the Closing Ode.

In any procession from the Lodge Room after the meeting, remain with the Initiate as he walks out. Prepare a brief oral summary of the ceremony for the Initiate, to explain its meaning and significance. Find an opportunity and take the time to deliver this summary before he returns home. One opportunity would be at the festive board immediately prior to proposing the toast to the new Initiate. At the same time, check his response to the ceremony and address any questions or concerns. Provide a written copy of the summary (i.e. Peterborough Booklet) for him and explain that this can be shared with his spouse / partner on his return home. Introduce him to other members of the Lodge, taking care not to overwhelm him. Arrange to sit with or near the Initiate at the Festive Board. During the meal explain to him the toasts that are taken, as well the firing routine, and provide him with a copy of the words of any songs. Remind him that he will be asked to respond to a toast to his health. Write out the preamble for him and provide any further guidance or help he requires. Before the end of the meeting, arrange to meet the Initiate during the next week or two. Explain that the purpose of that informal meeting is to: - discuss what happened during his Initiation and what he needs to know for the immediate future. - practise with him the sign of the degree, and any firing undertaken at the Festive Board. - address any questions that he may have at this point. The next Step in the Pathway, Step 8: Supporting the new Freemason, provides guidance as to how to support the new member of the Lodge after the day of his Initiation.