Supplementary Questions

for use with the Framework for Training Ringers

These questions can help you think more deeply about the topics in the Framework, and stimulate your thoughts. They are not the only questions you could ask, so don't feel constrained by them.

An explanatory note can be downloaded from: http://www.cccbr.org.uk/edc/fwk.php

1 Management

1.1 Organisation

Effective training is about more than what an individual tutor does hands-on. Training a ringer is an extended process that involves many people. It is most likely to be effective if the overall process is coherently organised from initial recruiting through to ringers becoming self sufficient.

1.1.(a) Prior to starting training, a new recruit is given a full understanding of what is entailed in learning to ring and what commitment will be expected when (s)he can ring.

How do you make sure that your trainees know what being a ringer will entail?

What determines the information you provide beforehand and what only during training?

What determines the balance between information provided as hard (or soft) copy, and verbally?

How much do you show, demonstrate and explain about the workings of a bell to trainees?

How do you try to assess whether they are likely to have the requisite aptitudes and attitudes?

When would you provide some sort of trial sessions to allow for second thoughts?

1.1.(b) The rate at which new trainees are recruited takes account of the human resources available to provide adequate support for learning at each stage.

What determines when you start to train a new ringer?

What determines how many you train at once?

How do you determine whether to limit the number learning at once?

How do you determine the interval between starting new learners?

How do you ensure that each new trainee gets an appropriate amount of training time per week?

How do you ensure that each developing ringer gets an appropriate amount of rope time per week?

1.1.(c) The tutor(s) allocated to a recruit for initial training is suitable in temperament for the trainee.

Do you have any choice of tutor for initial training?

If not, how would you handle any problems caused by personality or teaching style?

How would you detect such problems?

If you have a choice of tutor, how do you allocate trainees to tutors?

And do your trainees have routine access to more than one tutor?

1.1.(d) Training sessions are scheduled to optimise the trainee's opportunity to progress.

How do you determine the number and frequency of training sessions?

How do you determine the best number of hours per week for initial tuition?

Do you manage to achieve enough hours per week for initial tuition of most trainees?

How do you determine the hours per week your improvers need to spend on the end of a rope?

Do you manage to achieve enough hours per week on a rope for most of your improvers?

Do you provide additional practice opportunities when you have trainees at the early stages –rounds and hunting – (and why or why not)?

Do you run special practices for particular groups, or particular topics (and why or why not)?

Do you exploit opportunities for additional practice for your trainees outside the tower?

1.2 Young people

Young people will become the next generation of ringers. When working with them our society expects us to adopt appropriate procedures, and these are normally agreed with the Parish. To train effectively, you need to ensure that you comply with these requirements in a practical way that does not unduly impair the benefit of either the training, or the ringing experience, that you give to the young people.

1.2.(a) When a young person is recruited, his/her parents are also given the full understanding of what is involved, and the support that they will be expected to provide. How do you involve parents before and after starting to train a young person? What information do you give to parents prior to agreeing to begin training a young person? How do you ensure parental support for regular attendance?

1.2.(b) Training sessions involving young people conform to the Parish's child protection policy Have you agreed details of a policy for ringers and ringing, that is in accord with the Parish's overall approach to child protection? Is the policy workable and practical within the constraints of everyday tower activity? Does the physical layout of the tower and any surrounding spaces ensure that unsupervised interaction between young people and adults will not take place during training? Do you consider the positive and negative aspects of using a parent (rather than someone else) as the second person present during initial one-to-one training sessions? Do you discuss this with the parents and/or the young person?

1.3 Assessment of results

Assessment is an essential part of any well managed process. Whether it is done formally or informally, you need to know how well things are working, both in terms of individual trainees and in terms of your whole training process.

1.3.(a) A trainee's progress is regularly assessed in an open and constructive way How do you assess trainees' progress during the early stages of teaching handling? How do you discuss progress with the trainee (and parents if appropriate)?

1.3.(b) Decisions about future training are based on reviews of progress What factors affect the style and content of one-to-one teaching sessions? What criteria determine when a trainee joins in collective practices with the other ringers? What criteria determine when individual bell control coaching is no longer given? What situation(s) would lead to a decision not to proceed with training? Who makes these judgements? How are they discussed with the trainee (and parents if appropriate)?

1.3.(c) Tutors are encouraged to assess the outcome of training methods they use How do you assess the effectiveness of the teaching methods you use? If you have more than one tutor, how do they benefit from each other's experience, techniques and approaches?

2 Resources

2.1 The training setting

The setting provides an important part of the overall training experience, and affects the outcome in several ways.

> **2.1.(a)   Training is conducted in comfortable surroundings**
>
> How is the environment in your tower conducive to good teaching and learning?
>
> Is there good lighting, fresh air and an equable temperature and humidity?
>
> Is there adequate space for the activities being undertaken?
>
> Is there low background noise and freedom from interruption or distractions?
>
> Is there suitable seating to rest between exercises?
>
> Is there somewhere suitable to hang coats
>
> Is there provision of water or soft drinks nearby, and availability of toilets?
>
> If the above are less than ideal what have you done, or could you do, to improve things?

> **2.1.(b)   The location used for training does not present undue safety hazards**
>
> What are the possible consequences of things breaking or not functioning correctly?
>
> What are the possible consequences of people making mistakes, not knowing how to do things, being careless or forgetting things?
>
> What measures have you taken, or what procedures do you have in place, to make accidents less likely and/or to reduce harm if they should occur?
>
> How will you know if things become less safe because something changes in the future?
>
> Have you ever conducted a risk assessment (and would you know how to if needed)?

2.2 Physical resources

Making the best use of available resources, recognising their constraints and where appropriate providing other resources, helps to make your training more effective.

> **2.2.(a)   Resources are provided to demonstrate how a bell works and is rung**
>
> What visual aids do you use to demonstrate how a bell works, and how what it does relates to the person ringing it?

> **2.2.(b)   Bell(s) used for initial training are chosen to present the trainee with least handling challenge**
>
> What determines which bell(s) each trainee is initially taught on?
>
> If your bells present problems to trainees how do you minimise the effect on the training?

> **2.2.(c)   Trainees ring bells of progressively different characteristics to help develop rounded skills**
>
> What determines how many other bells each trainee rings during initial one-to-one tuition?
>
> How do you teach your trainees to overcome handling challenges presented by different bells?

> **2.2.(d)   Different resources are used to gain benefit from different exercises**
>
> What means do you provide to cater for trainees and tutors of different stature, and to enable both to perform effectively?
>
> What aids do you provide to help trainees see their own behaviour on the end of the rope?
>
> What aids do you provide to help trainees develop rhythmic, listening or other skills?
>
> What other training aids do you provide (and use)?
>
> Do you encourage trainees to practise some things at home with improvised aids?

> **2.2.(e)   Effective use is made of available resources**
>
> Do you make effective use of any training aids that you have, eg simulator, video camera, ...?
>
> If your tower, etc is not ideal, do you find ways to offset the limitations it otherwise imposes?

3 People

The questions you need to ask about these aspects are more difficult to answer than some of the others. Unless you have been closely involved with the teaching process, as a tutor, or observing and talking to both tutors and trainees, you are unlikely to be able to offer other than shallow answers. These questions are fundamental to the effectiveness of your tower's teaching.

*Note that some questions relate to teaching **bell handling**, ie becoming safe on the end of a rope, while others relate to teaching **bell control**, ie making the bell accurately do the right thing.*

3.1 Personal ringing competence

Quite apart from their teaching ability, all those involved in hands-on training need adequate personal mastery of bell control skills.

3.1.(a)   Tutors who teach bellhandling can safely and confidently handle any bell on which training is undertaken, using minimal concentration

Are all of your tutors sufficiently secure in their ability to control a bell that they have adequate margin of concentration to focus entirely on the trainee and the trainee's needs?

It is difficult to get inside the heads of your tutors, to know how much concentration is left over after what they need to handle a bell. There is no single way, and you and your tutors must make a judgement, but ability to do any of the following can provide useful indicators.

- *Ring a bell accurately in rounds while talking about something else*
- *Ring a bell tidily while looking away from the rope at something else to the side*
- *Ring a bell one handed in rounds*
- *Bring a bell immediately back to the balance after it suddenly drops*
- *Ring a bell smoothly and tidily with eyes closed*

3.1.(b)   Tutors who teach bellhandling can intervene in a timely and safe way if necessary

Are all of your tutors able to intervene quickly, incisively and effectively if it is necessary to prevent a hazard to the trainee (or anyone else)?

Do your tutors have sufficient confidence in their ability to intervene when required, that they will not intervene unless it is actually necessary?

Intervention could include removing the rope if it falls anywhere unsafe, eg on the shoulders or under the arm, or taking over the rope at one or both strokes if the trainee gets into difficulty,

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3.1.(c)   Tutors who teach bellhandling can set a good example, and demonstrate any aspect of bell control

Can all your tutors perform all of the exercises that students are required to do, to a reasonable standard?

Can all your tutors demonstrate all ringing actions with a tidy (but not necessarily perfect) ringing style?

Are any tutors with minor imperfections in their own style (and able to ring adequately despite it) aware of them sufficiently to be able to explain to trainees why it is undesirable to copy them?

3.1.(d)   Ringers supervising novices can intervene in a timely and safe way if necessary

Do you use 'assistant tutors', ringers other than the tutor in a position where he or she might have to make an intervention, but who does not take responsibility for the whole training process?

If so then ask the questions in 3.1(a) and 3.1(b) about them too, taking account of the 'difficulty' of the situations that the relevant tutor would allocate to them.

3.1.(e)   If more than one person working as a team undertakes training, the collective competence of the teaching team is adequate

Does your training regime includes any of the following?

- A novice tutor learning to teach under the direction of an experienced tutor
- An inexperienced tutor running a training session with an experienced tutor present

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> • Medium experienced tutors working together to help each other
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> If so, then as well as asking questions about individual competence, consider the way that responsibility will be shared, when asking the questions in 3.1(a) to 3.1(d).

3.2 Teaching skills

Competent tutors are essential to good training, but there are degrees and types of competence. You need to understand this to make most effective use of the skills available to your tower.

> **3.2.(a) Tutors who teach bell control understand essential ringing skills**
>
> Do your tutors understand the different component skills needed for effective ringing, and how they complement each other? *(This is different from asking if they possess the skills themselves.)*

> **3.2.(b) Tutors understand the learning process**
>
> Do your tutors understand the different ways that people learn?
>
> Can your tutors recognise when a different approach, or a change of tutor, would better match the way a particular trainee learns?

> **3.2.(c) Tutors who teach bell control can observe trainees and diagnose problems**
>
> Can your tutors observe trainee actions, detect any problems and diagnose likely causes?
>
> Can your tutors detect where improvement is needed, and identify actions or exercises that would help produce the desired improvement?

> **3.2.(d) Tutors explain things clearly, and check that the trainee understands**
>
> Do your tutors clearly explain the way things are done?
>
> Do your trainees normally understand what they are told?
>
> Do your tutors listen to trainees, to find out their problems, and what they do or don't understand?

> **3.2.(e) Tutors develop a rapport with their trainees**
>
> What sort of relationship do your tutors have with your trainees?
>
> How does it affect the effectiveness and progress of training?
>
> Do your trainees spontaneously turn to their tutors for advice at all stages of their training?

3.3 Development of tutors

Tutors need developing as well as trainees. The long term health of your band depends on improvement of your current tutors and the creation of future tutors.

If you are the only tutor in a band of inexperienced ringers, this might seem impossible, but it is a valid long term aim. New ringers can become competent ringers and then develop into competent tutors quite quickly in the right circumstances.

> **3.3.(a) The band develops new tutors to ensure continuity**
>
> How many of your ringers take an interest in the development of ringing skills in others, as well as in the development of their own skills?
>
> How many of your competent ringers become involved with training sessions?
>
> How many of your ringers are competent to teach handling?
>
> Do you have 'apprentice tutors' (why or why not)?
>
> How else do you encourage interest in training among your ringers?

> **3.3.(b) The band encourages its existing tutors to develop their teaching skills**
>
> Do your tutors compare notes about different approaches?
>
> Do your tutors ever observe and comment on each other's teaching sessions?
>
> Do any of your tutors participate in courses, seminars or discussions on training?
>
> Do your tutors exchange ideas with other tutors outside the tower, for example as members of the NRT (Network for Ringing Training)?

3.4 Participation of trainees

Teaching is not a one-way process. Learning is more effective when trainees are actively engaged. They also have responsibilities

3.4.(a)	**Trainees actively participate in their development**

Do your trainees want to learn (and how do you know)?

Do your trainees ask about their difficulties and needs, and tell their tutor about their successes?

3.4.(b)	**Trainees take an appropriate share of responsibility for safety**

Does the behaviour of your trainees contribute to safety?

If not, do you understand why?

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4 Teaching process

4.1 Bell control

The way your ringers are taught bell handling will be a major factor in their ability to develop accurate bell control, and lay foundations on which they can later build.

4.1.(a) Trainees are taught to control a bell using a systematic process of explanation, demonstration, supervised rehearsal and critical feedback

Do you know how each of your tutors works in individual tuition sessions?

How do they mix demonstration and explanation with letting the trainee do things?

Are all trainee exercises explained and demonstrated before the trainee does them?

Do your tutors exploit a variety of different exercises for specific purposes?

How do your tutors know whether their trainees understand what they are doing?

4.1.(b) Trainees are taught a basic safety drill before they learn to ring

Do you know when all of your trainees are taught to recognise and react to a failed stay?

Do you know when all of your trainees are taught to how to react to a dropped bell and flapping rope, in order to achieve a safe condition?

Do you know how your trainees will react to a missed sally?

4.1.(c) Physical tutor intervention is kept to the minimum while a trainee is ringing

Do your tutors encourage their trainees to feel what the bell is doing?

What sequences of exercises, at what stages of development, do your tutors use to ensure their trainees can be given freedom to ring the bell without risk of putting it into an unsafe state?

4.1.(d) Trainees are taught to raise and lower a bell early in their training

How early in their training could your trainees safely lower a bell, if for any reason they had to, and if no one present could help them?

How early in their training could your trainees safely get a bell up and set it, if for any reason it had badly dropped, and if no one present could help them?

How soon can your new ringers participate fully in raising and lowering bells before and after ringing?

4.1.(e) Trainees are coached to perfect their bell control skills alongside learning to ring methods

How long is it normal to offer constructive criticism and advice about bell control to your trainees?

Do bell control problems impair the quality of your trainee's performance when ringing changes?

If so, how do you help them to overcome them?

4.2 Collective ringing

Ringing is a collective activity. The way you help your trainees to make the transition from solo to sequential ringing will have a big impact on how easily they can make further progress.

4.2.(a) Trainees are taught to synchronise a bell with others using a systematic process of explanation, rehearsal and critical feedback

How do you introduce your trainees to the task of synchronising the bell to fit in with an external rhythm?

What advice do your trainees receive on speed control and how to achieve it?

How do you give your trainees opportunities to ring in Rounds that are sufficiently well struck for them to be able to tell whether or not their own bell is in the right place?

How do you help your trainees to develop a proper balance between rhythm, listening and ropesight?

How do your trainees know how good their striking is (and how do you know)?

4.2.(b) Trainees are encouraged to develop a sense of rhythm by a combination of suitable exercises and coaching

What exercises do you use to help trainees develop a sense of rhythm when ringing?

How do you encourage your trainees to ring rhythmically?

To what extent do your trainees use rhythm when ringing (and how do you know)?

4.2.(c) Trainees are encouraged to develop listening skills by a combination of suitable exercises and coaching

What exercises do you use to help trainees develop their listening skills?

How do you encourage your trainees to use, and rely on, their listening?

To what extent are your trainees able to hear their striking (and how do you know)?

4.2.(d) Trainees are encouraged to develop ropesight by a combination of suitable exercises and coaching

What exercises do you use to help trainees develop their ropesight?

How do you encourage your trainees to see what is happening around them?

To what extent are your trainees able to use their ropesight (and how do you know)?

4.3 Change ringing

Change ringing is the essence of English style ringing, and the end goal of your training is therefore to produce competent change ringers. In most bands that means method ringing, though in towers with a call change tradition, it is that which must be perfected for performance. *Some of the questions in this section relate specifically to method ringing.*

4.3.(a) Trainees are taught change ringing using a systematic process of explanation, rehearsal and critical feedback

What controls when and how your developing ringers take new steps (including small ones) in method ringing?

How are new things explained to trainees, and how long before the trainee has to try to do them?

How is what your developing ringers learn on different occasions, and perhaps in different places, co-ordinated?

4.3.(b) Trainees are taught the basics of changeringing using simple exercises and methods

How are your trainees introduced to the mechanics of methods (hunting, place-making, dodging)?

Do any of your trainees progress to method ringing while their performance is impaired by problems with moving the bell to the required positions?

4.3.(c)   Trainees are given opportunities to progress in small steps where possible

How do you provide opportunities for trainees to develop towards the band's normal repertoire, without the need to learn many different things at once?

Do your trainees ever have difficulty with one thing, while simultaneously trying to develop something else?

If so, how do you help them?

4.3.(d)   Trainees are encouraged to supplement practical experience with study of theory

How much preparation do your developing ringers do (how do you know)?

Is it adequate for them to gain the best benefit of both their ringing time, and the time invested by the rest of the band ringing with them?

4.3.(e)   Input from 'minders' while trainees are ringing is kept to a minimum but available if needed

What decides whether your trainees have a minder during a touch?

What guidance do your minders have about when and when not to offer advice?

How effective is your use of minders (how do you know)?

4.3.(f)   Trainees are encouraged to develop an understanding of what they are ringing

How many of your ringers can explain 'how' methods work, or 'why' they are as they are?

How do they share this knowledge with your developing ringers?

4.3.(g)   Trainees are encouraged to aspire to being able to call things that they can ring

What determines when one of your ringers starts to call things?

What advice and coaching do you give to people learning to call?

Do all of your ringers who are able to do so, get enough opportunities to call things?

4.4 Broad development

4.4.(a)   Trainees are encouraged to take responsibility for their own continuing development

How do your new ringers make the transition from 'being taught' to 'developing themselves'?

How are your new ringers introduced to the wider ringing world?

4.4.(b)   New ringers are encouraged to take an active role in ringing.

What opportunities are there for your new ringers to contribute to the life and running of the band?