

Paper C1

Communications committee
The URC's publications policy

United
Reformed
Church
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Church 2016



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Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Peter Knowles peter.knowles@bbc.co.uk
Action required	Decision
Draft resolution(s)	Mission Council thanks the communications committee for its work on the publications policy, and directs the committee to work on the basis of this policy until further notice.

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	The communications committee sets out what type of publications it will publish, and the process authors should follow when submitting manuscripts
Main points	The publications process and the associated legalities
Previous relevant documents	None.
Consultation has taken place with...	The communications committee and departmental staff

Summary of Impact

Financial	None.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	Publishing a range of 'faithful and thoughtful' books may raise our profile outside the denomination.

The URC's publications policy

1. Introduction

1.1 In the United Reformed Church decisions about what will be published are made by the publications board, a sub-committee of the communications committee. Details of what we will publish, and the process for authors seeking publication by the URC, are detailed below.

2. What we will publish

2.1 The United Reformed Church will prioritise the publication of books that:

- Resource the local churches
- Are relevant to 21st century life and ministry
- Celebrate the Good News of the Gospel
- Are of interest to Christians within – and ideally without – the United Reformed Church
- Are fiscally responsible
- Original works (noting that compilations including work already published will be considered).

3. The publishing process

3.1 'On spec' submissions of complete manuscripts will not be considered.

3.2 Authors are required to submit a synopsis and sample chapter(s) for consideration, to the publications office.

3.3 Synopses and sample chapters will be considered for publication by at least one member of the publications board.

3.4 If the initial feedback is favourable, two more members of the board will read it, before making a decision re publishing it. It may be that those considering manuscripts for publication will seek the views of others with specialist knowledge/experience of the manuscript's subject matter.

3.5 The publications board, in collaboration with the graphics office and the Head of Communications, will recommend both the most suitable medium for the manuscript, which may include online, self-publishing or print-on-demand publication, and the size of the print run(s).

3.6 The graphics and print office will, when asked, provide quotes for design and print costs.

3.7 The Head of Communications in consultation with the chair of the publications board will set the retail price for the publication.

3.8 The Head of Communications in consultation with the graphics office and the chair of the publications board will set the production schedule and publication date.

3.9 Editing the manuscripts will be done by suitable qualified/experienced volunteer editors.

3.10 Final decisions on all manuscripts will be made jointly by the Head of Communications and the convenor of the publications board – and may be referred to the communications committee convenor or full committee.

4. Commissioning original books

4.1 In line with the publications strategy, the communications department intend to commission original works, to meet identified needs and gaps in the market. We expect to begin by commissioning one or two new works a year. Final decisions with regard to commissioning (partially with regard to the production capacity of the department staff) lie with the communications committee and Head of Communications but it is expected that the chair of the publications board will actively participate in the process.

4.2 The communications committee agreed that commissioned titles should not only meet the criteria detailed in the 'what we will publish' section above, but will also aim to be faithful and thoughtful, focussing on:

- Bible studies
- Liturgy and;
- Reformed theology.

5. The legalities: contracts, copyright and fees

5.1 Contracts: The communications department will issue a short and simple contract to all authors.

5.2 Copyright: The standard contract will include shared copyright, where both the URC and the author have equal rights over the material. Other agreements may be entered into negotiation prior to the contract being signed.

5.3 Fees/royalties: Authors will receive six complimentary copies of their book, once published. Authors will only receive financial payment when the URC has recouped the production costs of the title – on this basis authors will receive royalties amounting to 20% of the sale price.