

The Ethos Group Terms of Reference

The Ethos Group scrutinises draft copy of Methodist Church resources for their theological, political, social, ethical or liturgical content (unless they are included in one of the categories not needing referral below). This list is not intended to be fully inclusive; there will always be need for conversation for some pieces.

Purpose of the Ethos Group

To support originators/writing teams by scrutinising content for resources (web copy, film, social media, pdf or print) to ensure that what we are saying is authentically Methodist. The Ethos Group's scrutiny is to ensure resources appropriately meet the Church's diverse audiences and range of activities: • presbyters and deacons • local church members • unaffiliated people • young people • work with other Christian Churches and in dialogue with other faiths • the Inclusive Methodist Church and Church at the Margins • Heritage • identity and values of the Methodist Church • global Church Partners.

The Ethos Group is the first point of contact, via the Convenor, for advice and scrutiny. The Convener is available for early conversations about specific pieces of work to decide whether referral is necessary, and may seek advice from others.

Members of the Ethos Group have a range of expertise including Faith and Order (F&O, this member is nominated by the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee); Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) encompassing Justice, Dignity and Solidarity (JDS); social issues; safeguarding (for the Convenor to consult with Safeguarding team as necessary); ecumenism (up to now the Convenor's responsibility); representing young people and Methodist Conference decision-making.

Where publications originate from outside the Connexional Team to be published or approved by the Methodist Church there is always a requirement for scrutiny. This will normally be the task of the Ethos Group. Teams may offer links to external resources, but such 'endorsement' is the responsibility of that team and it is clear the linked item is not a resource of the Methodist Church.

Resources NOT requiring review by the Ethos Group

There are some circumstances in which it is clear that no referral to the Ethos Group is normally required including:

- Publications produced in response to the direction of the Conference that are already subject to scrutiny by groups or committees appointed by the Conference or the Council. For example, resources produced by the Ministries team are scrutinised by the Ministries Committee.
- Publications of the Conference Office or those scrutinised by the Secretariat, including content by the President and Vice-President.
- Publications of the Faith and Order Committee or sub-groups of the Faith and Order Committee.
- Short-term press work and related quick turn-around media content.
- Items being reprinted (that have been previously reviewed by Ethos, unless there is substantial revision).

Process for scrutiny of content by the Ethos Group

1. Team leaders continue to hold responsibility for oversight of proposals/Resource Planner submissions for digital and paper publications.
2. Production scheduling includes Ethos Group review time at four weeks.
3. Editorial in Publishing Services update the Ethos Group on forthcoming content/publications requiring scrutiny. This enables a smooth flow of necessary information through the Ethos Group Convenor and for booking in scrutiny time with relevant Ethos members.
4. The Convener receives material from the Commissioning Editor, agrees deadlines for response, and circulates to members of the Ethos Group. It is not always necessary to include all members of the group in circulation.
5. The Convener receives and collates responses from the group before returning to the Commissioning Editor. Normally the collated responses are shared with the Ethos Group.