



# The Members' Pathway: *Level 3*

PLAN > Lodge Planning > *Understanding your Lodge*

## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR REVIEWING A LODGE

*The following questions are intended for use in a Lodge review.*

*Select and / or adapt the questions to suit your purposes and situation. A Lodge review is an extensive process. Therefore, you may find it useful to build the questions you choose into a questionnaire. You can then use the questionnaire to gather individual views, pool them for analysis and presentation, and then use the results as the basis for your detailed review discussions.*

See "[Understanding your Lodge](#)" for more guidance on the Lodge review process.

### 1. *Circumstances or current situation of the Lodge*

#### 1.1. Description of the Lodge origins and its situation today

- What are the noteworthy points related to the Lodge's history, current membership, location, etc?
- What is unique or distinctive about the Lodge?
- Was the Lodge established primarily for a particular group of people?
- *Are these details still relevant and are they likely to continue to be so? Do members want to continue with these features or change them?*
  
- How many meetings do the Lodge have each year?
- On what days, dates and at what times does it meet each year?
- Where does it meet for each of its meetings?
- *Are these details still appropriate for current and likely future members? Do members want to continue with these details or change them?*

#### 1.2. Health of the Lodge

- How many subscribing members are there in the Lodge today?
- In the last five years has membership increased, remained stable or decreased?
- What is the Lodge's age profile? (eg, age of youngest member, age of oldest member, spread of ages in between, average age of all members)
- What is the mix of occupations, religions and ethnic origins of the members of the Lodge?
- Where traditionally have new members come from?
- *Is the traditional source of new members still likely to produce candidates? Where else could new members come from?*
  
- How many Initiates have the Lodge had in the last twelve months / 2-3 years / 4-5 years / 6-10 years?
- How many Joining members have it had in the last twelve months / 2-3 years / 4-5 years / 6-10 years?
- How many resignations / cessations / exclusions have the Lodge had in the last twelve months / 2-3 years / 4-5 years / 6-10 years?
- *Have we been able to retain Initiates and Joining members? If not, do members understand the reasons they left and what we could do to improve retention?*



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- What proportion of members are regular attenders?
- How many visitors attend each meeting?
- What attracts members and visitors to the Lodge?
- *If appropriate, how could the attendance of members be improved and the number of visitors be increased?*
  
- Given all of the above, how could the health of the Lodge be described?
- Has the health of the Lodge changed in recent years and, if so, how?
- How is it likely to change in the next few years if things continue as they are?
- *What should be changed about the Lodge to make it more healthy, if anything?*

#### 1.3. How would the Lodge be described in terms of its

- Ritual (eg, it seeks excellence / members help people to do their best / ritual is shared out among new members / ritual is shared out among Past Masters, etc)
- Lodge traditions
- Education about Freemasonry
- Communication (eg, all communications are read in full at meetings / communications are sent to members as they are received / kept to the minimum in the Lodge meeting)
- Meetings (eg, meetings are enjoyable / dignified / brisk / attract visitors / rarely have visitors, etc)
- Festive board (eg, formal seating / buffets / full toasts always given / abridged toasts / white table once a year, etc)
- Social events (eg, no social events / formal events / informal events / attract interested non-Masonic guests / at Lodge meetings / never at Lodge meetings, etc)
- Charity (eg, charities supported / use of Relief Chest or Benevolent Fund / how decisions are made / fundraising methods, etc)
- Support for new members (eg, planned mentoring / involvement / Lodge of Instruction, etc)
- Care for members in need of support (eg, illness / mobility / mental health / financial difficulty, etc)
- Contact with absent members (eg, those who occasionally miss meetings / those who regularly miss meetings / those who never attend)
- *Which of these aspects of Lodge life should continue unchanged?*
- *What new developments could be introduced to these aspects of Lodge life?*
- *Is there anything that the Lodge currently does that should be stopped or phased out?*

#### 1.4. Lodge governance and administration

- Are the details in the Lodge by-laws still appropriate?
- Are the Lodge records up to date?
- Are all forms and returns submitted in good time?
- Is the Lodge regularly losing money on any of its activities (eg, meals booked but not paid for)?
- Is the Lodge solvent and able to pay its liabilities?
- Has the Lodge recently estimated its likely future income and expenditure and prepared a budget?
- Are annual subscriptions collected in advance so that annual dues may be paid in arrears?
- Do Lodge bank accounts have sufficient signatories and comply with UGLE requirements?
- Are the Lodge charity funds being applied in a manner consistent with the Lodge's priorities and interests (especially relevant to special interest Lodges)?



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- Is the Lodge properly represented on appropriate other bodies (eg, Masonic Hall committees, Lodge Association committees)?
- Is the Lodge making efficient use of modern technology for administration and communication (eg, preparation and dissemination of documentation, handling bookings and payments, promotion through social media)?
- *Is any housekeeping necessary to bring governance and administration up to date?*
- *How can governance and administration be improved?*
- *What new skills have members developed that could make administration simpler and more efficient?*

## 2. *Expectations*

### 2.1 The Lodge's expectations

- On which occasions are new members expected to attend (eg, Lodge meetings / Rehearsals / Lodges of Instruction / Committees / Social events)?
- When specifically are these held and how often?
- What are new members expected to commit to do in the Lodge?
- What opportunities are there for new members to become involved in the life and running of the Lodge and how will these change as members progress?
- Are all these expectations still realistic?
- How prepared are members to adjust these expectations to accommodate a new members' changing circumstances?
- What help and support can be given to new members to help them meet others' expectations?
- How flexible and responsive does the Lodge appear to new members?
- *Are these expectations still appropriate?*
- *Do they take account of the circumstances, lifestyle and working lives of the members and those the Lodge would like to attract?*
- *How could the expectations be adapted to make the Lodge more attractive to and supportive of new members?*

### 2.2. Why should a man join this Lodge?

- In addition to all the above, what will a member get from our Lodge when he joins?
- How will being a member of our Lodge enrich a new member's life?

### 2.3. Costs of membership

- The support document "[Time and cost commitments](#)" offers a template that a Lodge can use to list all of the costs associated with membership.



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## 3. Values

### 3.1 Lodge culture

- How are decisions made in the Lodge?
- Who has authority in the Lodge and how is it used?
- How is communication handled
  - o from Lodge to members
  - o from members to Lodge
  - o between members
- *Should any of these aspects of Lodge culture be reviewed?*

### 1.2. Considering the Lodge, what do members consider to be the rank order of importance of the following aspects of Lodge life (1 is most important to us, 7 is least)?

- Ritual
- Lodge tradition
- Education about Freemasonry
- Administration
- Meetings
- Festive board
- Social events
- Charity
- Support for new members

### 1.3. Which of the following reasons for becoming a Freemason are likely to be satisfied by someone joining our Lodge (please rank 1 for most likely to 9 for least likely)

- Inclusion of discussion and lectures on history and tradition
- The respect and status accorded to each other
- Endeavours to help members to be a "Better man"
- The inclusion of discussion and lectures on the symbolism and mystical aspects of Freemasonry
- The conviviality, friendship and enjoyment of Lodge ceremonies in providing a haven and escape from the pressures of everyday life
- History of family connections in the Lodge
- The strength of pre-existing friendships with lodge members
- Active support for charity and contribution to the local community.

Lodges that wish to explore their values in more detail may wish to use the "[Values Questionnaire](#)."



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### 4. *Strengths and weaknesses*

#### 4.1. Summarising everything above

- What are the main strengths of the Lodge?
- What are the main weaknesses of the Lodge?
- What new opportunities for developing the Lodge have been identified?
- What threats or potential threats to the Lodge have been identified?
- Have any means of turning weaknesses into strengths or threats into opportunities been identified?