

Statistics for Mission - Frequently asked questions

1) Can I include more than one church on a single Statistics for Mission return?

To understand what is happening within each church it is helpful for individual churches to complete their own return. However, we understand that in some circumstances (e.g. in small, rural, multi-parish benefices) it makes more sense to submit a single Return for the whole parish/benefice.

If you open the form for one of the churches you wish to complete the return for, you will see a list at the start of the form of the churches in the parish. You can then select the churches you wish to include in the return by ticking them in this list.

2) If I don't have the information for a section, can I leave it blank?

To maximise the usefulness of the information, it is helpful if parishes can complete as much of the information as possible. However, we do recognise that there can be challenges in obtaining data.

- *For questions where you do not know the answer, please write 'unknown'*
- *For actual values of zero, please enter '0'*
- *For questions that are not relevant, please enter 'N/A'*

You can see if any cells remain blank because the return will show as not 100% complete.

3) We had a service that was of an unusual size, should we still include it in the October count?

If you feel that you had a congregation size that was not typical for your church due to a special circumstance, or you have any other concerns about the data you have entered, please still include it within the information but make a note of the details within the comments section at the end.

But, please remember not to include the number of people attending weddings and funerals within the October count.

4) Some questions on the form ask for data to be broken into age categories, but we don't know how old people are?

Where possible please give a best estimate of the number in each age category. However, if there really are too many instances where you are unsure, please enter 'unknown' for that section. Please always give a total figure over all age categories. Note that if you have a mix of numbers and 'unknowns' then when adding the numbers it should come to less than the total number shown.

5) The October count section in the Statistics for Mission return appears to collect the same information as the Diocese of Blackburn Data Collection Form – why do you need us to complete both?

Whilst these two datasets initially look similar, they are actually collecting slightly different things so we really appreciate you completing both. However, please follow the guidance carefully.

*On the Diocese of Blackburn Data Collection Form, for section 1 please **only** count those **over the age of 18 who regularly attend your church**. This is because the figures are used as part of the parish share calculation and therefore we wish to know how many people are regular attendees who*

*may be willing to contribute financially to the work of the parish. Please count each person just **once** even if they attend more than one service in a week. Please **do not count** those attending weddings or funerals.*

*For the Statistics for Mission return, please count **everyone who is attending including visitors and those who do not regularly attend** your church. Please count each person just **once** even if they come to more than one service in a week. Please **do not count** those attendings weddings or funerals.*