

Accreditation Guidelines 2020

**REVISED ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES
OCTOBER 2020 VERSION**

This document is a revision of and replacement for the previous Accreditation Guidelines as approved by the Assembly of the Baptist Union of NSW and ACT in September 2003, August 2015 & May 2019.

The version was approved at the Annual Assembly in October 2020.

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POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THOSE SEEKING ACCREDITATION AND RECOGNITION WITH THE BAPTIST CHURCHES OF NSW & ACT

1. PREAMBLE

This document outlines the procedures that are to be followed when a person is seeking accreditation or recognition for pastoral ministry with the Association of Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT. It provides the guidelines for all persons who participate in this process and seeks to specify and make clear the necessary requirements involved in each stage for accreditation or recognition. This document has been developed as part of a broader review process facilitated by the Committee for the Ministry in consultation with Morling College and with the Association. It should be a reference point for all decisions made in relation to persons seeking accreditation or recognition with the Association.

These guidelines operate according to the Constitution of the Association.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 SCRIPTURE

NSW & ACT Baptists seek to be guided by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit in identifying those men and women who are called and equipped to serve Christ through the pastoral oversight of our churches, and other approved ministries.

Biblically, the setting aside of people for ministry is informed by New Testament texts such as:

- Matthew 10:1 – 16
- Luke 6:12 – 16; 9:1 – 6; 10:1 – 7
- Acts 1:12 – 26
- Romans 12:3-8
- 1 Corinthians 12:27 – 31
- Galatians 2:1 – 2
- Ephesians 4:1-16
- 1 Timothy 3:1 – 7
- Titus 1:5 - 9

These texts inform us that certain persons are called by Christ, gifted by His Spirit, then recognised and affirmed by the church, to serve God's people in particular roles of leadership and equipping His people. Fundamental Baptist convictions affirm that it is through the people of God that He confirms His will and direction, as they gather to discern His mind for them.

We believe that the evidence of such calling is seen especially in

- the testimony of those who know the persons well and who can affirm that their lives conform to the New Testament principles for ministry, as well as
- the person's own sense of call to ministry and
- their preparedness to equip themselves for the ministry needed, along with
- a willingness to submit to ongoing accountability and supervision.

Further, this affirmation is from both a local church level and an Association level. Again, this is consistent with two Baptist convictions: the autonomy of local congregations, and the value of association for mutual support and accountability.

2.2 DEFINITIONS

In these guidelines:

- **Assembly** means a gathering of the Association as set out in the Constitution
- **Assembly Council** means the council appointed by Assembly to implement its decisions and otherwise conduct the Association's affairs between Assemblies
- **Association** means the Association of Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT which is also known as NSW & ACT Baptist Churches and Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT
- **Constitution** means the constitution passed by an Assembly of the Association in March 2012 and as amended from time to time
- **Committee for the Ministry** means the committee by this name established under the Constitution
- **Director of Ministries** means the person holding that role in the Association
- **Baptist Ministry Team (BMT)** means the component of the Baptist Association that serves and resources the churches and pastors of the Association. In particular, candidates will be involved with the Leadership Development section of the BMT
- **Morling College** means the Association's theological college as defined by the Constitution
- **Pastor** The decision of the Assembly Council is that the title 'pastor' is applied only to those who are accredited or recognised ministers or who have applied for accreditation.

There are two forms of affirmation for those persons engaged in various types of pastoral ministry with the Association.

a. Accreditation

This is the broadest form and highest level of pastoral affirmation within the Association. Accreditation involves the formalised approval of people as suitable, and available, for ministry within the Baptist churches of NSW & ACT. It recognises they have met certain requirements, that they have the appropriate qualifications and credentials for ministry, qualifications and credentials that are usually recognised nationally, and internationally by Baptist Associations and Unions belonging to the Baptist World Alliance.

Accreditation means that the Association stands behind the person, affirming their fitness to perform appropriately under the legal requirements of the state, with regard to such matters as marriage, child protection, and non-discrimination legislation.

The Association maintains a List of Accredited Ministers. Persons listed there are those who:

1. are baptised members of a Church affiliated with the Association. Under exceptional circumstances these two requirements may be waived by the Committee for the Ministry at the time of application, but will need to be fulfilled prior to the applicant's name being recommended to Assembly.
2. subscribe to the basic doctrines, objects, and values of the Association, as set out in its Constitution.
3. have been accepted for Accreditation by the Committee for the Ministry as those set apart for ministry with the Association
4. have had that acceptance confirmed by resolution of the Assembly Council on recommendation of the Committee for the Ministry
5. receive approval of acceptance by a vote at an assembly upon recommendation of Assembly Council
6. have been set apart for the ministry of the Word by a local church affiliated with the Association, or some other body approved by Assembly

Accreditation is a benefit to the individual, the local church, the Association and the wider community. It benefits the applicant by providing the opportunity to seriously examine themselves, and their call, in the light of the seven dimensions listed above. It benefits the accredited person by providing examined networks of accountability and support across the life-span of ministry, and a recognition of character, call and competence that is international in scope. Accredited ministers also have the right to be voting members of Assembly.

For the local church, when they call an accredited minister there can be a measure of confidence that certain levels of character, competence and capacity, have been reached, consistent with the seven dimensions described (in Table 1). These enable the person to operate responsibly in the role to which the church calls them. Likewise for the Association; it benefits from the fact of having at its disposal a pool of trusted and trained persons it can commend to churches, and from which it can find leaders for its services to the churches.

Importantly, for the wider community, accreditation increases trust and confidence that accredited ministers within the Association have been examined and trained to a high level of integrity, trustworthiness and moral fidelity.

It is a privilege to be so affirmed by the Association.

In certain circumstances, the Committee may consider persons for accreditation in specialised ministry. If, at a later date, a person accredited for a specialised ministry desires to be accredited for general pastoral ministry, that person will need to be re-interviewed by the Committee for the Ministry and assessed for general accreditation.

b. Recognition

The Association also maintains a list of Recognised Ministers. Persons in pastoral ministry or related ministry who have not applied to become an accreditation candidate may apply for this more limited form of recognition by the Association. A person who is acknowledged in this way is recognised and affirmed in their current role for as long as they remain in that role and meet the requirements placed upon them by the Association. In essence, this level of affirmation is more a recognition that the local church has appointed the person as a minister than the affirmation that the minister has satisfactorily demonstrated their standing across the seven dimensions of ministry listed in Table 1, (see page 6, Dimensions for Examination).

2.3 PURPOSES OF THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The purposes of the application and Accreditation processes are to:

Support

Candidates and their family in the discernment of God's call on their life.

Educate

Candidates and their family regarding the privileges, potential pitfalls, and demands of pastoral leadership.

Assess

The capacity of candidates and their family to undertake pastoral ministry in its various forms and settings.

Improve

The likelihood of sending into ministry holistically healthy persons with self awareness, biblical literacy, and clarity regarding their motivation, inter-personal functioning and resilience.

Demonstrate

That the vocation of pastor is a demanding role requiring rigour in training, support, association, and accountability, for the sake of the community, church and wider culture.

Maintain

Rigorous standards in relation to ethical and legal requirements prescribed by society from time to time.

Connect

Pastors and families into an ongoing process and support network, which over time accurately proves and reaffirms them in their calling.

Inform

The pastor and their family regarding the value and importance of the principle of “association” as understood in Baptist policy.

3. THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

In the understanding of the Association, accreditation is a process whereby the Association, working interdependently with the local church, assesses and affirms seven dimensions (see Table 1 below) for women and men who put themselves forward for pastoral leadership and ministry.

3.1 TABLE 1: THE SEVEN DIMENSIONS FOR EXAMINATION

DIMENSION	DEFINITION
Character	the bedrock for an individual’s ministry effectiveness. Character involves the following: integrity, reliability and consistency in line with the character of Jesus Christ; evidence of a love for the Word, love for God and love for people
Call	the conviction and evidence of a vocation from God, as evidenced in the person’s life and confirmed by other individuals and the candidate’s church
Doctrine	demonstrated commitment to and understanding of orthodox, biblical belief; ability to explain it clearly
Capacity	evidenced current ability to follow the call to ministry
Competence	spiritual gifts and natural abilities to get the job done
Training	proficient development of gifts, skills, and knowledge through processes of formal, informal and supervised experience-based equipping
Capability	potential to develop and improve

Accreditation is a formal process that tests, develops and supports these seven dimensions. The ability of a person to satisfactorily sustain the requirements of these dimensions over the course of ministry life, will wax and wane according to contextual factors that are sometimes beyond their control. However, the accreditation process seeks to evaluate these dimensions at the time of application, and during the period of candidacy.

Accreditation is overseen by the Committee for the Ministry acting on behalf of the Association Assembly and the Assembly Council. The process calls for input from:

- the applicant (and where applicable their spouse/fiancée)
- their local church or ministry setting
- Morling College
- any other theological training institution attended by the applicant
- the Committee for the Ministry
- the Baptist Ministry Team
- personal referees.

Persons applying for accreditation normally come from within Morling College. Components of the training at Morling will address to varying degrees each of these seven dimensions (see Appendix 9 Seven Dimensions and Morling Alignment). Equipping at Morling covers some of these dimensions in more depth whilst other dimensions require additional training, education and assessment prior to individuals applying for accreditation. These additional requirements aim to provide a consistent pathway for evaluating pastoral outcomes as outlined in Appendix 1 (Baptist Pastoral Outcomes).

In consultation with Morling:

- i. prior to acceptance as a candidate for accreditation, some brief workshops for training, mentoring and assessment are required in the following areas:
 - development of interpersonal effectiveness
 - family of origin, the bio-psychosocial/stress vulnerability model and resilience
 - addictions and addictive behaviour
- ii. during candidacy or the post-accreditation years, candidates will be required to gain a basic understanding of and skill in the following areas of ministry:
 - Church planting
 - Leading church revitalisation and change
 - Cross - cultural ministry and mission
 - Children, Youth and families ministry

The most common pathway in applying for Accreditation occurs while a student is at Morling College, or within three years after graduation. This document also provides guidelines for those who apply:

- i. as accredited/ordained ministers from other denominations;
- ii. to be transferred from a Baptist Association in another state of Australia or from overseas;
- iii. as applicants from another theological institution;
- iv. in exceptional circumstances, usually as persons who have served in pastoral oversight for a period of at least ten years in a local church or some other approved ministry position.

Outlined on the following pages are six stages in a full progress to accreditation, from initial consideration of a possible call to ongoing accreditation throughout the course of a minister's life. Initial steps in the process of accrediting a person to pastoral ministry commence well before formal Application and acceptance procedures.

3.2 STAGE 1: RECRUITMENT AND REFLECTION

The purpose of this stage is to support and educate individuals with regard to pastoral ministry, through the provision of resources by the Association, and the local church, to enable:

- i. existing pastors to identify and mentor potential new pastors;
- ii. clarity for persons considering pastoral ministry concerning the nobility, privilege and demands of pastoral leadership.

See Appendix 2: The Noble Task

This stage is a very early exploration of the second of the seven dimensions, namely, 'call'.

3.3 STAGE 2: PRE-APPLICATION

The purpose of the pre-application stage is to further educate individuals by outlining requirements of the accreditation process, and support them in discerning God's call on their life. This stage starts assessing the first and second dimensions, namely, 'call' and 'character'. A brief definition of character is outlined in Table 1. The Code of Ethics and Conduct gives a more detailed description of the practical outworking of character in the setting of pastoral ministry.

From time to time, people make the decision that they may have a call to pastoral ministry. This pre-application stage is designed to provide an initial, formal discernment process to assist the person, their spouse/fiancee (if married or engaged), and the Association, in deciding whether they proceed with a formal application or not.

It is likely that at this stage students at Morling College will engage in conversations with faculty regarding their emerging sense of a call.

The requirement of this stage is for individuals to attend a preliminary interview with persons appointed by the Committee for the Ministry. Interviews will be held periodically in groups, or individually each year. During the interview the person will:

- i. be provided with a document outlining the requirements of the accreditation process;
- ii. complete and sign a Confidential Questionnaire and Statutory Declaration regarding their personal character and history;
- iii. provide a basic referral from their pastor, where possible, indicating support for their application.

The format of the interview will allow for discussion and exploration of the requirements and processes involved in accreditation.

The Committee for the Ministry will retain a list of all persons who complete a pre-application interview, for a period of up to two years.

3.4 STAGE 3: FORMAL APPLICATION

The purposes of this stage are to maintain rigorous standards in application processes and moves to a formalised stage in testing the desire to become an accreditation candidate. It also aims to demonstrate that the vocation of a pastor is a demanding role requiring rigor, and to connect Applicants to an ongoing process and support network.

This third stage examines in more depth the first and second dimensions of character and call as well as that of the third and fourth dimensions, namely, doctrine and capacity.

3.4.1 APPLICANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

A person wishing to make formal Application will submit the appropriate online Application Form to the Director of Ministries by 31 January, for consideration by the Committee for the Ministry in the first half of the year, and no later than the 30 June for consideration in the second half of the year of Application.

This Application Form will include:

- a statement of what leads the applicant to believe that God has called them to ministry.
- an account of their early religious training, conversion and subsequent spiritual experience.
- a statement, in not less than 500 words of their convictions on Baptist doctrine and practice, including their views on the inspiration of the Bible and the way of Salvation.
- a statement, in not less than 500 words of their understanding of the Baptist doctrine and practice of ministry, and of the significance of ordination (with specific attention to the practice of accreditation and ordination of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT)
- a statement of their experience in Christian work, including preaching.
- Referees - The Referees shall be:
 - three persons who know them well
 - the Pastor of the Applicant's current church or another leader if there is no current pastor
 - the Pastor of their previous church - provided that the connection there is not more than five years before
 - the Secretary or other appropriate officer of the Applicant's church indicating the church's support of the application. This statement will comment on the activities and period of membership of the person during their time at that church.
- list of theological and general reading (identifying books read during last two years).
- an up-to-date medical report.
- two copies of a full manuscript sermon preached by the applicant in the previous few months, and a digital recording of the preached version, or online reference to such a sermon.
- a statement addressing the Applicant's stance on the Statement of Beliefs in the Constitution (the Applicant should make comment on any differences in their belief).

3.4.2 COMMITTEE FOR THE MINISTRY'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The committee for the Ministry will maintain a Register of Applicant's for Accreditation. Upon receipt of an application, the Applicant's name will be placed on the Register. The Application will remain valid and the applicant's name will remain on the register for a period of one year from the date of receipt of the application.

Following receipt of an application, the Secretary of the Committee for the Ministry will contact the Applicant's church, asking them to form a sub-committee to hear the Applicant preach, discuss their potential for ministry, strengths and weaknesses and any other matter that close contact with the congregation could reveal that would be relevant for the Committee for the Ministry. This sub-committee will provide a report which both reflects the consensus reached by the committee, but also any "minority views" that members of the committee wish to express. The report of the sub-committee should be endorsed by a meeting of the Applicant's church.

The Secretary of the Committee for the Ministry will arrange for each applicant to submit herself or himself to an examination by an approved clinical psychologist for a professional personality and aptitude assessment. The assessing psychologist

will provide a written report, copies of which will be forwarded or made available to each of the following:

- i. the Applicant
- ii. the specialised Personality and Relational Capacity Interview Panel (see Stage 4, Phase One).

The applicant will be required to make the report available to their spouse. The Committee for the Ministry will arrange to provide appropriate support to couples when reflecting on the report.

Where necessary the Committee for the Ministry will make arrangements for the Applicant and spouse to appear before the Divorce Sub-Committee, before proceeding with the application.

The Secretary of the Committee for the Ministry will arrange for Applicants to undertake brief training and evaluation workshop/s that will cover the following topic, or such other topics as the Committee from time to time may deem necessary:

- Development of interpersonal effectiveness
- Family of origin, the bio-psychosocial/stress vulnerability model and resilience
- Addictions and addictive behaviour

The Secretary of the Committee for the Ministry will forward to the Applicant a copy of the Statement of Principle and a copy of the Code of Ethics and Conduct. Upon their acceptance as a candidate the individual will be required to:

- affirm in writing the Statement of Principle (See Appendix 8)
- sign that they will comply with the Code of Ethics and Conduct (see Appendix 11).

Where the student is attending Morling College, the College will provide a report on the Applicant.

3.5 STAGE 4: FORMAL EVALUATION AND ACCEPTANCE

Stage 4 consists of two phases: (i) interviews and (ii) candidacy and probation. The purposes of this stage include:

- assessing in more detail the Applicant's capacity to undertake pastoral ministry;
- improving the likelihood of sending into ministry holistically healthy persons;
- demonstrating that the vocation is a demanding role requiring rigour in training;
- informing the Applicant and their family of the value and importance of the Baptist principle of association and
- educating the Applicant and their family regarding the demands of pastoral leadership.

The dimensions examined in Stage 4 include the first four, namely, character, call, doctrine, capacity and are now widened to include the remaining three, competence, training and capability.

3.5.1 PHASE 1: INTERVIEWS

The Applicant will be given at least fourteen days notice of the time and place of the interviews with the Committee for the Ministry.

The interviews will occur over the course of one day.

Prior to the interviews by the Committee of the Ministry, members will receive copies of all documentation listed in Stage 3.

Additionally, if an Applicant has been divorced, or is married to a divorced person, the Applicant will be interviewed by the Divorce Sub-committee, and a report prepared for the Committee for the Ministry. If the Sub-committee recommends and the Committee for the Ministry accepts this recommendation, that the Applicant

can continue the process, the fact that an Applicant or their spouse is divorced will NOT be considered again.

Where an Applicant is married or engaged, their spouse/fiancée will also be involved in the interviews.

At the end of this process, the Applicant will either be accepted or declined as a candidate for accreditation.

If accepted, an individualised ministry and leadership development plan will be developed that the Applicant (and spouse) can work on during their candidacy period.

3.5.1.1 Structure of Interview Day

3.5.1.1.1 Devotion, Prayer and 'Story' of Applicants

Upon arrival the Applicants will be invited to join with Committee for the Ministry members to share in devotions. To foster connection and support, the Applicants will then be asked to briefly share their 'story' of what has led them to the accreditation process, and why they believe they have a 'call' to ministry. Panel members will then pray for the Applicants and their spouses.

3.5.1.1.2 Meeting with Specialist Panels

Each Applicant will then complete three interviews as described below.

DOCTRINE AND DENOMINATIONALISM PANEL

This will involve a thirty-minute interview with a panel of three persons to examine the doctrinal beliefs and denominational understandings of the candidate

PERSONALITY AND

RELATIONAL CAPACITY INTERVIEW PANEL

This interview will focus on two areas:

- i. the Applicant's personality. This will be based upon the Applicant's independent formal psychological evaluation with a Clinical Psychologist prior to the day (as obtained in Stage 3). The content of the report will remain confidential to the Applicant, spouse and the panel members. The Applicant and (if Applicable) spouse will be required to read the report prior to the interview, and again on the day of the interview to enable clear comprehension of the content of the report. The purpose of this meeting with the panel is to determine the Applicant's insight and self-awareness into the issues raised in the psychological evaluation, and assist them identify areas for growth.

The panel will examine the Applicant's current capacity in terms of emotional resources to follow the ministry call, as well as assess future capability to change and grow. When necessary, the panel will make specific recommendations to help the Applicant pursue these areas of growth through the candidacy period and beyond.

- ii. the Applicant's relational capacity within their marriage (or engaged) relationship, and/or a single person's capacity to develop and maintain healthy and supportive relationship networks. In a marriage/engaged relationship, this will involve exploring the way each individual relates to the other and may involve the completion of a brief assessment tool by each individual, prior to the meeting.

This focus upon relational Capacity is based upon documented research. This research demonstrates that pastoral ministry by its very nature makes significant and unavoidable demands upon the pastor, immediate family and beyond, more than most other roles.

This panel will also seek to clarify the person's (and where Applicable their spouse's) expectations of ministry and of the ministry-work-life balance. When necessary, specific recommendations will be made by the panel to help the Applicant to pursue these areas of growth through the candidacy period and beyond.

GIFTS AND EXPERIENCE FOR MINISTRY PANEL

This interview will focus on the Applicant's competence and Capacity for ministry. This will involve exploring the Applicant's understanding of their range of ministry gifts as well as their Capacity to identify potential in key areas of ministry. It will also examine leadership ability, Capacity to deal with conflict and attitudes to pastoral care. When necessary, specific recommendations will be made to help the Applicant to pursue these areas of growth through the candidacy period and beyond.

3.5.1.2 Determining Outcomes

Following all three panel interviews Applicants will be informed when they will be notified of the outcome. At this point all Applicants are free to leave. A plenary session will then be held with all panel members to report recommendations on acceptance. At the plenary session, each panel will present:

- a recommendation regarding acceptance
- identify areas of strength
- identify growth areas taking into consideration the Key Ministry Competencies (see Appendix 9) and the Seven Dimensions (see Table 1)
- if accepted make one or two specific recommendations regarding the Applicant's ministry and leadership development plan.

Following the recommendations from the panels, considering all relevant matters, and making such other enquiries as may be relevant, the Committee for the Ministry will determine whether it can accept the Applicant to become a candidate for Accreditation.

All Applicants will be notified of the outcome via telephone on the day of the interviews.

Candidates will then be required to meet (at a time to be set) with representatives from the Committee for the Ministry to discuss in greater

detail areas of strength, areas for growth and the recommendations provided by each panel. At the end of this meeting the candidate will have an agreed-upon ministry and leadership development plan and checklist to assess their progress during candidacy (Phase Two – see page 13).

3.5.1.3 Declined Application

If the Application of the prospective candidate is declined, that person may reapply, but not sooner than twelve months after the date of the previous interview date.

When an Applicant is declined, two persons from the Committee for the Ministry will meet with the Applicant and a support person agreed to by the Applicant. This meeting will

- explain with clarity the reasons for decline of the Application
- answer any questions from the person
- ensure the person has appropriate support strategies in place

A representative of the church's leadership will be notified as to the reasons for the Applicant being declined.

3.5.1.4 Reapplications

If the Applicant reapplies, a letter requesting another interview will be sent to the Chair of the Committee for the Ministry and the Director of Ministries, along with:

- i. an account of the Applicant's spiritual and ministry journey since the date of the previous interview.
- ii. the names of three referees, plus the name of the Applicant's Pastor, to provide up to date references as is reasonably possible. If there is no Pastor, or the Applicant is the current Pastor the name of the Church Secretary.
- iii. two copies of a full manuscript sermon preached in the last few months, and a digital recording of the preached version, or on-line example of a sermon.
- iv. a statement from the Applicant's church setting out the church's recommendation regarding the Application.
- v. if three years have elapsed since the previous interview, a new psychological assessment will be required.

The Applicant will attend a full day of interviews with the Committee for the Ministry, which will include the various sub-committees as outlined above (3.5.1).

If the Applicant is accepted by the Committee for the Ministry, they will be subject to all the probation and supervision clauses as per this document.

If the Applicant has already graduated from Morling College and is accepted by the Committee for the Ministry the Applicant will be required to:

- a. comply with any probationary requirements by the Committee
- b. attend the "Readiness for Ministry" course before proceeding to Accreditation,
- c. comply with all other requirements as set out above.

3.5.2 PHASE 2: CANDIDACY AND PROBATION

Generally, persons accepted as candidates will undergo at least a twelve month period of probation from the 31 December in the calendar year of their acceptance, before being able to proceed to accreditation upon completion of necessary training and evaluation. During the period of candidacy the person will complete theological training required to that point, ministry equipping, and further development across the seven dimensions [see Table 1]. The process will include the completion of a Checklist [Appendix 4] designed to assess progress of the Applicant across the seven dimensions.

Alternatively, the Committee may conclude that there are justifiable reasons for a two-year probation of a candidate. This period will provide opportunity for observation and evaluation of the candidate's development and growth.

While as a general rule, all candidates for accreditation are to be on probation for twelve months from the 31 December in the calendar year of their acceptance, prior to receiving approval to proceed to accreditation, the Committee may waive this requirement depending on experience and study.

During the candidacy period, the candidate will be required to complete such ministry training at Morling College in addition to their undergraduate studies (see Appendices 9 & 10), as will be required by the Committee for the Ministry. A group consisting of representatives of the Committee for the Ministry, the Baptist Ministry Team, and Morling College, will work alongside the candidate to ensure that an individualised ministry and leadership development plan is in place. This will align with the key learning areas outlined in Appendix 9. The plan may reflect deficits from pre-existing studies, or issues identified by the Committee for the Ministry as requiring special focus by the candidate.

In consultation with Morling College and the Baptist Ministry Team with the written approval of the Principal of Morling College, the candidate may elect to complete their studies:

- as a residential / on-campus student of the College, or
- through an approved local 'provider' (such as Greater West for Christ) or
- via a combination of distance and on-site intensive programmes.

A candidate, during the whole of the period of their candidacy and probation, shall be under the oversight of the Committee for the Ministry and the Principal of the Morling College. The Committee, in consultation with the Principal, may at any time decide upon dismissal, resignation or retirement of any Candidate in the case of:

- misconduct
- lack of diligence
- undue delays in completing training
- inability to profit by training
- or any other reason that the Committee considers prevents the Candidate from fulfilling the requirements of continuing as a Candidate.

Candidates will have the opportunity of being present and being heard at a meeting of the Committee for the Ministry at which such dismissal is to be considered.

During the period of candidacy, the candidate will be required to complete the requirements listed in the Probation Checklist including the schedule of personal and interpersonal competencies and equipping for ministry (see Appendix 4 below), under the supervision of the Baptist Ministry Team and Morling College.

All students who are accepted candidates shall be associated in a pastoral ministry role with such church, or churches, or other Approved ministry settings, as arranged in consultation with the Baptist Ministry Team, in co-operation with Morling College.

All students who are accepted candidates shall normally engage in pastoral ministry work in consultation with the Coordinator for Pastoral Accreditation and Recognition and the Principal of Morling College (or nominee), until the 1 February after accreditation. "Pastoral ministry work" includes:

- pastoral charge,
- associate pastoral responsibility,
- or other approved ministry.

At the end of the stipulated probationary period the Committee for the Ministry will interview the candidate to decide whether they will come off probation or not. This interview will consider reports from the candidate's church and other persons as required by the Committee.

3.5.3 PHASE 3:

FINAL EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION

Once released from probation, and upon completion of required training, a candidate will undergo a final interview by the Committee for the Ministry. This interview will determine whether to recommend to the Assembly Council that the Candidate proceed to Accreditation as outlined in the Constitution.

This final interview is designed to assess:

- i. the development of the Applicant in any areas for improvement that were identified in Stage 4 of the Acceptance Process, and
- ii. the impact that the candidacy period has had upon the Applicant's character and competence.

Prior to this final interview reports will be received from

- the Director of Ministries and/or the Baptist Ministry Team
- the Principal of Morling College
- designated mentors, ministry supervisors,
- the supervising pastor or senior officer of the church,
- separate reports from two church members
- those responsible for supervision of the checklist.

Completion of this checklist and the impact that the candidacy period has had upon the Applicant's Capacity and competence will be assessed in the final interview (Stage 4 Formal Acceptance Process).

A decision will be made regarding current students of Morling College only if a positive report has been received from Morling College

Upon successful transition through this interview, the candidate will be recommended to Assembly Council to proceed to accreditation.

Accreditation will be formally recognised at an annual "Service of Accreditation", conducted by the Association. Prior to this "Service of Accreditation", persons will be eligible to be set apart for the ministry of the Word by their local congregation (ordination).

Prior to the Accreditation Service, the candidate will

- give evidence of being a baptised believer
- be in membership with an affiliated Baptist church
- be in an approved ministry for a Baptist minister

- arrange for an ordination service at their current or sending congregation, or their approved ministry
- undertake the Readiness for Ministry Program, as arranged by the Baptist Ministry Team
- sign that they will comply with the Association's Code of Ethics and Conduct for ministers (see Appendix 11)
- have completed Advanced Safe Spaces training as required by the Baptist Association.

Following accreditation

- the minister's name will be placed on the List of Accredited Ministers for the Association
- From this point on, and only this point on, the minister may use the title 'Reverend'.

While ordained, accredited, and fulfilling requirements of the Continuing Ministry Development program, the Minister may use the title "Reverend". Retired Ministers may use the title "Reverend (Retired)" so long as they adhere to the most current Code of Ethics and Conduct.

Following accreditation, the minister's name will be placed on the List of Accredited Ministers for the Association.

NOTE: in exceptional circumstances, with the approval of Assembly Council, an accredited minister may retain their accreditation while serving in a non-Baptist setting.

3.6 STAGE 5: POST-ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is an ongoing process, requiring persons to demonstrate continued growth over a three-year cycle, in areas of spiritual life, professional skill and connection. The purposes of the Post-Accreditation three years include:

- support newly accredited ministers
- to continue to educate ministers in their professional and personal formation
- assess the well-being of the ministers in these early vulnerable years
- to continue to connect ministers with peers and the resources of the Association

During the first three years following accreditation, accredited ministers will be required to:

- i. complete any remaining ministry training (theology, bible, practical and pastoral ministry, etc.) as required by the accreditation processes;
- ii attend required post-accreditation events conducted by the Baptist Ministry Team;
- iii undertake professional or pastoral supervision with a person from a list provided by the Association, for a number of sessions per year. The focus of this supervision will be consistent with the seven dimensions outlined above, and given structure by a formal covenant between the pastor and the supervisor.

NOTE: candidates posted overseas in an approved ministry will make appropriate alternative arrangements with Committee for the Ministry to fulfill the above requirements for the first three years of post accreditation. If transferring

interstate, the pastoral committee of that State will be informed that the person's accreditation is currently conditional upon completing post-accreditation requirements in the next three years.

A requirement for all accepted Candidates in the first year after February 1st, following accreditation is that they serve under the direction of the Baptist Ministry Team, or Global Interaction, or such other body approved by the Committee for the Ministry. This will be the case unless the individual is released, partially or completely, by the Committee for the Ministry, from this responsibility. (See below Appendix 4).

During this period, a minister will need to consult with the Baptist Ministry Team if considering a change in their ministry placement.

3.7 STAGE 6: CONTINUING MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT

Accreditation is a continuing process. Accredited ministers are required to fulfill and demonstrate fulfillment of certain requirements (see Continuing Ministerial Development Guidelines, Appendix 6) over repeated three year cycles, in order to retain their accredited standing.

A significant, required component of Continuing Ministerial Development will involve Clinical Mentoring and/or Clinical Supervision with a qualified supervisor from a list provided by the Association, for a minimum of four hours per year. The intention of this supervision is to ensure:

- i. healthy and effective mentoring relationships are established and active for each individual
- ii. to make professional supervision another avenue by which an accredited or recognised minister continues to grow in the areas of character, competency, capacity and capability.

This is intended to be a healthy part of a pastor's continued growth.

During each of the three-year cycles, the minister will demonstrate achievement of required activities in three areas, as outlined in the Continuing Ministerial Development Guidelines (see Appendix 6 below). During the first three years after accreditation, the minister will be required to participate in the requirements of the CMD Process.

Failure to adequately fulfill requirements of the CMD Process, may result in removal from the List of Accredited Ministers.

3.8 OTHER DENOMINATIONS, INTERSTATE, OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE AND OTHER

3.8.1 MINISTERS ACCREDITED/ORDAINED WITH OTHER DENOMINATIONS

Ministers from other denominations who have been appointed to roles in churches affiliated with the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT may apply to be placed upon the List of Accredited Ministers. Applicants will be required to complete a Formal Application document (see Stage Three) for submission to the Committee for the Ministry.

The Applicant will be exempt from the requirements of Stage Four, Phases Two and Three of the Accreditation Process. They will be required to fulfill certain requirements in Stage Four Phase One, plus:

- demonstrate the required theological training as determined by the Committee for the Ministry, in consultation with Morling Theological College and the Baptist Ministry Team, complete the Baptist Distinctives course at Morling College, or undertake such additional ministerial training as required by Committee for the Ministry;
- provide a written statement outlining their stance on the Statement of Beliefs in the Constitution. The transferee should declare any differences in their belief;
- affirm the Mission, Vision and Values of the Association and its Code of Ethics and Conduct for ministers;
- provide a report from the previous denomination, demonstrating that they were a minister in good standing and of good reputation;
- agree that the Committee for the Ministry can undertake an online assessment of their current Working with Children Check;
- a written affirmation of the Statement of Principle.
- provide evidence that they have undergone a psychological assessment process as part of their accreditation with the previous denomination or undertake at their expense a psychological assessment required by the Committee for the Ministry.
- have completed Advanced Safe Spaces training as required by the Baptist Association
- complete and sign a Confidential Questionnaire and Statutory Declaration regarding their personal character and history.

Following an interview with the Committee for the Ministry, the Committee will decide the person's Application. If approved by the Committee, the Applicant will be recommended to the Assembly Council for approval to be added to the List of Accredited Ministers. If the Applicant is not approved, the Committee for Ministry will provide feedback to the Applicant regarding the reason for non-approval.

3.8.2 MINISTERS SEEKING TO HAVE THEIR ACCREDITATION REINSTATED AFTER NON-ENGAGEMENT WITH ACCREDITED MINISTRY

Persons who have been previously removed from the Accredited List because they had ceased to engage in ministry for which their accreditation was granted may apply for reinstatement of their accreditation if:

- they apply in writing to the Committee for the Ministry, such application containing
 - an outline of their stance on the Statement of Beliefs in the Constitution, including

- a declaration of any differences in their belief;
 - affirmation of the Mission, Vision and Values of the Association
 - agreement to abide by its Code of Ethics and Conduct for ministers, and
 - an affirmation of the Statement of Principle.
 - the Committee for the Ministry is satisfied that they are now engaged or about to be engaged in a ministry approved for Accreditation under these guidelines
- The person seeking reinstatement of their accreditation will be required to attend an interview with the Committee for the Ministry. Following a successful interview the person's name will be added to the List of Accredited Ministers.

3.8.3 MINISTERS SEEKING TO BE TRANSFERRED FROM A BAPTIST ASSOCIATION OR UNION IN ANOTHER STATE OF AUSTRALIA, OR FROM OVERSEAS

Ordained/Accredited persons transferring from another State or Country from an Association affiliated with the Australian Baptist Ministries (BUA) or Baptist World Alliance will complete the appropriate transfer form. The person seeking a transfer will normally be required to provide:

- testimony of past and present spiritual and ministry experience;
- the names of three referees - one of whom would come from the previous place of ministry;
- a reference from the appropriate Association attesting that they are a minister in good standing with that Association;
- a written statement outlining their stance on the Statement of Beliefs in the Constitution. The transferee should declare any differences in their belief;
- undertake, at their expense, a psychological assessment required by the Committee for the Ministry, unless they come from a state of Australia which requires psychological assessments as part of its ordination/accreditation processes;
- affirm the Mission, Vision and Values of the Association and
- agree to abide by its Code of Ethics and Conduct for ministers;
- a written affirmation of the Statement of Principle;
- have completed Advanced Safe Spaces training as required by the Baptist Association
- complete and sign a Confidential Questionnaire and Statutory Declaration regarding their personal character and history.

The person seeking transfer will be required to attend an interview with the Committee for the Ministry. Following a successful interview the person's name will be added to the List of Accredited Ministers.

3.8.4 GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTANCE OF PERSONS WHO HAVE SERVED IN PASTORAL OVERSIGHT FOR A SIGNIFICANT PERIOD OF TIME IN A LOCAL CHURCH OR SOME OTHER APPROVED MINISTRY POSITION

Under exceptional circumstances, such persons may be accepted for accreditation if they

- have served for a minimum of ten years in an Approved Christian Service
- have demonstrated their call, character, competence doctrine, capacity, training, and Capability to the satisfaction of the Committee for the Ministry; and
- have successfully completed Stages 2, 3 and 4 / Phase 1 of the Accreditation Process.

An Approved Christian Service is a sphere of Christian service, whether full or part

time, which is approved by the Assembly Council in relation to each such person.

3.8.5 OTHER APPLICANTS

From time to time, persons with previous theological studies at another institution apply for accreditation. Such persons will meet initially with representatives from Morling College and the Baptist Ministry Team.

If an Applicant has satisfactorily completed at least three years at another Theological Institution they may apply to the Committee for the Ministry during their first year at Morling College. A report will be requested from the previous Theological Institution to include details of ministry formation.

If an Applicant has completed less than three years at another Theological Institution, they will be required to spend at least one full year at Morling College before they can apply.

In exceptional circumstances the Committee for the Ministry may, at its discretion, waive these requirements.

This Application should be made to the Director of Ministries.

These Applicants will need to fulfill the following requirements:

- demonstrate that they have been baptised as a believer;
- complete an Application Form and associated documents, and submit them to the Director of Ministries
- supply a reference from the Principal of the Theological Institution, along with an official transcript of credits and details of subjects studied. These will be forwarded to the Principal of the Morling College.
- undergo an interview by a panel (Accreditation Study Panel) comprised of representatives from Morling Theological College, the Baptist Ministry Team, and the Committee for the Ministry to establish what additional ministry training will be required of them. Normally this will be nine units prior to accreditation and three post-accreditation. However, the panel will have the discretionary power in this matter, and can make a case-by-case decision. Credit may be granted for study done in other tertiary institutions approved by the Committee for the Ministry on the recommendation of the Morling College, provided that the subjects are, in the opinion of the Faculty of the Theological College, no less in content and standard than units offered by the College for such subjects.

Applicants will undergo an interview process before the Committee for the Ministry, in line with the processes outlined above. If successful, the person will become a Candidate for Accreditation. Candidates will then need to complete the additional training required of them by an Accreditation Study Panel. During the period that the study is being completed, the Candidate will be placed on Probation.

Once studies required by Morling College have been completed successfully, the Candidate will have a final interview with the Committee for the Ministry. Upon successful completion of this interview, candidates will be approved for recommendation to the Assembly Council that they proceed to Accreditation.

Candidates will be required to attend the Readiness for Ministry Course prior to Accreditation and fulfill all other requirements made of Candidates prior to accreditation.

3.9 TABLE 2 - SUMMARY OF STAGES OF ACCREDITATION PROCESS

STAGE	ACCREDITATION PROCESS	RESOURCES	PERSONNEL INVOLVED	PROCESSES
One	Recruitment & Reflection Promotion of pastoral ministry in a realistic but positive way	DOCUMENTS: • The Noble Task • Ministry, Family and Marriage WEBSITES: • Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT • Morling College	• Local Pastor • Local ministry networks	• Proactive and/or responsive discernment by local pastors of possible persons for ministry • Conversations with possible persons
Two	Pre-Application	• Pre-Application Document • Basic Referral from pastor (where applicable) • Document outlining the rationale for the requirements prior to application.	• Representatives of Committee for the Ministry / the Baptist Ministry Team	• Pre-Application interview of person and spouse (where applicable) by two persons appointed by the Committee for the Ministry
Three	Formal Application	• Online, detailed Application Form (password protected) • A4 page document outline of the Formal Acceptance Process	• Secretary of Committee for the Ministry • Referees • Local church	• Completion of detailed Application Form
Four	Formal Acceptance Process Phase One: Initial Evaluation	• Psychometric evaluation • Detailed personal references • Church reference	• Psychologist/s • Committee for the Ministry	• Applicant has a formal interview with a clinical psychologist and undertakes a personality assessment • Completion of workshops to cover topics referred to on page 7 above • Committee for the Ministry interviews with Applicant and spouse • Committee for the Ministry Interviews
Four	Formal Acceptance Process Phase Two: Candidacy and Probation	• Individualised ministry and leadership plan • Ministry placements • Structured mentoring • Reports from ministry placement • Structured placements	• Pastors of placement locations • Mentor/s • Morling faculty • the Baptist Ministry Team • Committee for the Ministry	• Completion of training requirements established by the Committee for the Ministry: - Theological - Ministry skills - Marriage • Ensure support structure for spouse • Completion of "Checklist" • Development and completion of an individualised ministry and leadership plan • Mentoring/placement reports • "End of probation" interview • Annual meetings with the Baptist Ministry Team
Four	Formal Acceptance Process Phase Three: Final Evaluation and Accreditation	• Final Report from local church	• Committee for the Ministry • Mentor/s • Baptist Ministry Team	• Mentoring • Final Interview • Approval by Assembly Council and Assembly • Ordination Service • Readiness for Ministry Course • Accreditation Service
Five	Post Accreditation	• First three year cycle of continuing accreditation (Continuing Ministerial Development) • The Baptist Ministry Team resource and development events	• Baptist Ministry Team • Morling College • Mentor/s	• Annual Post-Accreditation Days • Completion of outstanding College requirements
Six	Continuing Ministerial Development	• Annual Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) plans and reports • Referees (CMD) reports • Church review & affirmation (CMD)	• CMD Administrator • Baptist Ministry Team • Mentor/s • Referees • Local church	• Annual CMD Reporting Processes

4. CHANGE OF ACCREDITATION CLASSIFICATION

If a person has been Accredited or Accepted to a ministry other than General Accreditation (eg. Missions) and that person seeks general pastoral ministry it would be desirable for that person to be interviewed by the Committee for the Ministry with a view to changing their Accreditation classification.

A reference from their previous ministry would be sought.

Upon a successful interview, the Committee for the Ministry would recommend to Assembly Council a change in that person's classification.

If anyone applies outside any of the above guidelines the Committee for the Ministry will decide case-by-case.

5. RECOGNISED MINISTERS

In essence, this form of affirmation by the Association provides "recognition" of the right of a local church to appoint pastors of its own choosing. However, "recognition" also aims to require that those pastors meet certain basic standards and understandings.

Acceptance for listing on the Recognised Ministers' List provides:

- a context for accountability and support by the Association;
- confidence for the supporting church that the pastor has received rudimentary training in ministerial standards, conduct and tasks;
- a basic level of affirmation by the Association as to the minister's competency and gifting for their current ministry placement;
- sufficient affirmation by the Association to the relevant authority to enable the minister to obtain a marriage license

Application to become a Recognised Minister may be made as soon as the pastor is formally appointed to an appropriate role by a church. A person applying to become a Recognised Minister:

- i. must be in membership of a Baptist Church affiliated with the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT.
- ii. will be required to provide the following:
 - A statutory declaration and confidential questionnaire in line with that required of Accreditation Candidates
 - testimony of past and present spiritual and ministry experience including a statement as to why the Applicant believes God has called them to this ministry
 - a statement on their convictions on Baptist doctrine and practice including views on the inspiration of the Bible and way of salvation
 - a response as to their stance on the Statement of Beliefs in the Constitution
 - affirmation of the Mission, Vision and Values of the Association and
 - agreement to abide by its Code of Ethics and Conduct for ministers;
 - affirmation of the Statement of Principle
 - the names of four referees, one of whom shall be the Church Secretary or major lay leader in the congregation.
 - will provide a Church recommendation. Where it is not a local church ministry then the recommendation will be from an appropriate person in the relevant area of ministry.
- iii. will undergo an appropriate level of psychological assessment, as required by the Committee for the Ministry, at the Applicant's or their church's expense.

If an Applicant has been divorced, or is married to a divorced person, the Applicant will be interviewed by the Divorce Sub-Committee (see page 28). This will occur before proceeding with the interview by the Committee for the Ministry. If the Sub-committee recommends, and the Committee for the Ministry accepts, that the Applicant can continue the process, the fact that an Applicant or their spouse is divorced will NOT be considered again.

The following application and candidacy fees will be charged, being directly billed either to the applicant or their church:

- The costs of the psychological evaluation by the external provider
- An application and administration processing fee of \$250 (amount adjusted as required)
- A training programme fee of \$250 (amount adjusted as required)

The applicant will meet with a specialised sub-committee of the Committee for the Ministry. The subcommittee will interview the Applicant with regard to their character, call, doctrine, capacity, competence, and capability

Upon a satisfactory interview a recommendation will be forwarded to the Committee for the Ministry and if agreed to,

- i the applicant will be listed as “Candidate for Recognition”;
- ii a probationary period will commence from the date of acceptance to the end of the following year

Once accepted, the Candidate for Recognition will

- a. attend the Recognised Ministers’ Course, conducted by the Baptist Ministry Team. The course will be in two, three-day sections held over two calendar years.
- b. received supervised mentoring by a skilled pastoral leader approved by the Committee for the Ministry.

At the end of the probation/candidacy period, the CfM will require a report from the church and the candidate’s supervisor, and a check by a representative of the CfM that any requirements made of the candidate have been appropriately fulfilled, including completing the Baptist Association’s Advanced Safe Spaces training, during the period of candidacy.

Upon successful completion of the candidature period, the pastor’s name will be added to the List of Recognised Ministers.

The Recognised Minister will be acknowledged as such for the period of their current ministry. When a change of ministry takes place notification is to be given to the Committee for the Ministry. The Committee will determine if the acknowledgement will continue.

Recognised Ministers will be listed in the Handbook of the denomination. Where Applicable, the area of specialisation will be shown e.g. Chaplain, Youth etc.

Recognised Ministers may apply to become Marriage Celebrants.

6. MATTERS OF PROCEDURE & PRACTICE

6.1 CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is a core value for the Application of the Accreditation Processes.

6.1.1 FOR APPLICANTS

All written material relating to the Application will be made available only to the members of the Committee for the Ministry. Only one copy will be kept in an Applicant's personal file at the Baptist Ministry Centre, under the direction of the Director of Ministries. No other files are to be kept. No reports on the process of the Application or the outcome of the Application will be made to anyone other than the Applicant, unless the Applicant gives express permission.

Committee members will not keep Application papers after a decision has been made on an Applicant. All papers will be handed back to the Secretary of the Committee for shredding.

6.1.2 FOR REFEREES

Reports from referees can be made available to the Applicant if the referee agrees. This is to protect the ability of a referee to be honest and frank in their report on the Applicant.

Attempts may be made to phone selected referees for further comment.

6.1.3 FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Comments of individual members of the Committee are not to be quoted to the Applicant or referees, nor recorded verbatim in Committee Minutes so that they can be attributed to specific members of the Committee.

6.2 POST GRADUATE AND FURTHER STUDY

An accreditation candidate wishing to undertake postgraduate work outside Australia prior to the completion of their required term of service under the guidelines above, shall seek approval from the Committee for the Ministry for leave of absence in order to complete the study. The Committee will make its decision on the Application following discussion with Morling College and the Baptist Ministry Teams to (i) the suitability of the study for the Applicant and (ii) the record of the Applicant's course of study up to this point.

6.3 MARRIAGE CELEBRANTS' LICENSES

All students who are accepted Candidates in Training for the Ministry desiring to be registered as a Marriage Celebrant are required to complete the appropriate course within the Morling College curriculum.

Non-Morling students desiring to be registered as a Marriage Celebrant are required to undertake a marriage preparation training program (as Approved by Morling College and the Baptist Ministry Team), and have completed the training for administering "Prepare" or its equivalent.

Accredited persons transferring from another State shall be requested to apply for Accreditation prior to approval of Application to be a Marriage Celebrant.

Australian Defence Force Chaplains may receive and retain a Marriage Celebrant's Licence without the need to transfer their accreditation from state to state when posted.

Ordained persons from another Denomination shall be required to apply for Accreditation prior to approval of Application to be a Marriage Celebrant.

Non-accredited persons, whether from another Denomination or from within the Baptist Association, shall be required to apply for recognition as a Recognised Minister prior to approval of Application to be a Marriage Celebrant.

All Applicants for approval as Marriage Celebrants, will agree to do a one-day Marriage Preparation Training Course held annually. They will also complete "Prepare" Course - unless exempted by the Baptist Ministry Team. If this undertaking is not honoured, Association approval will not be given for an Application to be made to Births Deaths and Marriages for a Marriage Celebrants' Licence.

To retain their Celebrants' Licence, accredited ministers will be required to do a Marriage Licence Refresher course at least once every five years.

6.4 MINISTERS UNDER DISCIPLINE

The Committee for the Ministry is responsible to ensure all persons accredited and recognised by the Association, as well as those who were formerly accredited or recognised and are now retired, maintain integrity in ministry. Any discipline that may need to be applied will be done so in a way that will build up the high standard of calling to ministry, rather than being punitive.

In cases of an allegation that a serious breach of the Code of Conduct and Ethics has occurred, the minister's church leadership will be informed that an investigation by the Standards Unit is taking place. The Committee may advise that a person being investigated for a serious breach of the Code of Conduct and Ethics should withdraw from all preaching and speaking engagements and not accept any leadership role in the church while the matter is investigated, and until the issue is settled.

After appropriate investigation and assessment, the Ministry Standards Committee will determine whether there has been a breach of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and what outcome may be appropriate.

Outcomes determined by the Ministry Standards Committee could include:

- a decision that no action is required;
- removal from the Accredited List;
- conditions including supervision and/or counselling, followed by a review after an appropriate period of time.

This decision of the Ministry Standards Committee will be reported to the Committee for the Ministry who will ensure that due process and the guidelines of the relevant procedure document have followed. The Ministry Standards Committee will then notify all relevant parties in writing of the outcome.

The decision will also be reported to Assembly Council and thence Assembly.

6.5 REMOVAL FROM THE ACCREDITED LIST

Persons can be removed from the Accredited List under the following circumstances, after contact with the Committee for the Ministry, in accord with the Constitution of the Baptist Association:

- Accept employment in another Denomination or become accredited with another denomination
- The minister has not served in a pastoral ministry in a Baptist Church or other Approved ministry for at least two years
- membership in a NSW/ACT Baptist Church has not been maintained
- serious moral or ethical misconduct based on the findings of the Standards Unit.
- any circumstances that fall within the guidelines below pertaining to Divorce and Remarriage, under the guidance of the Divorce Sub-Committee

• failure to maintain Continuing Ministerial Development requirements • at their own request.

NOTE:

persons who have formally 'retired' from active ministry will be placed on a Retired Ministers' List and their names removed from the Accredited List.

Persons will be removed from the Accredited List by the Committee for the Ministry under the following circumstances:

- a. death
- b. ceasing to be a member of an affiliated church
- c. the Accreditation to Ministry in another Denomination.
- d. becoming a member of a Church of another Denomination.
- e. upon ceasing to minister in NSW or ACT the person's Accreditation has not been transferred to another body affiliated with the Baptist Association of Australia or a body affiliated with the Baptist World Alliance within 12 months.
- f. the person has not been available to serve in a pastoral or other Approved ministry position, full time or part-time, for a period of two years. Accredited Ministers changing from a pastoral ministry role to another role (eg, chaplaincy, an administration position within a para-church organisation, etc) must inform the Committee for the Ministry, at which point their accreditation status will be reviewed. However the names of those persons who, for a period of not less than two years, have ceased to engage in the ministry for which, in the opinion of the Committee for the Ministry, the Minister is Approved, will be contacted to indicate why they should remain on the Accredited List. They may be invited to meet with representatives of the Committee for the Ministry to determine if they may remain on the list. If no response to the contact is received, they will be removed from the Accredited List. Exceptions would be those who are in an Approved Ministry.
- g. serious moral or ethical misconduct based on the findings of the Ministry Standards Unit pursuant to its Policy and Procedures.
- h. any circumstances that fall within the guidelines below pertaining to Divorce and Remarriage, under the guidance of the Divorce Sub-Committee.
- i. failure to maintain Continuing Ministerial Development requirements.
- j. The Assembly Council resolves that the person no longer subscribes to the basic doctrines, objects and values, ceases to hold to their response to the statement of beliefs, or makes comments or acts in a way which indicates that the person no longer holds to their responses to the statement of beliefs, provided that the person has been given an opportunity to be heard by the Assembly Council either in writing or in person at one of its meetings. The person must be given not less than 1 month's notice in writing of the time and place of the meeting and the nature of the business to be addressed at the meeting.
- k. at their own request.

NOTE:

Persons who have formally 'retired' from active ministry will be placed on a Retired Ministers' List and their names removed from the Accredited List.

6.6 DIVORCED PERSONS

Being divorced, or married to a divorced person, is not an automatic bar to Accreditation as a Minister with the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT.

When an Applicant for the Ministry has previously lived in a de facto relationship, has children outside of a marriage relationship, or has been divorced and/or is married to a divorced person; or

When an Accredited Minister or Recognised Minister becomes divorced and/or married to a divorced person;

such persons will meet with the Divorce Sub-Committee of the Committee for the Ministry, as per the guidelines laid down by the 1983 Assembly. Following the interview, an appropriate recommendation will be given to the Committee for the Ministry. If the Sub-committee recommends and the Committee for the Ministry accepts this recommendation, that the Applicant can continue the process, the fact that an Applicant or their spouse is divorced will NOT be considered again.

6.7 HUMAN SEXUALITY, MARRIAGE AND CHURCH LEADERSHIP

In line with the Association statements on Marriage and Human Sexuality, the following standards will apply to Accreditation Candidates, Accredited Ministers, and Recognised Ministers.

1. The Baptist Association of NSW & ACT will not knowingly accredit, for local church leadership, or any other Approved ministry, persons who engage in sexual relationships outside the marriage relationship. Marriage is defined as outlined in the Marriage Rites of the Baptist Union of Australia, (ie the union between a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life) and be a legally recognised marriage.. Applications for accreditation, or ordination, or any other ministry, from persons actively engaged in sexual relationships outside of marriage, will be declined.

2. Upon preliminary Application for acceptance as an Accreditation Candidate, or to become a Recognised Minister, the Applicant will be made aware of the Baptist Association's position and policy on marriage, and sexual relationships.

Applicants will be asked to affirm in a Statutory Declaration whether there is anything in these policies that would call into question their suitability for ministry in or on behalf of our churches.

Unless there is evidence to justify pursuing the matter further, the candidate's answers will be accepted as settling the question.

3. If it is alleged that an accredited person is involved in sexual relationships outside the marriage relationship of a man and a woman, the matter will be referred to the Standards Unit, which will investigate the circumstances of the allegation. As necessary, the Standards Unit will bring a recommendation to the Committee for the Ministry regarding appropriate disciplinary action required.

Throughout the process, the Committee for the Ministry will do all it can to preserve the confidentiality of the persons involved, and act with pastoral sensitivity. The grounds upon which a person's name is to be removed from an Accredited Ministers' List will not be disclosed unless it is so requested by that person.

6.8 RULE CHANGES

A copy of the Guidelines shall be given to all Applicants, and shall be published on the Association website.

No alteration or addition to these Rules or to the Form of Undertaking shall be made except by the Assembly, upon receipt of a report from the Committee for the Ministry regarding the changes.

7. APPENDICES

7.1 APPENDIX 1:

BAPTIST PASTORAL OUTCOMES

GENERAL COLLEGE OUTCOMES FOR ALL GRADUATES OF MORLING COLLEGE

Our commitment is to be doing all we can to see graduates:

1. Embrace the core characteristics of evangelicalism, including:
 - a. Holding to a Trinitarian orthodoxy, including that the one God exists in one substance and in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
 - b. Upholding the historicity of the crucifixion and resurrection, the centrality of the person and work of Christ, his divine/human nature, and his saving work on the cross as the only means for salvation and the forgiveness of sins
 - c. Affirming the Bible as infallible, as God's revelation to humanity, and as the supreme source of authority in matters of faith and practice
 - d. Encouraging evangelism in organised missionary work or by personal encounters and relationships with others, supporting mission through both announcement (proclamation) and demonstration (social concern and action)
2. Have a commitment to the local church, to being an active participant in a local church community, and to exploring their ministry vocation in local churches and other ministry and mission opportunities further afield
3. Interpret the Bible accurately for themselves, and demonstrate an understanding of the Word of God, including:
 - a. An appreciation of the big picture and the plotline of Scripture
 - b. A clear understanding of the Christian Gospel, and a capacity to share that with others
 - c. An ability to convey and apply the truths of Scripture to their own and others' lives in effective ministry
4. Have a keen interest in Bible and theology, and the ability and desire to grow and feed themselves in understanding and skills beyond study at Morling College
5. Understand themselves as Christians called to world mission – locally, regionally, nationally and globally
6. Strengthen and deepen their spiritual relationship with God
7. Be readied as far as possible for appropriate Christian ministry and Christian service
8. Value and develop Christian character
9. Beginning to understand their beliefs in the light of Christian history, and their particular Christian heritage and tradition (with a corresponding interest in exploring this beyond their study at Morling), and developing a sound basic understanding of Christian history and historic Christian faith, such that they have a vital context to evaluate current ecclesiological, theological and pastoral emphases theologically and pragmatically.
10. Have an ability to articulate their Christian faith, especially with respect to other belief systems and worldviews, and what it means to be a Baptist. (Even if they are not a Baptist, they should have some idea of the core convictions and beliefs of the Baptist tradition.)

2. The Baptist accreditation group is the key group we have in mind here; however we would like to see these Pastoral Leadership Outcomes embraced by others who are a part of the Pastoral Leadership Cohort also.

3. These are the texts dealt with in Appendix B.

BAPTIST PASTORAL OUTCOMES (PRESENTED BY MORLING COLLEGE, THE BAPTIST MINISTRY TEAM AND THE COMMITTEE FOR THE MINISTRY)

In addition to the General Outcomes listed above, our commitment is to doing all we can to see pastoral leadership graduates² adequately formed for ministry. Our expectations need to be informed by scripture, and in particular by Matthew 5:1-12, 6:33, 10:26-33; Mark 10:35-45; Acts 20:17-35; Romans 12:1-13; 1 Corinthians 12-13; 2 Corinthians 4-5; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 3:7-17; Colossians 1:28-29; 1 Timothy 3-4; Titus 1; 1 Peter 5:1-11; and, Jude 20-23.³

DOCTRINE

Theological and Intellectual Formation - understandings consistent with evangelicalism and the NSW/ACT Baptist Statement of Beliefs in the Constitution:

- a. The NSW/ACT Baptist Statement of Beliefs in the Constitution – A clear commitment to these as provided in Appendix A (page 31) of this document.
- b. A theological understanding of ministry, leadership, mission, church governance and discipleship that is consistent with Baptist ecclesiology and the supplied Baptist Statement of Beliefs.

Demonstrated commitment to and understanding of orthodox, biblical belief along with an ability to explain it clearly.

CHARACTER

following: integrity, reliability and Consistency in line with the character of Jesus Christ; evidence of a love for the Word, love for God, and love for people.

Christ-like qualities of character – character and integrity that reflects Scriptural standards.

- Priorities shaped by the mind of Christ
- Ethical standards and personal integrity in obedience to the imperatives of Scripture
- Conduct that is consistent with Christian teaching and values
- Sexual purity, especially, but not only, in relationships in ministry
- Willing observance of ministerial ethics, including loyalty to peers and colleagues
- Thinking reflective of a clear understanding of biblical values
- Being above reproach as reflected in the passages listed in the introduction to Part B of this document (Appendix B lists some qualities of character and spiritual life sourced from these texts, which are exemplary rather than exhaustive)

CAPACITY

Evidence of current internal and external resources to follow the call to ministry.

Emotional maturity – consistent, healthy self-awareness and self-acceptance.

- Emotional stability over time and under differing circumstances
- An accurate understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses
- A healthy awareness of their personality, behaviour patterns, level of interpersonal effectiveness, motivations, growth areas, and response to anxiety and conflict

Self-discipline – the capacity to work to potential.

- Completion of agreed-upon tasks without coercion
- The taking of initiative to attend to their responsibilities in a timely way
- The setting and keeping of healthy ministry boundaries – saying “yes” or “no” as appropriate
- Taking responsibility for the development of their spiritual gifts

Spiritual disciplines – prayer, reflection, personal encounter with God, and personal application of truth to self and life.

- Actively practising taking “time out” to consider how to align their life with God’s word
- Evidence that their knowledge of truth is moving beyond information gathering to personal application
- Demonstration of a personal faith in their practice of ministry in both word and deed
- Living in a Spirit-filled way, according to the prompting, fruits and guidance of the Spirit
- Consistently making space to commune with God
- Demonstrating a love for time with God and in the Scriptures
- Cultivating a rich devotional life, including regular (preferably daily) prayer and study of the Scriptures

Developing relational, emotional, and psychological capacities for ministry

- Relational capacity
- Relational support
- Self-awareness
- Resilience

CALL

A sense of vocation – responding to the call of God revealed by the Spirit in the Word, the community of faith, reflection and prayer.

- The conviction and evidence of a vocation from God, as evidenced in the person’s life and confirmed by other individuals and the candidate’s church
- An attitude toward their ministry that reflects a sense of obedience to the leading of God

Accountability – acceptance of spiritual care giving from others.

- Willingness to be close enough to form true community with others
- The choice to have spiritually accountable relationships/Church/Ministry Life – steady, meaningful involvement in local context.
- Committed to the local expression of the body of Christ, and to meeting with Christians in a local church regularly, and to submitting to its discipline
- Being committed to corporate worship

Zeal – an authentic spiritual fervour and passion for God’s kingdom and his righteousness.

COMPETENCE & TRAINING

Spiritual gifts and natural abilities to get the job done. Proficient development of gifts, skills and knowledge through processes of formal, informal and supervised experience based equipping

Ministerial and Missional Formation - demonstrated by competence in core ministry areas of:

The Word – capable of interpreting, teaching and proclaiming Scripture.

- Demonstrating a solid understanding of hermeneutics, exegesis, and homiletics. Being able to accurately exposit the Scriptures, apply them to their own and other lives, and communicate these truths effectively.
- Ability to preach and/or teach competently in the context of one’s ministry

Mission and evangelism principles – ability to apply such principles personally and in ministry.

- Interpreting the cultural context for the purposes of ministry and mission
- Applying principles that will promote mission and growth
- Actively seeking to lead others to a personal relationship with God
- Knowing how to help various kinds of unbelievers move toward a commitment to Christ
- Practising hospitality and welcoming the stranger
- Demonstrating a capacity to relate to people from cultural backgrounds significantly different from the one they know best
- Adapting well to new ministry settings

Interpersonal relationships – effective skills in relating to others.

- Competence in the give-and-take of good interpersonal communication
- Knowing how to demonstrate and receive love and respect
- Ability to form healthy relationships with the opposite sex

Leadership – capacity to form and equip others for ministry, with integrity.

- Having a working understanding of what their equipping roles are
- Discipling others and developing a culture of discipleship in their ministries
- Demonstrating the skills and competencies to empower others for service
- Showing initiative in leading an area of ministry, as well as equipping others to work with them
- Understanding how to lead change and transition in their ministries, and how to manage and resolve conflict
- Understanding and demonstrating the skills of servant leadership
- Paying attention to developing the next generation of leaders, who can likewise build up and develop others. Seeking to equip others for ministry (Ephesians 4)
- Having an ability to lead through sound administrative and management capabilities

Pastoral Care – compassionate care of others.

- Demonstration of genuine skills in spiritual care giving, including the skills involved in visitation, and the development and oversight of systems of pastoral care (for example, small groups or other structured programs of pastoral care involving the pastoral ministry of other people)
- Demonstration of competence in helping others
- Exhibiting the ability to attend (give supportive attention) to persons, families, or congregations in the midst of crisis in ways, which blend a theoretical understanding, empathy and wise counsel. Giving pastoral responses that reflect a model of Christian care beyond just modern therapeutic approaches.

CAPABILITY

- A willingness to develop and improve through reading, mentoring, coaching, immersion in community, ongoing training (formal, informal, and semi-formal), accountability groups, etc.

7.1.1 BAPTIST PASTORAL OUTCOMES APPENDIX A: THE NSW/ACT BAPTIST STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

(NSW ACT Constitution 2012)

THE NATURE AND UNITY OF THE GODHEAD

There is one God Who is eternal personal Spirit. He is infinite in power, wisdom, holiness and love. God is Triune in essential being and revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

THE DEITY AND HUMANITY OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ as the second Person of the Godhead is eternally one with God the Father of whose person and glory Jesus is the accurate expression. To become human He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, so that two whole and perfect natures, the nature of God and human nature, were united in one Person; truly God and truly human.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Trinity is eternally one with the Father and the Son yet He is sent by Them to achieve the divine purpose in the world and in the Church.

THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES

The Scriptures, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, are the infallible Word of God. They were written by holy people of God inspired by the Holy Spirit and have supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

THE SINFULNESS OF PEOPLE

People were made in the image of God and for fellowship with God. By transgression of God's command humankind fell from fellowship with God and their nature was corrupted. As a consequence all people are spiritually dead under Satan's dominion and control and subject to God's wrath and condemnation. Therefore, apart from God's grace, people are helpless and hopeless.

CHRIST'S ATONEMENT FOR HUMAN SIN

In order to redeem people from the guilt, penalty and power of sin, Jesus Christ became human and died a sacrificial death as our representative substitute. By His resurrection, God's acceptance of His atoning death was demonstrated. This atonement is sufficient for the whole world, but effective only in those who received it. The sinner is justified and reconciled to God, not through any personal merit, but solely on the basis of God's gracious gift of salvation in Jesus Christ received through faith.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SALVATION

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is necessary for the acceptance of God's provision of salvation. The Holy Spirit convinces sinners of their sinfulness, leads them to personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and so brings them to spiritual birth as God's children and to fellowship in Christ. Working within the life of believers the Holy Spirit makes real the presence of Christ, witnesses to their relationship with God, leads into all truth, bestows gifts for effective service and produces graces for holy living.

THE CHURCH

The Church is the body of people whom God has separated from the world through faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. All regenerate persons are members of the universal Church of God which takes local form wherever groups of believers unite for worship, fellowship and service in accordance with scriptural

principles. All believers are called to a priestly ministry in the offering of spiritual sacrifices and sent into the world to be witnesses. God calls individuals to positions of oversight and leadership or to special ministries. The Church recognises such by ordaining pastors, commissioning missionaries, appointing deacons and other leaders, following New Testament practice.

THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS ONLY BY IMMERSION

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a public declaration of a person's faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In accordance with New Testament Scripture it should be administered only by total immersion which symbolises the believer's identification with Christ in death, burial and resurrection, the remission of sins and the believer's dedication of himself to God to live and walk in newness of life.

THE COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ instituted by Him to be celebrated with the elements of bread and wine by believers in Christ until the end of the age. It commemorates and declares our thanks for the Lord's substitutionary death. The celebration of the ordinance expresses our fellowship with and in the Lord Jesus Christ as members of the Body of which He is the Head.

THE RETURN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

At the end of this age, according to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in His glory to the earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom of God awaits His return.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

At the end of the age, there is to be a resurrection both of the righteous and the unrighteous. After death people's bodies return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God - the righteous to be with Him and the unrighteous to be reserved for the judgment.

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS IN A FUTURE STATE

God has appointed a day of final judgement for the world. At that time Jesus Christ will judge every person and each will receive reward or punishment according to their deeds. Those judged righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment.

7.1.2 BAPTIST PASTORAL OUTCOMES APPENDIX B: QUALITIES OF CHARACTER AND SPIRITUAL LIFE WE EXPECT TO SEE IN THOSE GOING INTO PASTORAL LEADERSHIP FROM MORLING COLLEGE

Our expectation is that pastoral leadership graduates would be above reproach, as reflected in the passages already listed. Appendix B lists some qualities of character and spiritual life sourced from these texts, which are exemplary rather than exhaustive, and which we expect to see ongoing growth in our pastoral leadership graduates in the following areas:

- i. Poor in spirit, willing to mourn or be persecuted for righteousness sake, merciful, meek, pure of heart, peacemakers, who hunger and thirst after righteousness (Mt 5:1-12)
- ii. Seeking first the kingdom and God's righteousness, boldly and fearlessly proclaiming the Gospel (Matt 6:33, 10:26-33)
- iii. Demonstrating the characteristics and qualities of a servant (Mk 10:35-45)
- iv. Serving the Lord with humility, faithful proclamation of the Gospel, obedience to God's leading, considering one's life worth nothing save obedience to Christ (Acts 20:17-24)
- v. Keeping watch over oneself and the flock as faithful shepherds (Acts 20:25-35)
- vi. Offering one's body as a living sacrifice, being transformed by the renewing of the mind, using one's gifts enthusiastically, never lacking in zeal, keeping one's spiritual fervour, serving the Lord (Rom 12:1-13)
- vii. Honouring all members of the Body of Christ and their unique spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12), and demonstrating the qualities of love described in 1 Corinthians 13
- viii. Setting forth the truth plainly, preaching the Lord Jesus Christ, persevering under trials, fixing one's eyes on what is unseen and eternal (2 Cor 4:1-18)
- ix. Living by faith not by sight, making it one's goal to please the Lord in view of his return (2 Cor 5:1-10)
- x. Committed to the ministry and the message of reconciliation through Christ Jesus (2 Cor 5:11-21)
- xi. Living by the Spirit rather than gratifying the desires of the sinful nature (Gal 5:16-21)
- xii. Demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5:22-23)
- xiii. Crucifying the sinful nature with its passions and desires, and living by the Spirit, while keeping in step with Him (Gal 5:24-26)
- xiv. Living a life worthy of God's call – completely humble and gentle, patient, maintaining unity in the Church (Eph 4:1-6)
- xv. Humbly using one's gifts and ministry to prepare God's people for works of service, building up the body of Christ toward maturity and the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:7-13)
- xvi. Speaking the truth in love with a view to the whole body growing up into Christ (Eph 4:14-16)
- xvii. Considering everything loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ, for whose sake they have lost all things. Seeking to be found in Christ, having a righteousness that comes by faith, and striving to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of sharing in his

sufferings, becoming like him in his death, attaining the resurrection from the dead. Pressing on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of them. Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead. Pressing on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called them in Christ. Following the example and pattern of those who have exemplified this life. (Phil 3:7-17)

- xviii. Proclaiming Christ, admonishing and teaching with all wisdom in order to present everyone perfect in Christ, struggling with all Christ's energy, which so powerfully works in them (Col 1:28-29)
- xix. Above reproach, faithful in marriage and exemplifying an honourable family life, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, having a good reputation in the world, keeping hold of the Gospel with a clear conscience (1 Tim 3)
- xx. Holding firmly to and teaching consistently the truth of the Gospel, training oneself in godliness, and setting an example in speech, life, love, faith and purity (1 Tim 4:1-12)
- xxi. Faithfully serving through one's spiritual gifts, while watching life and doctrine closely (1 Tim 4:13-16)
- xxii. Blameless, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain – instead, being hospitable, loving what is good, self-controlled, upright, holy, disciplined, and Gospel-focused (Titus 1)
- xxiii. Being a shepherd who is eager to serve, self-controlled, resisting the devil, standing firm in the faith, an example to the flock and a servant leader, and clothed with humility (1 Pet 5:1-11)

Building themselves up in their most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit. Practising mercy, passion for the Gospel and salvation, and hating sin (Jude 20-23)

7.2 APPENDIX 2:

A NOBLE TASK CONSIDERING THE CALL TO BAPTIST PASTORAL MINISTRY

Pastoral Ministry within NSW & ACT Baptist Churches

A Noble Task – A Beautiful Work

‘Here is a trustworthy saying: whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task’ (1 Tim 3:1 NIV).

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news...” (Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:15)

The ‘noble task’ Paul writes about is literally a ‘good or beautiful work’ (Gk: καλου εργου). To want to be a pastor is to want to do something beautiful with your life.

To serve God by serving as a leader amongst his people gives you a wonderful opportunity of using your time and gifts to love, share and model the life, love and mission of Jesus within community.

Yet, pastoral ministry is also one of the most demanding roles anyone can be called to. Being a shepherd-leader to God’s people demands sacrifice. It will at times be exhausting and humbling. Good work is rarely easy work. Yet, if this is your calling, your sacrifice can lead to deep satisfaction as God uses you to transform lives. And you will find God will transform you as well.

As an Association of Baptist Churches, we want to encourage all those who ‘aspire to this work of beauty’ to prayerfully seek God’s will with guidance and support from other wise and Spirit filled brothers and sisters in Christ.

‘It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.’ Ephesians 4:11-13

Ministry within Baptist Churches

Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd, is the head of the church universal (Col 1:18). Furthermore, he is the head of every true church manifest in a local setting. Those called into pastoral ministry are not called to rule over the church or be in a position of absolute authority - that would be to displace the position reserved for our Lord and Saviour. Rather local churches, within a Baptist framework, call pastors to the glorious responsibility of being under-shepherds of God’s flock, serving under the authority of our chief shepherd, the Lord Jesus.

Baptists affirm the priesthood of all believers. This means that although pastors are called to a special responsibility within the church, they are in no way more spiritual or special in God’s eyes, nor do they have access to the ministry of the Holy Spirit to a greater extent than any other member of the church.

The unique calling of a pastor is in being set apart by the church body to serve as an under-shepherd of the flock. They are to exercise their ministry through the teaching the Word, being an example of Christ-like living, announcing the good news of salvation, and through sacrificial service for the good of the flock they have responsibility for.

Baptists have consistently affirmed both the priority and autonomy of the local church. In practice this means that, rather than a greater denominational hierarchy, each local church is charged with the responsibility of calling and setting aside those whom they

wish to serve them as pastors (some call this process 'ordination'). Each individual church has the responsibility of identifying, supporting, and setting aside those whom they consider to be fit to serve in pastoral ministry. Consequently, the local church and its leaders must have a priority to identify and encourage those with gifting and aspirations towards pursuing pastoral ministry.

'Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away'. 1 Peter 5:2-4

Accreditation

Accreditation is the most thorough and broad form of pastoral affirmation supported by the Association. Through the accreditation process the Association seeks to support its member churches in the discernment of an individual's call to pastoral ministry. It is an intentionally rigorous process designed to encourage growth and godliness in the candidate and give support and assistance to the local church as it assesses in broad terms a candidate's suitability for pastoral leadership.

Accreditation requires the investment of a significant amount of time and energy and prayer from a number of parties; these include the candidate and their family, their local church, and representatives of the Association. It is expected that this investment of time and energy will be richly repaid through more effective ministry amongst our family of churches.

Accreditation is designed to be of benefit at a number of levels:

i. **THE INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATE.**

Each candidate has the opportunity, through multiple forms of input and feedback, to seriously examine themselves as they are encouraged to grow in godliness, competence, training and self-awareness. The accreditation process is aimed at equipping people more effectively for a lifetime of ministry, whether that involves formal pastoral oversight or not.

ii. **THE LOCAL CHURCH**

The local church will have access to far greater resources and support in helping to assess and develop those they have identified as having potential for pastoral ministry. Furthermore, accreditation should give local churches a greater measure of confidence as to the suitability of a candidate when calling an individual to a role of pastoral oversight.

iii. **THE ASSOCIATION**

The entire Association of Baptist Churches benefits from having at its disposal a pool of trusted and trained persons who can be commended to churches, and from which it can find leaders for its service to the churches.

iv. **THE WIDER COMMUNITY**

Accreditation demonstrates to the wider community that those who have undergone its rigours have been examined and trained to a high level of integrity, trustworthiness and moral fidelity. This is particularly important as the Association stands behind its accredited ministers, affirming their fitness to perform appropriately under the legal requirements of the state with regard to such matters as marriage, child-protection, and non-discrimination legislation.

'Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.' (2 Timothy 2:15)

What to Do Now?

The first thing to do, after a period of prayer, is to speak to your pastor or other church leaders and Christian mentors. Be direct: 'I'm thinking that I should investigate becoming a pastor or other Christian leader. What do you think?' Begin the conversation and then be prepared to listen to their advice. Look for new opportunities to serve in your local church. Be prepared to take on more responsibility as you have opportunity.

Even as you explore your calling, God will already be using you in beautiful ways for his glory.

If, over the course of time, you receive affirmation from your pastor and your church, the next step is to make direct contact with the Association to investigate Accreditation and formal theological training.

Speak first to the Coordinator of Pastoral Accreditation & Recognition, or other member of the Baptist Ministry Team.

Phone: (02) 9868 9230

Email: cfm@nswactbaptists.org.au

Further details on the Accreditation Process can be found at www.nswactbaptists.org.au

'Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.' Acts 20:28

It really is beautiful

"To me, the pastoral ministry is the greatest vocation I can think of; a privileged position, a wonderful adventure, with much to discourage us and more to encourage us.

The secret to surviving and thriving is to never allow ourselves to become discouraged. We do this by 'encouraging ourselves in the Lord,' as David did (1 Sam 30:6). The key is to remain permanently plugged into the source of 'eternal encouragement' (2 Thess 2:16). The best way to do that, is to start each day by accepting Jesus' gracious invitation of Rev 3:20 to share spiritual food with Him. Then, we and Jesus are ready for anything the day brings."

Neil Wykes

Senior Pastor, Maroubra Baptist Church

"We thank God every day for the privilege of serving Him as pastors in a Baptist Church. We love working with a team of brilliant pastors and leaders and we are so often humbled and filled with delight as we see the things that God is doing. Of course there are times that are bumpy and tiring, and yet God's grace and his call upon our lives has sustained us over the past 23 years."

Stephen & Kathy Bates

Pastoral Team Leaders, Parramatta Baptist Church

"God had to drag me kicking and screaming into pastoral ministry. And sometimes, I need lots of encouragement to stay in it. But in pastoral ministry, with all its ups and downs, I have found purpose, fulfilment and joy. God was right all along."

Megan Du Toit

Associate Pastor, Gordon Baptist Church

7.3 APPENDIX 3:

REFERENCES TO ARTICLES ON MINISTRY, SELF & FAMILY LIFE

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7.4 APPENDIX 4: PROBATION YEAR CHECKLIST

One of the key strategies of the Accreditation Process is to assess a Candidate over a longer period of time, providing opportunity to

- i. assess development in various areas through training, mentoring and experience, and
- ii. identify real or potential areas of challenge that may need to be specifically addressed. This longitudinal approach requires standardised but flexible procedures to be in place for each candidate, as expressed in the following Checklist, the successful completion of which will be required of the Candidate.

ASPECT EVALUATED	PROCESS FOR EVALUATION	COMPLETED
Capacity	Undertake a Marriage Enrichment Course	
	Further psychological evaluations – Million / PAI	
Competence	Two short-term intensive placement experiences	
Training/Competence	Statement from supervising pastor or church leader of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pastoral experiences eg. weddings, funerals, dedications, hospital visitation • leadership competencies eg. development of others, vision and direction, planning • spiritual formation eg. prayerfulness, spiritual gifts, discernment • relational competencies eg. capacity to build and maintain healthy relationships, conflict skills 	
Training/Competence	Report on preaching competency (from Morling Advanced Preaching Course Assessment)	
Competence/Capability	Final Objective Observational Report (Church)	
Training/Competence	Rated Gifts for Ministry Assessment	

7.5 APPENDIX 5:

OBJECTIVE OBSERVATIONAL REPORT (CHURCH)

The Accreditation Process aims to assist in the development of godly pastors who can lead and develop others in the work of Christ. The process seeks to evaluate the candidate across the following dimensions of life and ministry:

- **character** integrity, reliability and consistency in Line with the character of Jesus Christ
- **call** the conviction and evidence of a vocation from God
- **doctrine** demonstrated commitment to orthodox biblical belief
- **capacity** external and internal resources to follow the call
- **competence** spiritual gifts and natural abilities to get the job done
- **capability** diligence and drive to persevere in the call
- **training** proficient development of gifts, abilities and knowledge

To be completed by the

- i. supervising minister or church officer from the church in which the candidate is placed
AND
- ii. the Principal of Morling College. Please rate the level of competence achieved by the candidates, FOR EACH OF THE ITEMS ASSESSED, on a scale of 1 – 7 where 1 = not achieved at all, and 7 = highly achieved.

DIMENSION	ITEMS ASSESSED	RATING ACHIEVED (1-7)
Character	Demonstrates integrity in behaviour and speech consistent with Christian belief	
	Is reliable and consistent in high standards of personal behaviour	
	Demonstrates the fruit of the Spirit in increasing measure (Galatians 5:22-23)	
	Is a person of good reputation within the church and wider community	
Call	Give evidence of a clear call to pastoral ministry	
Doctrine	Gives evidence in teaching and preaching of orthodox Christian belief (1 Timothy 4:16; Titus 2:1)	
Capacity	Demonstrates a developing emotional and spiritual resources to face the rigours of pastoral ministry	
	If married, gives evidence of a sound marriage relationship	
	Gives evidence of healthy supportive relationships to sustain ministry	
Competence	Gives evidence of relational competencies in pastoral and personal interactions	
	Demonstrates spiritual gifts consistent with ministry calling	
	Is increasingly self-aware	
	Shows capacity to equip others for ministry	
Capability	Is diligent in fulfilling ministry role	
	Gives evidence of developing personal resilience	
	Demonstrates drive and passion for ministry	
Training	Is able to apply skills in ministry setting	
	Has been diligent in completing required studies	

7.6 APPENDIX 6: CONTINUING MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Welcome to Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD - formerly known as Continuing Accreditation Process). We look forward to working with you as you take time to reflect on your ministry over a year and look ahead to where the Lord will lead you in the years ahead.

The CMD Program

The following key elements were established as the original requirements for the program at the 2005 Assembly of the Baptist Association (then Union) of NSW/ACT:

- Continued accreditation is affirmed when certain requirements across three key areas of competency, commitment and skill
- Adopted by Assembly and Ministers Association in the light of proposals to develop Codes of Conduct for Churches and Pastors

One important change to these elements relates to the original exemption possible for those within six months of retirement. Upon further consideration, the CMD Panel, The Baptist Association of NSW & ACT and Assembly Council believe that this should cease. It is important for the welfare of churches and the ongoing development of ministers that CMD is

- mandatory for all pastors in active ministry roles – full or part time, permanent or interim

Non participation

The heart of CMD is to recognise the need to grow, learn and develop as pastors. With a system of reporting which has the requirement of completion of hours in a given category of ministry activity, there can be a belief that the CMD process is inflexible. However, this is not the intention of the process, and consideration will be given to situations or circumstances which may be restricting engagement from pastors.

Pastors can have up to 2 years leave of absence if they need to take study leave or simply require a break from ministry. In addition, there is flexibility for pastors who are struggling with depression, sickness, financial pressures or other circumstances. It is important to note that unless the CMD Administrator is contacted to talk through any of these issues, the Panel may remain unaware and the Administrator will be requested to follow up pastors on behalf of the Panel.

The two options

OPTION 1

Achieve 90 hours over a three year cycle with a minimum of 10 hours in each of the three key areas of engagement

OPTION 2

Find a mentor/supervisor to reflect with you on involvement in 3 key areas and submit 5 references at the end of the cycle.

Where am I up to?

The next three year cycle of the Continuing Ministerial Development Process for Baptist ministers commenced on 1 January 2015. Each accredited minister is required to have engaged with the process (unless they have specific exemptions which have been advised to and approved by the CMD Panel):

Key areas of engagement

No matter which option you have chosen to follow, the requirements of the program are to meet minimum requirements in three areas of competency, commitment and skill. The following are the key areas and listed are some examples of various activities that can be included:

PS: PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION EXAMPLES

- Mentoring
- Spiritual Direction
- Counselling/Therapy/Prayer Ministry
- Reflection on Current Ministry roles
- Retreats (spiritual, family, individual, Pastoral renewal groups)
- Personal reading on personal spiritual formation
- Spiritual formation courses
- Marriage enrichment courses
- Short-term mission trips

A: PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC FORMATION EXAMPLES

- Seminars, Training courses, Conferences
- Post-graduate studies
- Distance study or other appropriate secular institutions
- Professional reading reflecting on academic learning
- Involvement in a professional area or body
- Involvement in pastoral/church reviews, observation or evaluation
- Write an article for a journal
- Present a paper at a conference
- Teaching and/or designing workshop/lectures (if not your primary ministry)

D: DENOMINATIONAL INVOLVEMENT EXAMPLES

- Attendance at Assemblies and Revive Annual Conference
- Attendance at Pastors Annual Conference
- Membership and involvement on a committee
- Involvement in regional pastors networks
- Involvement in District Association meetings
- Involvement with Church Consultation
- Involvement in training others for ministry
- Mentoring a student or church leader
- Outside main ministry involvement (eg., chaplaincy, community work, schools)

Mentoring other pastors

Throughout the first cycle, the CMD panel became aware of a number of pastors, particularly those from non-English speaking backgrounds, who found the CMD process difficult to understand and/or follow. If you are aware of any pastors in your area who are struggling in similar ways, we encourage you to mentor them in the CMD process so that requirements can be met for all accredited pastors.

CMD Panel and Administrator

The Continuing Ministerial Development Panel is here to help and support you in the CMD process and the program is operated on a grace basis. We are aware of the pressures in ministry and that things slip through the cracks amidst the busy life of a pastor. However, the CMD program is not designed to add pressure but to assist you reflect on your ministry role and in the process be encouraged by that reflection. The Administrator is employed on a part time basis but is available to answer questions and concerns so do not hesitate to be in touch by email (cmd@nswactbaptists.org.au) or phone (02 9868 9273) to ask for assistance.

7.7 APPENDIX 7: FORM OF UNDERTAKING



FORM OF UNDERTAKING

To be signed by all Candidates for the Ministry

If accepted as a Student for the Ministry I will diligently apply myself to the prescribed course of study and will faithfully comply with the “Guidelines for those Seeking Accreditation”. I note the responsibilities I will have to The Committee for the Ministry, and by extension, to the Theological College and the Baptist Ministry Team.

I acknowledge having read the above Undertaking as well as having read the “Guidelines for those Seeking Accreditation” and have received a copy thereof.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20

Signature: _____

7.8 APPENDIX 8: STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

I acknowledge that our risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the sole and absolute authority in all matters relating to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures and that each Church has liberty and responsibility, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to interpret and administer his teachings.

I acknowledge that the Baptist Church in any given place consists particularly of those believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who have been admitted to membership according to the provisions of the Constitution of that Church.

I also acknowledge that there may be other believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who, while not being members of that Baptist Church, are included within its fellowship and are committed to the beliefs, worship and ministry of that local Church. I affirm that I shall encourage all such believers to become members of that Church according to the provisions of its Constitution.

I accept the principle of the autonomy of the local Church. The government of that Church, being vested in the body of believers who comprise its membership, shall be exercised by the Church meeting. The local Church shall have full authority to manage its own affairs (save in matters relating to property, in which the Church must operate within the provisions of the Baptist Churches of NSW Property Trust Act).

I accept the responsibility of mutual counsel, co-operation and support of other Churches which are members of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT (Baptist Association of New South Wales). I acknowledge that this counsel, co-operation and support may be sought and mediated where and whenever necessary through the elected officers of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT.

I recognise my role as Pastor in any Church of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT as that of a servant leader. I recognise that the responsibility of my role requires me to pursue ongoing growth in my character, my walk with Christ, my understanding of the Scriptures and my level of pastoral skills.

The ministry of any Church in which I serve is the ministry of that Church and not just my own. Therefore I must recognise the giftedness of others. I also recognise my responsibility to lead the Church in co-operation with members of that Church and especially with others on any pastoral team, with the Elders, Deacons and other Office Bearers whom the Church may CMDpoint under the headship of Christ. Therefore I must exercise that leadership through serving the congregation in a manner consistent with any agreed code of conduct produced by the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT.

Affirmed by: _____ Dated: _____

7.9 APPENDIX 9: SEVEN DIMENSIONS AND MORLING ALIGNMENT

DIMENSION	DEFINITION	MORLING ALIGNMENT
Character	Character is the bedrock for an individual's ministry effectiveness. Character involves the following: integrity, reliability and consistency in line with the character of Jesus Christ; evidence of a love for the Word, love for God, and love for people. Demonstrating Christlike qualities of character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry Mentoring (MM) program • Supervised Field Education (SFE) supervisory relationship • Guided Spiritual Formation (GSF) program
Call	<p>The conviction and evidence of a vocation from God, as evidenced in the person's life and confirmed by other individuals and the candidate's church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocation • Accountability • Church ministry life • Zeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry Formation unit • Guided Spiritual Formation (GSF) program • Ministry Mentoring (MM) program
Doctrine	<p>Demonstrated commitment to and understanding of the basic doctrines and beliefs of the Baptist Association, along with an ability to explain them clearly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evangelical convictions • Supporting NSW/ACT Baptist Statement of Beliefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible, theology, Christian thought, ethics, apologetics, and church history units • Baptist Distinctives unit and projects
Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relational capacity • Self-awareness • Resilience • Emotional maturity • Self-discipline • Spiritual disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myers Briggs course • DISC course • Ministry Mentoring (MM) program
Competence	<p>Spiritual gifts and natural abilities to get the job done</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying spiritual gifts and natural skills • capable of interpreting, teaching, and proclaiming Scripture • competency in leadership, pastoralia, mission, and evangelism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission competencies: Mission and evangelism units, Partnership Mission, Mission Study Tours, mission exposure trips, and "mission formation" program • Communication competencies: Multiple preaching units • Pastoral and leadership competencies: Multiple units in these areas, and the Supervised Field Education (SFE) program • Morling pastoral leadership stream • Mentoring, supervision, and coaching programs • Safe Churches training
Training	<p>Proficient development of gifts, skills and knowledge through processes of formal, informal and supervised experience based equipping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Morling/MSD Pastoral Outcomes document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See dot points under "competence" • Morling and The Baptist Association of NSW & ACT short courses, day seminars, etc. • See Morling/MSD Pastoral Outcomes document
Capability	Potential to develop and improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback given to students in all classes and extra-curricular activities • Supervised Field Education (SFE) program • Morling pastoral leadership stream • Mentoring, supervision, and coaching programs

7.10 APPENDIX 10 GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR MORLING GRADUATES AND APPLICANTS FROM OTHER THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

Morling graduates will complete an undergraduate or graduate award (24 units) of carefully crafted Bible, theology, and practical and pastoral units.

They then complete a further five units in their accreditation year (in a Graduate Diploma, or in a chosen, appropriate external or internal (Morling) award.

At this point they will

- i. proceed to accreditation, and
- ii. commit to the Association via the Committee for the Ministry, to complete three units as part of post-accreditation professional development.

Accreditation thus requires a total of thirty-two units, with the final three being completed as professional development. The time limit for completion of the final three units will be in the first three years following accreditation.

During their four years of study the students will work with the College, the Baptist Ministry Team, and Committee for the Ministry on their ministerial, psychological, and theological, development (including more intentional psychological preparation for ministry).

Applicants from Colleges other than Morling with three-year equivalent awards will be required to complete, nine units at Morling, and then do three units as post-accreditation professional development.

Failure to complete post-accreditation subjects in the prescribed period will result in removal from the List of Accredited Ministers.

In summary, ministry training will look like this:

Morling Graduates (& other approved Baptist colleges):

1. Undergraduate/Graduate Award +
2. Five ministry preparation units (bible, theology, practical and pastoral, etc).
(A panel composed of representatives of Morling, the Baptist Ministry Team, and the Committee for the Ministry in conversation with the student, will determine the shape and content of these units.) plus
3. Three post-accreditation/professional development units plus
4. Ministerial/psychological/theological formation by Committee for the Ministry/
Baptist Ministry Team /College

Graduates of Non-Baptist Colleges:

1. Undergraduate/Graduate Award plus
2. Nine ministry preparation units (bible, theology, practical and pastoral studies, etc). (A panel composed of representatives of Morling, the Baptist Ministry Team, Committee for the Ministry in conversation with the student, will determine the shape and content of these units.) plus
3. Three post-accreditation/professional development units plus ministerial/
psychological/theological formation as determined by the Committee for the Ministry, the Baptist Ministry Team and Morling College

7.11 APPENDIX 11: CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

Code of Ethics and Conduct – NSW / ACT Baptist Ministers

The need for a Code of Ethics for NSW/ACT Baptist pastors has been apparent for some years. In June 2003 a Code was drafted and adopted by the then NSW Baptist Ministers' Association, but did not proceed to Assembly, due to a desire by the Ministers' Association that it be proceeded with only if a Church's Code of Conduct was developed.⁴ From 2006, the Pastoral Development Taskforce (PDT) [now known as the Pastoral Advisory Group 2014] of the Baptist Ministry Team was charged with the responsibility of advising on and overseeing the development of policies and procedures to support pastoral health and well-being for NSW/ACT pastoral leaders. With the appointment of a Professional Standards Unit and Professional Standards Unit Manager (2013), and a review of the Accreditation Process for Ministers (2014), this significant lack of an approved Code of Conduct for Ministers' for the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT was once again highlighted, and addressed in conjunction with the Pastoral Advisory Taskforce (PAT) and the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT.

The Code of Ethics and Conduct will from this point be referred to as The Code.

The establishment of a Code is a recognised practice that has been undertaken by other Baptist Unions in Australia and various other denominations in recent years. The Code's drafting group drew on material from these codes.

A Draft was circulated to pastors and church leaders in January 2015. Feedback was received and considered.

The Code reflects an ongoing commitment by the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT to:

- the maturity, health and professional conduct of its pastoral leaders and the churches to which they minister;
- its responsibility to make clear the duty of care that pastoral leaders have towards those they lead and work with.

The Code is not intended to replace other official documents prepared by the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT but should be read in conjunction with them. These include but are not limited to:

- Statement of Beliefs as found in the Constitution
- Safe Church Policy
- Complaint Procedure for Allegations of Misconduct by Pastoral leaders
- Continuing Ministerial Development and Recognition Guidelines
- Privacy Policy of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT

The Code is not intended to replace a Covenant of Care document established between a pastoral Leader and their congregation at the commencement of a period of ministry but should be read in conjunction with the Covenant.

The Code aims to provide pastoral leaders (and their churches) with clear guidelines and common benchmarks for ethical conduct and legal responsibility. It is not designed to be a replacement for the Bible as a fundamental guide for faith and practice. It recognises however, that a diversity of Scriptural interpretation exists among Baptists.

4. "There was concern that if such a code was developed, there also ought to be a similar document for churches. The Ministers Association has therefore agreed that this Code of Conduct of Ministers, although adopted by the Association for its members, be not presented to Assembly until a code of conduct for churches be simultaneously presented." June 2003 Baptist Ministers' Association Code of Conduct, page 1.

Nor is the Code intended to be an exhaustive 'How to Manual' for ministry. It does seek to reflect the biblical call to godliness and faithfulness in ministry.

Several of the Code's principles are aspirational: pastoral leaders will endeavour to fulfill them to the best of their ability. Several are advisable: guidelines that are strongly recommended; and other principles are mandatory: failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action being taken by the Baptist Association NSW & ACT, and/or removal from the official list of pastors.

Those sections which the Association considers mandatory and subject to potential disciplinary action are clearly labeled MANDATORY.

The document titled Procedures for Handling Allegations Brought Against Accredited (or Recognised Ministers) outlines the process undertaken when misconduct occurs.

The Code is an open document that will be reviewed from time to time by the BANSW & ACT Pastoral Advisory Group in consultation with the Professional Standards Unit.

Pastoral leaders include the following people associated with the Baptist Association:

- Ordained and Accredited Pastoral leaders;
- Recognised Pastoral leaders (non-ordained but accredited);
- Accreditation Candidates in Training;
- All persons employed by the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT in leadership roles to do with church or pastoral ministry
- Anyone who is registered as a marriage celebrant with the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT;
- Any person in a position appointed by Assembly but not mentioned above.

Pre-Amble

Pastoral leaders are called by God, affirmed by the Church and usually trained in a professional manner.

People enter into ministry in response to a gracious call from God and the Church. It is this call that requires pastoral leaders to carry out their responsibilities in a biblically faithful manner. As Scripture says: "See to it that you fulfill the ministry that you have received from the Lord" (Col 4:17). Pastoral leaders have been given a significant role within the life of the Church. They are called upon to exercise leadership in its worship, preaching, mission, pastoral care and discipleship; they also serve as Christ's representatives in the world (Matt 28:18-20). As pastoral leaders live out their call to ministry in positions of power and influence, they will seek to express the love and character of Christ in all their relationships.

Pastoral leaders within the churches of the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT also exercise ministry under the auspices and affirmation of that Association. Accredited and Recognised Ministers are thus accountable to work within the values and standards espoused by the Association i.e. contained within the Constitution, the Accreditation Guidelines and the Statement of Beliefs.

Finally, bearing as they do a call to reach the wider community and operate within the appropriate laws of the State (Romans 13:1 - 7), pastoral leaders will operate with the highest professional commitment to these laws. While pastors are not mere "professionals", they will behave "professionally".

This Code is thus informed by biblical, Associational and professional standards.

1. **Pastoral leaders must exercise ministry within the limits of their expertise, and within the parameters of the Code of Ethics & Conduct for Pastoral Leaders.**
 - 1.1 Pastoral leaders must uphold professional standards of ministry, outlined in this Code
 - 1.1.1 Pastoral leaders exercise a role in society that carries respect. Thus they should act in a way that maintains the trust of the community. The nature of ministry requires pastoral leaders to be godly, healthy and humble examples to others.
 - 1.2 Pastoral leaders should seek to minister with an attitude worthy of their call.
 - 1.2.1 Pastoral leaders touch people's lives in times of joy, pain, celebration, grief and vulnerability. They train the church to serve the Lord in caring for one another, praying, studying the Scriptures, and proclaiming the Gospel. They seek to enable others to grow in Christian maturity (Colossians 1:28) and to focus on God as the source of forgiveness, restoration and wholeness.
 - 1.3 Pastoral leaders must ensure that they act responsibly and with integrity towards others.
 - 1.3.1 Pastoral leaders exercise considerable influence and power. Therefore they must act at all times with integrity and maintain appropriate boundaries in their relationships.
 - 1.3.2 Pastoral leaders should recognise that they are not called to carry out their responsibilities alone. Therefore, they will be readily accountable to and seek support from others including their local church, its leadership group; colleagues, peer support group, mentor, professional supervisor and/or spiritual director as well as the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT.
 - 1.3.3 Pastoral leaders should seek to encourage the members of their congregations to exercise their own gifts and capacity for ministry and service in the church and society.
 - 1.4 Pastoral leaders should not offer unqualified advice in areas for which they do not hold credentials.
 - 1.4.1 Professionals are expected to act within the scope of their profession. A 'profession' is a group of people engaged in an occupation or calling whose competency depends upon specialised knowledge, training and experience. Any service that is offered beyond the scope of the profession of Christian ministry must be accompanied by appropriate and recognised qualifications.
 - 1.4.2 Pastoral leaders are not normally trained to provide services such as specialised Counselling or Psychological Analysis or other areas requiring specific training and qualifications.
 - 1.4.3 Most professions have their own codes of ethical standards. When pastoral leaders are offering a service from a particular profession (for example, Counselling or Psychology), they must also observe the code of ethics attached to that profession.
 - 1.4.4 Where pastoral leaders are in any doubt about their ability or qualifications to offer a service to a person in their care, they should refer the person to a qualified professional.

2. Pastoral leaders must treat those to whom they minister, and all with whom they come into contact, with respect, honesty and compassion.

2.1 Pastoral leaders should be an example of Christ-like behaviour to the members of both the church and the community.

2.2 Pastoral leaders should respect the dignity of others regardless of race, religion, gender, political beliefs, ability or sexual orientation.

2.3 Pastoral leaders should work to further justice in society.

2.3.1 Pastoral leaders should recognise the church's concern for all aspects of life and society.

2.4 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders should have a moral and biblical commitment to truthfulness, and must not knowingly represent other's work as their own.

3. Pastoral leaders must be aware that there is a power dynamic within their role, power that must not be abused but understood and exercised appropriately.

3.1 Pastoral leaders must acknowledge that in being called to pastor a church they are being placed in a position of authority within that church. With that authority comes the responsibility to exercise it in a way consistent with a follower of Jesus – in humility, servant hood, honesty and love.

3.2 MANDATORY

Abuse of power is when someone with authority uses that authority to unjustifiably exploit or harm others or through lack of action allows exploitation or harm to others.

3.3 A Pastor may use their age, intelligence, Bible knowledge, position in church governance, physical presence, technology, confidential information, trust or other means to abuse the power they have been given. Abuse of power can be blatant or subtle in its expression.

3.4 Examples of abuse can include, but are not limited to:

- using confidential knowledge of a person's life situation in open prayers or sermon illustrations,
- using superior bible knowledge to subtly manipulate others to do what you want them to do or to shame them in front of others,
- using your position of authority to coerce people to gift money or items to you as the Pastor
- favouring some people's requests over others for their own gain

4. MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must refrain from any form of conduct that exploits another for their own advantage, or the advantage of any third person.

4.1. Pastoral leaders must not spiritually, emotionally, verbally, physically or sexually abuse anyone.

4.1.1 Pastoral leaders should recognise the influence that they exercise in their ministerial roles. They must refrain from the abuse of the power that is possible in their role. The pastor's influence needs to be exercised wisely to sustain and build up the church, never to bully, manipulate or denigrate.

- 4.1.2 Pastoral leaders have the responsibility to ensure that their churches are places of safety where the personal boundaries of those within their care will not be violated.
 - 4.1.3 Pastoral leaders must refrain from sexual exploitation or sexual harassment of any kind. Sexual misconduct includes:
 - a. Sexual harassment: a wide range of unwelcome and unreciprocated behaviours, verbal and physical such as overt or covert seductive speech or gestures, the display of offensive pictures, unwelcome sexual advances or unwelcome requests or demands for sexual favours or engagement in other unwelcome contact of a sexual nature. Such contact may include expressions of inappropriate 'affection' such as unwelcome kissing, touching, patting, pinching or bumping;
 - b. Sexual assault: any unwelcome sexual behaviour that may occur along a continuum from verbal insult to sexual intercourse that makes a person feel threatened or afraid;
 - c. Sexual conduct prohibited by criminal law.
 - 4.2 Pastoral leaders must not engage in a sexual relationship with anyone other than their spouse.
 - 4.2.1 Pastoral leaders must not sexualise a pastoral or professional relationship. Sexualisation includes sexual interaction, consensual or otherwise with a person within their ministerial care. Apart from behaviour mentioned under 4.1.3, such interaction may also include unwarranted or inappropriate questioning of another's sexual history.
 - 4.2.2 In the event of a single pastor engaging in a courting relationship with a member of their congregation suitable accountability must be maintained.
 - 4.3 Pastoral leaders must not seek material gain for themselves or their families from a pastoral relationship, beyond recognised fees, stipends and entitlements.
- 5. Pastoral leaders must respect the right of all to whom they minister, to a relationship of mutual trust, privacy and confidentiality.**
- 5.1 MANDATORY
 - Pastoral leaders must maintain confidentiality unless this would result in harm to another person(s) or disclosure is required by law.
 - 5.1.1 In the context of a pastoral relationship, confidentiality is an assurance that pastoral leaders will not divulge written or spoken information about an individual with other people unless:
 - a. Permission has been granted by the individual;
 - b. Retaining such information would result in physical, emotional or sexual harm to another person(s);
 - c. Disclosure is required by law or is necessary to prevent financial loss to some other person due to fraud or other dishonesty where undue hardship might result.

- 5.1.2 Pastoral leaders should not seek to gain sensitive or confidential material to which they are not entitled or which would require another person to breach a confidence.
- 5.1.3 Pastoral leaders must take care to discuss the nature and limits of their confidentiality with those receiving counselling.
- 5.1.4 Pastoral leaders must ensure that confidential records are securely stored; that rooms in which pastoral conversations take place are appropriately private.
- 5.1.5 Staff members are to be informed of their duty in matters of confidentiality.
- 5.2 Pastoral leaders must not disclose private or confidential material in public unless prior consent has been given.
 - 5.2.1 Pastoral leaders should not use information or stories from pastoral conversations in their preaching and public prayers that would reveal a person's identity except with their permission. Even then, it may be inappropriate to reveal such information:
 - a. In deference to relatives of the person who may recognise the person(s) involved;
 - b. Because some people relish prurient information about themselves being broadcast;
 - c. Because it may discourage sensitive people from seeking help if they fear that inappropriate disclosure may be made about them.
- 5.3 MANDATORY
Pastoral leaders must comply with the provisions of the Privacy Act.
- 5.4 Pastoral leaders are to be discerning in their use of social media. Online communications can create an intense, relational situation because of the ease of access, the comfort of distance and its unobserved nature. The church considers talking with people online to be exactly the same as talking to them face to face and the same Code of Ethics and Conduct applies.
- 6. Pastoral leaders must commit themselves to ongoing personal and professional development.**
 - 6.1 Pastoral leaders should maintain professional standards of knowledge and skill in areas of ministry relevant to their context.
 - 6.1.1 Pastoral leader's professional conduct is enhanced by disciplined and prayerful reflection on the various ways in which the Christian faith affects the lives of the people within their care.
 - 6.2 Pastoral leaders should seek to contribute to the development of the wider ministry.
 - 6.2.1 Pastoral leaders are encouraged to share their professional knowledge and experience with ministerial colleagues and to contribute their expertise and experience to the development of the BA NSW & ACT's ministry, policies and practice.
 - 6.3 MANDATORY
Pastoral leaders must actively participate in the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT's Continuing Ministerial Development process (previously known as Continuing Accreditation Process).

6.3.1 The Baptist Association of NSW & ACT's Continuing Ministerial Development process provides an opportunity for pastoral leaders to review their sense of call on a regular basis and renew their response to it. The CMD ensures that provision is made for the establishment and continuation of mentoring and supervisory relationships that will support pastoral leaders in their ministries. The CMD includes accountability for matters of personal, spiritual, and professional growth and study. Pastoral leaders who wish to remain on the BA NSW & ACT's recognised ministerial lists are required to participate in the Ongoing Ministerial Development process.

7. Pastoral leaders must accept responsibility for their own spiritual, emotional, physical and mental health, and act with due care towards their families and friends.

7.1 Pastoral leaders should nurture their spiritual lives through regular attention to prayer, the reading of scripture and other spiritual disciplines.

7.1.1 Pastoral leaders should recognise that fruitful ministry is an expression and extension of a dependent relationship upon God.

7.2 Pastoral leaders should seek to maintain a proper balance between personal, family, church and other responsibilities.

7.2.1 Some pastoral leaders will face the temptation of being consumed by the ministerial role; others will struggle to give adequate attention to ministerial priorities.

7.2.2 Personal wellbeing is enhanced by good friendships. It is desirable for pastoral leaders to develop and maintain personal friendships with people outside the sphere of their ministerial responsibilities.

7.3 Pastoral leaders should seek to manage their time wisely and should set aside regular opportunities for rest, recreation and spiritual renewal.

7.3.1 It is desirable for pastoral leaders to establish viable work patterns that include weekly time (Sabbath) away from pastoral responsibilities and regular scheduled holiday breaks and/or annual leave.

7.4 Pastoral leaders should fulfill their responsibilities of love and care for their spouses and families, and avoid imposing unreasonable expectations and demands upon them.

7.4.1 Pastoral leaders should allow adequate time to fulfill their family responsibilities.

7.4.2 Pastoral leaders should exercise fidelity and integrity in their relationships to their spouses.

7.4.3 Pastoral leaders should encourage their loved ones to grow in faith. This may mean that pastoral leaders will ensure that someone else has the responsibility for the pastoral care of family members.

7.4.4 Pastoral leaders should respect the rights of their family members to privacy and refrain from making public references to them without first seeking their permission.

7.4.5 The responsibility of a pastoral leader's spouse is as a marital partner and, where, applicable, as a co-parent to the children, not as a church employee or unpaid leader (unless this arrangement

has been made with the free consent of the spouse). A spouse should be able to choose the nature of their involvement in the life of the congregation (like any other church member).

- 7.5 Pastoral leaders should seek to maintain their own physical and mental health.
 - 7.5.1 Physical health requires proper nutrition, adequate sleep, regular exercise and avoidance of the misuse of alcohol and other drugs. A regular (annual) health check with a medical practitioner is advisable.
 - 7.5.2 **MANDATORY**
Pastoral leaders will refrain from engaging in or condoning the production, distribution and possessing of in print, electronic or other forms of sexually explicit or pornographic material.

It is inappropriate for pastoral leaders to access any type of pornographic material. Pastoral leaders who struggle with this addiction should seek professional help.
 - 7.5.3 **MANDATORY**
Pastoral leaders who experience personal difficulties with addictive forms of behaviour should seek professional help at the earliest opportunity and consult with a senior colleague, mentor or peer group for advice and support.

8. Pastoral leaders must avoid entering into relationships or situations that may diminish their ability to maintain professional integrity and independence.

- 8.1 Pastoral leaders have a responsibility to discern situations in which their ability to provide proper pastoral care may be compromised, and to act appropriately.
 - 8.1.1 Because pastoral leadership occurs within a caring community, close friendships may develop with some members of the church community. At times the nature of these relationships may challenge the capacity of pastoral leaders to provide appropriate care. Such relationships may include: special friendships that may reasonably be construed by others as evidence of partiality or conflict of interest; and relationships that are becoming romanticised. Pastoral leaders have a responsibility to discern such developments and take appropriate action such as:
 - a. Disengaging from the pastoral relationship and arranging alternative pastoral care for the person(s) in question;
 - b. Seeking advice from a supervisor, mentor or senior colleague.
- 8.2 Pastoral leaders should exercise caution and discretion when entering into contracts or commercial arrangements with people to whom they minister.
- 8.3 Pastoral leaders should exercise caution and discretion concerning the acceptance of gifts as a result of their ministry.
 - 8.3.1 Pastoral leaders should take into account the intent and value of the gift, and the possibility of being unduly compromised or influenced by such a gift. Where pastoral leaders accept a gift to satisfy certain cultural traditions, they should consider using the gift for the benefit of the wider community of faith.

8.4 Pastoral leaders will acquaint themselves with the concept of “conflict of interest” and will declare such conflicts when they become aware of them.

9. Pastoral leaders must maintain integrity and exercise faithful stewardship in managing finances.

9.1. Pastoral leaders must manage their personal finances ethically and should seek to do so wisely.

9.1.1 Pastoral leaders should set an example of stewardship by seeking to live within their means and practising generosity, as they are able.

9.1.2 Pastoral leaders should be scrupulously honest in their private management of money. This includes seeking to pay bills in a timely manner and acting with integrity in matters of taxation.

9.1.3 Pastoral leaders should avoid participating in artificial tax minimisation schemes and claiming unwarranted expense deductions. Integrity means managing personal financial affairs in such a way that Pastoral leaders would not be embarrassed by such affairs being made public.

9.1.4 Pastoral leaders may supplement their stipend through other employment. It is good practice to discuss with the church how other employment will impact on the pastoral leader’s availability and ministry. Pastoral leaders should not take up employment that threatens their integrity or the good name of the Church.

9.2 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must not use Church funds, accounts or resources for private advantage.

9.2.1 Churches have a responsibility to ensure that pastoral leaders, as employees, receive a fair wage for their labour and that agreed ministry related expenses are reimbursed. Pastoral leaders must ensure that reimbursements for ministry related expenses are supported by appropriate documentation. Pastoral leaders should ensure that church funds and their personal money are kept separate.

9.2.2 At the conclusion of a ministry within a church pastoral leaders should return to the church any properties or material belonging to the church

9.2.3 Pastors and their families should show due respect in the use and maintenance of any church provided accommodation, especially long term use of a manse.

9.3 Pastoral leaders should not charge church members for pastoral services.

9.3.1 Pastoral leaders must obtain the support of the church body employing them before accepting remuneration beyond that agreed in their Statement of Understanding.

9.3.2 Where pastoral leaders receive fees or honoraria for ministry activities conducted within the usual bounds of their work, these should be passed on to the Church.

9.3.3 Pastoral leaders should not normally accept fees or honoraria for weddings and funerals from church members.

9.4 Pastoral leaders should refrain from direct involvement in the collection, counting and handling of money received by the church.

9.4.1 Pastoral leaders are often the recipients of a significant proportion of a church's funds as stipends. It is therefore good practice for them to remain "at arms length" from the handling of monies received by the church, so as to avoid any perceived conflict of interest. Pastoral leaders should encourage churches to implement generally accepted accounting practices and internal controls.

10. Pastoral leaders must treat all colleagues in ministry with respect, consideration and fairness.

10.1 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must refrain from any communication that may needlessly damage the reputation of colleagues.

10.1.1 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must refrain from gossip, slander and other communication (both written and spoken) that is false, degrading, defamatory or harmful to another's character or reputation.

10.1.2 When a person transfers from another congregation it is good practice for the pastoral leader of the receiving congregation to contact the leadership of the previous church to ensure that they are aware of the move and to ascertain if there are any issues to be aware of. Where a person is under discipline from a congregation, another church should receive them into fellowship only if they have ensured that the relevant matters have been dealt with as far as possible. An effort should be made to assist people to resolve conflicts with other believers.

10.2 Pastoral leaders should not proselytise members of other congregations and should exercise discretion in rendering pastoral service to a member of another congregation.

10.3 Pastoral leaders should not determine the selection of a successor and must not interfere in the ministry of their successor/s.

10.3.1 Upon conclusion of a ministry, pastoral leaders should normally seek membership in a different congregation from the one in which they have been serving. Participation in activities such as weddings and funerals would normally take place with the agreement of the current pastoral leadership.

10.3.2 Pastoral leaders who are concluding a ministry should not serve on the Search Committee for their successor. Nor should they seek to influence the composition or work of that committee.

10.3.3 Interim pastoral leaders must recognise the temporary nature of their tenure and not encourage the development of personal loyalties that may hinder the congregation in the process of calling and installing a new pastoral leader.

10.4 Pastoral leaders must not consider a call to a church to replace a current pastor who has not resigned or been removed.

10.4.1 Pastoral leaders should not establish a new work within close geographical proximity of another Baptist church without appropriate consultation with any local Baptist churches and the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT.

11. Pastoral leaders should respect the doctrinal basis, values and policies as expressed in the Constitution of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT and must work within its officially recognised guidelines.

11.1 Pastoral leaders should contribute to the wider life of the Association, participating as they are able in its assemblies, ministries and organisations.

11.2 Pastoral leaders should encourage the congregation in which they are serving to participate in the fellowship of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT.

11.2.1 Pastoral leaders should report accurately and fairly the processes and decisions of Assemblies and other Church councils to the congregation and its leadership.

11.3 Pastoral leaders should refrain from any public communication that aims to damage the reputation and unity of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT.

11.3.1 Pastoral leaders should respect the due processes of the Association in matters of decision-making and change. When they disagree with a decision or policy of the Assembly or its councils, they should work through established procedures to express their point of view.

12. Pastor leaders must act lawfully at all times, unless to do so would clearly contravene Christian principles or good conscience.

12.1 Pastoral leaders should promote adherence to the law within the sphere of their ministerial responsibilities.

12.1.1 Pastoral leaders are members of society and therefore subject to the laws of the State. They should seek to be good citizens as a commendation of the Gospel.

12.1.2 Pastoral leaders who intend to break the law or engage in civil disobedience must be prepared to face the consequences of their actions.

12.1.3 Pastoral leaders who engage in acts of civil disobedience should not behave in a violent or harmful manner.

12.2 Pastoral leaders must inform the Baptist Association's Associate Director - Finance & Administration, or Director of Ministries of any matter which may lead to legal action against the Minister, Association or Church.

12.3 Pastoral leaders must not encourage others to break the law except in instances where that may be required by Christian principles or good conscience.

12.3.1 Pastoral leaders should not coerce others to join them in acts of civil disobedience or law breaking, but should recognise and respect the right of individuals to make free choices. In calling for or encouraging such actions, they should make clear the possible consequences.

Affirmation and Consent by Pastors:

While being employed as a pastor within the terms of this document, I do hereby

- accept the Code of Ethics and Conduct and the related Standards Units Policies and Procedures documents;
- give consent to this procedure being followed in the event that a formal complaint is laid against me;
- agree to co-operate with any investigation that is set up in accordance with this document and or/Baptist Policy;
- agree to attend and take part in any rehabilitation process recommended from these guidelines.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Bibliography

Baptist Churches of Western Australia. Misconduct Guidelines for Responding to Allegations of Serious Misconduct.

Child Protection Committee of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia. Draft Code of Professional Ethics for the Practice of Pastoral Ministry: A Guide for Church Workers and their Communities, July 2003. Croucher, Rowland.

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Uniting Church in Australia. Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice for Ministers of the Word, Deacons, Deaconesses, Youth Workers, Community Ministers and Lay Pastors in the Uniting Church of Australia. Approved by the Ninth Assembly, July 2000.

