

**UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**P 3.5 COMMISSION FOR EDUCATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP AND LEADERSHIP
RULES**

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STATUS

P 3.5.1 These Rules provide for the exercise of the powers of the Synod and the Presbytery in regard to the education for discipleship and leadership in the Church as described in these rules. In accordance with Constitution clause 70 (c) all powers and responsibilities of the Synod of WA in relation to ministerial education and the Perth Theological Hall and its Faculty are hereby delegated to the Presbytery of WA in accordance with the minute 8/2009 of the 2009 Synod.

NAME AND ESTABLISHMENT

P 3.5.2 In accordance with the resolution of the 2009 annual meeting of the Synod and the 2009 annual meeting of the Presbytery, the Commission for Education for Discipleship and Leadership, hereinafter called “the Commission”, was established.

DEFINITIONS

P 3.5.3 For the purpose of these Rules and in addition to the definitions in Rule P 1.1.6 unless the context or subject matter indicates otherwise or requires:

“body” or “bodies” means any council, commission, sub-committee, division, department, college, agency or other institution of the Church.

“Church Centre Staff” (for the purpose of this Rule) means people who are in placement with or employed by the Presbytery or Synod of the Uniting Church in Western Australia, other than those specified as Faculty and the Moderator and

General Secretary of the Synod.

“Church’s Manual for Meetings” means the current *Manual for Meetings* published by The National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia.

“faith formation” means all aspects of intentional Christian learning and training, including nurturing for discipleship, ministerial formation, continuing education and lay training. It includes three primary areas:

- formation for discipleship among members; the lead role being taken by congregational leadership, lay and ordained, assisted by the Presbytery and Synod;
- formation for all those engaging in leadership in the congregational life and mission of the Church; the lead role and coordinating role being taken by the Presbytery and Synod; and
- formation for all people serving in a vocational capacity in agencies or schools of the Uniting Church; a shared task of the Synod with agency or school leadership.

“Presbytery Standing Committee” means the body appointed by the Presbytery in accordance with Regulations.

“Perth Theological Hall” is the Theological College established by the Synod and approved by the Assembly as a centre for training for ministry according to the Regulations.

“Permanent sub-committee” means a sub-committee of the Commission which is established for a particular purpose and continues to exercise its role as stated in these Rules until such time as the Commission or the Presbytery deems it no longer necessary to the life of the church.

“Resources Commission” means the body established and appointed by the Synod and Presbytery to exercise the powers and responsibilities for the resources of the church.

“Sub-committee” means a committee established under the guidelines of these Rules

PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION

P 3.5.4 The Uniting Church in WA upholds, as a central purpose for its life, the achievement of a culture in which formation for discipleship and leadership becomes prized, appreciated and accessible. To this end the Commission has been established to foster, encourage and develop all aspects of the educational work of the Presbytery and Synod for faith formation for discipleship and leadership.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE COMMISSION

P 3.5.5 In accordance with the report received by the 2009 Synod, the Commission in all its decision-making shall be guided by biblical scholarship and the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church in Australia. In particular:

- a) In every age, the church so called and sent, is endowed with gifts of the Spirit, including evangelist and teacher, scholar and prophet, to 'equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ'. (Ephesians 4:12);
- b) while waiting on God's Word witnessed to in the scriptures, all shall learn to 'sharpen their understanding of the will and purpose of God by contact with contemporary thought'. (Basis of Union para. 11) in order to share the message of reconciliation, together being agents of the new creation in Christ;
- c) the mission of tomorrow's church will require Christians having 'a reason for the faith that is within us' (1 Peter 3:15) and its people are to be equipped for the work of ministry and formed as learners and shaped as leaders for the sake of the gospel and the reign of God; and
- d) government (in the Church) is entrusted to representatives, men and women, bearing gifts and graces with which God has endowed them for the building up of the Church.' The Church in WA is called to exercise good stewardship in oversight for discipleship and leadership by ensuring form follows function, action follows Godly purpose, minimum oversight achieves maximum learning and that 'Christ alone remains supreme in His Church'. (Basis of Union para. 15)

In all matters the Commission shall act ethically within the ethos of the Uniting Church.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION

P 3.5.6 The Commission shall:

- (a) Promote education as a continuing, essential and life-long part of discipleship;
- (b) prepare policies, develop strategies and seek resources for the educational responsibilities of the Presbytery for the approval of the Presbytery;
- (c) provide oversight, guidance and co-ordination for all education for discipleship and leadership within the Presbytery;
- (d) provide assistance and support towards the fulfillment of the educational responsibilities of congregations, agencies and institutions of the Church;
- (e) exercise the responsibilities of a Ministerial Education Board and a Theological College Council as provided for in the Regulations;
- (f) provide support for the key personnel working in educational activities;

- (g) establish and approve bodies to conduct and direct training and assessment of Lay Preachers as required in the Regulations:
- (h) assist the Synod to assess educational attainments and provide education and formation for ministers from other churches seeking admission to the Uniting Church as required in the Regulations:
- (i) assist the Presbytery to identify, assess and monitor Pastor's competency development as required in the Regulations: and
- (j) consult and work together with other Commissions and bodies to further the life of the Presbytery and Synod.

Delegations

P 3.5.7 The Commission will determine in accordance with the Regulations, By-Laws, Rules and decisions of Synod and Presbytery as made or varied from time to time:

- (a) delegations of its powers and authorities (except for the power of delegation); and
- (b) responsibilities, authority and functions of Commission sub-committees.

P 3.5.8 The Commission may establish sub-committees such as steering sub-committees, advisory groups, reference groups, task groups and special purpose sub-committees.

P 3.5.9 The Commission may withdraw delegations, responsibilities and functions of Commission sub-committees, either generally or in a particular case, at any time, except where this would impair compliance to the regulations.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSION

P 3.5.10 The Commission is responsible for policy development, strategic planning for the development of education and faith formation for discipleship and leadership and the co-ordination of services and resources in education and faith formation including:

- (a) The forming of disciples in which all members and seekers in the way of discipleship with Jesus, pursue learning in the faith as a life-long activity towards 'having a reason for the faith that is within them';
- (b) the forming of leadership in the Church in which all members called to the service of Christ commit to being 'equipped for the work of service' in the area of their gifts of the Spirit and their skills.;
- (c) teaching across the whole Church for which those called to the teaching ministries, whether ordained or lay members, hear the call to exercise their ministry for the benefit of the whole Church, not confined to a specific locality, institution or congregation; and
- (d) coordinating oversight for education and formation for discipleship and leadership within the Presbytery and Presbytery in a single body.

P 3.5.11 Unless the Presbytery or Presbytery Standing Committee determines otherwise the Commission will determine and make recommendations to Presbytery or Presbytery Standing Committee regarding policy and will exercise oversight, facilitate, co-ordinate and provide advice to Presbytery in matters including (or related to):

- (a) faith formation for discipleship;
- (b) ministerial education;
- (c) lay education;
- (d) continuing education;
- (e) Lay Preacher education and formation;
- (f) Pastors competency development; and
- (g) Leadership development.

P 3.5.12 (a) The Commission will consider matters referred by Sub-committees of the Commission as being matters of significance or outside the Sub-committees delegated authority; and

(b) the Commission may require Sub-committees of the Commission to refer specific matters to the Commission for consideration.

Budget

P 3.5.13 (a) The Commission will prepare a recommended budget of all income and expenditure for all its activities, in consultation with its sub committees, and present it to the Resources Commission prior to the setting of the annual Synod Budget.

(b) The Commission will seek the approval of the Presbytery Standing Committee for any increase in budgeted expenditure.

Inquiries Regarding Risk

P 3.5.14 Where the Commission is of the opinion that an inquiry should be made regarding any risk or contingent liability which may be, has been or is proposed to be undertaken or incurred in the name or on behalf of the Church, a congregation or body, the Commission will advise the General Secretary.

Plans, Policies and Processes

P 3.5.15 The Commission will establish, implement and monitor performance of policy development, strategic planning and performance management of all its operations including its sub-committees.

P 3.5.16 The Commission will:

- (a) undertake periodic performance reviews of the Commission and Commission sub-committees;
- (b) approve Commission sub-committee competency profiles, identify prospective Commission and sub-committee members, oversee member induction and development; and
- (c) establish succession planning strategies for the Commission and sub-committees.

PERMANENT SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE COMMISSION

Perth Theological Hall

P 3.5.17 The Faculty of Perth Theological Hall will operate and report as a permanent sub-committee of the Commission

P 3.5.17.1 Perth Theological Hall is responsible for

- (a) The education and formation of candidates for ordained ministries in accordance with Assembly and Ministerial Education Board requirements;
- (b) Such other activities as directed by the Commission, particularly education and formation that may be required to promote or encourage the mission of the church; and
- (c) co-operation with other educational bodies following the agreement of the Commission.

Membership

P 3.5.17.2 Membership of the Faculty of Perth Theological Hall is determined by the Regulations.

Principal

P 3.5.17.3 The Director of Education and Formation, or in their absence another person appointed by Presbytery Standing Committee, on the recommendation of the Commission, will be the Principal of Perth Theological Hall.

Responsibilities of the Faculty

P 3.5.17.4 The Faculty will, within its area of expertise and responsibility:

- (a) undertake responsibilities and authorities delegated from the Commission;

- (b) deal with matters referred by the Commission;
- (c) provide recommendations and advice to the Commission; and
- (d) refer to the Commission for consideration and/or approval any:
 - (i) policy and strategic matter which has significant implications for the Church;
 - (ii) significant financial matters or desired changes in resource allocations;
 - and/or
 - (iii) matters outside the delegated authority of the Faculty.

Reporting

P 3.5.17.5 The Faculty shall report to the Presbytery, through the Commission.

Appointment to lectureships

P 3.5.17.6 The process for appointment to lectureships will be determined by the Presbytery Standing Committee.

P 3.5.17.7 When an appointment to a lectureship involves a linked complementary or fractional appointment with another institution, the Presbytery or Presbytery Standing Committee shall negotiate with the other institution with regard to the selection criteria and composition of the Joint Nominating Committee.

OTHER SUB-COMMITTEES

P 3.5.18 The Commission may establish entities such as steering sub-committees, advisory groups, reference groups, task groups, and special purpose sub-committees. Such entities:

- (a) shall be for a specified period not exceeding twelve months, subject to renewal by resolution of the Commission;
- (b) may include persons other than Commission members;
- (c) are to be chaired by a member of the Commission;
- (d) are to have responsibilities, powers and authorities as determined by the Commission;
- (e) may have their responsibilities, powers and authorities revoked or be terminated at any time by the Commission;
- (f) may have any member removed from office by the Commission;
- (g) shall include the Chairperson of the Commission, at their own discretion, at any meeting of a sub-committee; and
- (h) shall report to the Commission periodically or when requested to do so by

the Commission.

P 3.5.19 Sub-committees of the Commission may establish entities such as steering sub-committees, advisory groups, reference groups, task groups and special purpose sub-committees. Such entities shall be for a specified period not exceeding 12 months, subject to renewal by resolution of the establishing sub-committee and may consist of existing members of the Commission or Sub-committees or formed by co-opting individuals with specific expertise and knowledge.

P 3.5.20 Powers and responsibilities delegated by the Commission to permanent and other sub-committees of the Commission will not be further delegated.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION

P 3.5.21 The Commission is appointed annually and consists of:

- (a) the Chairperson, elected by the Presbytery;
- (b) the Principal and another representative of the Faculty;
- (c) one representative of the student body of the Perth Theological Hall;
- (d) one Lay Preacher;
- (e) one Pastor; and
- (e) four members elected by the Presbytery;

P 3.5.22 The Commission may co-opt up to three further members to ensure balanced representation or to provide the Commission with knowledge, abilities or experience not otherwise available to the Commission. The appointment of co-opted members shall be subject to endorsement by Presbytery or Presbytery Standing Committee.

P 3.5.23 All members of the Commission will, with the exception of the Faculty, be members of the Church and, as far as possible, the Commission membership shall include at least one-third women and one-third men, and a balance of lay and ordained.

P 3.5.24 Church Centre Staff may be present and speak to assist the Commission in the fulfilling of its purpose and responsibilities but are not eligible to vote.

MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

P 3.5.25 Membership of sub-committees will be established by the Commission, taking note of Regulations in relation to the Faculty,

P 3.5.26 The Chairperson of the Commission may, at their own discretion, attend at any meeting of a permanent sub-committee or any other sub-committee.

COMMISSION AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBER ELIGIBILITY AND COMPETENCIES

P 3.5.27 All members of the Commission and sub-committees of the Commission must be persons who have knowledge or experience in any area of the responsibilities of the Commission.

Term of Office

P 3.5.28 Members of the Commission co-opted in accordance with these Rules will hold office until the next annual meeting of the Presbytery and will be eligible for re-appointment except that such members may not serve for consecutive terms exceeding ten years without Presbytery approval.

P 3.5.29 The elected members of the Commission appointed in accordance with the provision of these Rules to the Commission and/or any of its sub-committees will hold office for three years from the date of appointment and will be eligible for re-appointment except that such members may not serve for consecutive terms of office exceeding ten years without Presbytery approval. The Faculty representatives shall be eligible for the term of their contract.

VACANCIES

P 3.5.30 A casual vacancy will occur in the membership of the Commission or a sub-committee of the Commission if a member:

- (a) resigns by notice delivered to the Chairperson of the Commission or sub-committee;
- (b) becomes unable to act as a member of the Commission or sub-committee; or
- (c) is removed from office by resolution of the Presbytery, it being expressly declared that the Presbytery is not required to state any reason for such resolution.

P 3.5.31 Casual vacancies in the Presbytery appointed membership of the Commission arising between meetings of the Presbytery will be filled by the Presbytery Standing Committee having regard to the skills required by the Commission at the time. The appointee will hold office for the remainder of the term of the member replaced.

P 3.5.32 If an ordinary vacancy occurs because the Presbytery failed to elect any or all of the elected members of the Commission or sub-committee of the Commission, then the Presbytery Standing Committee may elect persons to fill any or all of the ordinary vacancies.

MEETINGS AND REPORTING

Frequency of meetings

P 3.5.33 The Commission will meet at least quarterly.

P 3.5.34 The permanent sub-committees will each meet at least quarterly.

P 3.5.35 At least four meetings each year of the Commission and its permanent sub-

committees must be held in person.

P 3.5.36 The Commission and sub-committees may adjourn, determine time and place of meetings and otherwise regulate meetings as they consider appropriate subject to compliance with the Regulations and Rules.

Technology

P 3.5.37 A Commission or Commission sub-committee meeting may be called or held using any technology agreed to, in advance, by all the members of the Commission or sub-committee.

Quorum of the Commission

P 3.5.38 The quorum for a Commission meeting shall be a simple majority.

Quorum of Sub-Committees

P 3.5.39 The quorum for sub-committees shall be a simple majority including at least one Commission member.

Circulating Resolution Quorum

P 3.5.40 The quorum for a circulating resolution shall be all members entitled to vote on the resolution provided that this number is equal to or greater than the quorum for a meeting of the Commission or sub-committee as stated in these Rules.

Minutes

- P 3.5.41** (a) Minutes will be kept of all meetings of the Commission and Commission Sub-committees in a minute book provided for that purpose and the minutes will be confirmed by the next succeeding meeting of the Commission or sub-committee and signed by the Chairperson of that meeting.
- (b) Minutes of all sub-committee meetings will be provided to the Commission prior to the succeeding meeting of the Commission.

Circulating Resolutions

- P 3.5.42** (a) The Commission or a sub-committee may make decisions by a circular or electronic poll of all members entitled to vote, provided that no decision of such a poll is binding unless there are no dissenting votes. The resolution is passed when the last member signifies agreement.
- (b) A Commission or sub-committee member is not entitled to vote on a circulating resolution if she or he has a conflict of interest unless it has been disclosed and dealt with in accordance with these Rules and procedures set down by the Commission.

Officers

P 3.5.43 In the absence of the Chairperson, the members present at any meeting of the Commission or sub-committees of the Commission may elect a chairperson/convener of the meeting from amongst those present.

Calling a Meeting

P 3.5.44(a) The Chairperson or the Secretary of The Presbytery may convene a meeting of the Commission at any time. The Secretary of the Presbytery shall on receipt of a requisition in writing by any three members, convene a meeting of the Commission.

(b) The Convener of a Sub-Committee of the Commission or the Chairperson of the Commission may convene a meeting of the sub-committee at any time. The Convener or the Chairperson of the Commission shall on receipt of a requisition in writing by any three members of the sub-committee, convene a meeting of the sub-committee.

(c) The requisition for a meeting shall specify the reason for which the meeting is to be convened.

(d) At least seven days written notice of every Commission and Sub-committee of the Commission meeting shall be given to all members of the relevant group unless the Chairperson considers an emergency exists in which case a meeting may be convened on shorter notice.

P 3.5.45 The non-receipt by a Commission or Sub-committee of the Commission member of a notice of meeting does not invalidate the meeting.

Conduct of meetings

P 3.5.46 The procedures of the Church's Manual for Meetings apply as far as practicable to all meetings of the Commission and Sub-committees of the Commission.

P 3.5.47 Each member of the Commission or sub-committee of the Commission has and may exercise one vote.

P 3.5.48 A resolution passed at a meeting of the Commission or a permanent sub-committee of the Commission will not be rescinded at a subsequent meeting unless seven days' notice of the intention to propose the rescission is given in the notice convening the meeting.

Reporting

P 3.5.49 The Commission will report to the Presbytery at each ordinary Presbytery meeting including details of the operation each of its sub-committees and will report to the Presbytery Standing Committee when requested. The Commission may at any time bring a matter before the Presbytery Standing Committee for consideration.

P 3.5.50 Each sub-committee will report to each meeting of the Commission in a form and content as prescribed by the Commission.

P 3.5.51 The Commission, acting as a Ministerial Education Board, will report to the Assembly as required in the Regulations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

P 3.5.52 A member of the Commission or of any sub-committee of the Commission who has any direct or indirect pecuniary or beneficial interest, or whose unfettered or independent judgment is or could be perceived as impaired by any contractual, business or other relationship, in a matter being dealt with by the Commission or sub-committee must, as soon as the member becomes aware of that interest or relationship, disclose to the Commission or sub-committee the nature and extent of that interest or relationship. The Commission or any sub-committee of the Commission then determines whether the extent of the interest or relationship disclosed is such that the member should not participate in, vote on, or be present during any debate on that matter. The Commission or any sub-committee will minute its decision and record that decision in a Register of Conflicts.

AMENDMENTS TO THESE RULES

P 3.5.53 The Commission may submit a request to the Presbytery for the amendment of these Rules which may only be amended in accordance with Rules P 1.2.