

## **Appendix**

### **Part A – Relevant section of the Articles of Agreement**

#### **7. Theological Training**

7.1 There shall be a course of training for the ministry of Word and Sacraments which shall be supervised by the College Committee.

7.2 The General Assembly shall determine the course of training, together with the prerequisites for entry to the course.

7.3 The College Committee shall admit candidates for the ministry to the course of training, grade students throughout the course, approve syllabi, conduct examinations as necessary, and issue certificates (known as exit certificates) on completion of the course of training.

7.4 The State Assemblies shall administer the course of training through the operation of such theological halls or colleges as: (a) are recognised pursuant to Article 7.5, and (b) may be recognised from time to time by the General Assembly.

7.5 The theological colleges and halls recognised for the training of candidates for the ministry shall be: (a) in Queensland - the Reformed College of Ministries, (b) in NSW - the Presbyterian Theological Centre, and (c) in Victoria - the Presbyterian Theological College.

7.6 Each State Assembly operating a theological hall or college shall appoint professors or lecturers, together with a faculty and a committee to administer each such hall or college.

7.7 The course of training shall consist of a theological course, at degree standard, whose subjects are prescribed in regulations approved by the General Assembly after receiving advice from the College Committee.

7.8 A Presbytery shall not license a candidate for the ministry until the candidate has been issued by the College Committee with an exit certificate

which certifies that all requirements of the College Committee have been met by the candidate.

7.9 Only men shall be eligible for admission to the ministry of Word and Sacraments in the Church and all rules and regulations of the General Assembly and services of ordination shall be construed that reference therein to ministers of the Word and Sacraments shall refer only to men.

## **Part B – Regulations**

### **10.7 COLLEGE COMMITTEE**

#### **Composition of Committee:**

1. The College Committee shall consist of the conveners of the Theological Education Committees of the State Assemblies of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia, together with the full-time professors and lecturers at the Theological Colleges (or Halls) approved by the Assembly.

2. The convener shall be elected by the committee from among its members.

#### **Admission to the Course of Training:**

3. The College Committee shall admit to the course of training for the ministry applicants who

(a) have been accepted by a presbytery as candidates for the ministry and are recommended by the presbytery and the state committee responsible for theological education for admission to the course of training;

(b) submit adequate evidence that they have met the requirements specified in

4.

4. An applicant for candidature for the ministry shall be required to

(a) have been a member in full communion of a congregation within the Presbyterian Church of Australia for at least six months prior to the date of application;

(b) obtain a certificate from the presbytery of the congregation of which the applicant is a member stating that, after careful enquiry, the presbytery is convinced that the applicant's maturity, and personal and spiritual gifts are such as to fit the applicant for the work of the ministry.

5. Prior to admission to the course of training, each candidate

(a) shall have successfully completed:

(i) final year secondary school studies at a level that would qualify for admission to tertiary studies; or

(ii) an assessment set and marked by the College Committee;

(b) shall be encouraged:

(i) to complete a tertiary degree;

(ii) to gain experience in the workforce;

(c) shall demonstrate a basic knowledge of the Bible and of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

(d) shall demonstrate competence in English.

### **The Course of Training:**

6. The theological course shall extend over four academic years. The College Committee shall be empowered on the recommendation of the faculty to give appropriate credit towards the course requirements for previous studies pursued by candidates provided that satisfactory evidence is forthcoming that such studies were of a nature and at a standard consistent with studies at the theological college (or hall).

7. The faculty shall include in the course of training the following subjects:

English, History, Philosophy, Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis, New Testament Greek and Exegesis, Apologetics, Church History, Systematic Theology and Pastoral Theology and Training (including Presbyterian Polity).

The faculty shall prepare syllabi in these subjects and submit them to the College Committee for approval.

The faculty shall test candidates in these subjects at appropriate stages in their training by such means as examinations, critical exercises and theses.

The faculty may exempt candidates from Hebrew after the satisfactory completion of one year's study, reporting such exemption to the College Committee, but shall require such candidates to complete Old Testament Exegesis as an alternative to Old Testament Exegesis from the Hebrew.

The College Committee is empowered to give approval to extension courses and to distance education courses but not to correspondence courses.

8.

(a) The faculty of each theological college (or hall) shall be responsible for assessing the progress of candidates and shall make annual reports to the College Committee on their progress:

(b) The College Committee

(i) may, on academic grounds, remove a candidate from the course of training on the advice of the state committee responsible for theological education after the state committee has consulted with the presbytery concerned;

(ii) shall, on other than academic grounds, remove a candidate from the course of training on the advice of the presbytery that that presbytery has terminated the candidature of the person concerned.

(ii) shall remove a candidate from the course of training if after eight years from first enrolling the candidate has failed to complete the course, unless permission has been given by the relevant faculty to extend the course; and shall then request the Presbytery having jurisdiction to terminate the candidature of that candidate.

9. The faculty shall direct candidates in their course of training.

**Exit Regulations:**

10. The College Committee shall issue an exit certificate to a candidate when:

- (a) the candidate has been certified by the faculty as having completed the prescribed studies to the satisfaction of the faculty;
- (b) the candidate has submitted one thesis during the final year of the theological course in the area of Biblical Studies, such thesis having been supervised by an appropriate lecturer in the theological college (or hall) and passed by an external examiner appointed by the College Committee.

**Special Cases:**

11. The executive of the College Committee is empowered to deal with special cases, including a reduction in the requirements of the course, as they arise from time to time. If it departs from prescribed procedure in doing so, it shall report to the full committee.

**Visitation of Theological Colleges (or Halls):**

12. The College Committee shall arrange regular visitation to theological colleges (or halls) by visitors whom it appoints.

**Part C****Assembly resolutions since 1991**

The regulations (Part B above) were approved at the 1991 meeting of the Assembly. Any prior resolutions of the assembly concerning the course of training were superseded by those new regulations. The resolution that follows is the sole decision interpreting or applying those new regulations.

Assembly July 2001

80 (6) Instruct the College Committee not to require the study of Hebrew Grammar or Hebrew Exegesis from people applying to be received as ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Australia through the Reception of Ministers Committee, the decision to take effect immediately.

## **Part D**

### **Relevant College Committee resolutions since 1991**

The provisions that follow comprise a summary of the committee's interpretation and application of the articles and current regulations. Mostly these are the College Committee Regulations, but in one case, the Reception of Ministers Regulations.

These are listed in the same order as the regulations – in each case identifying the regulation and then the College Committee minute(s) applicable.

#### **College Committee Regulation 10.7.5 - CC Minute 207.7 – Cross Credit for Equivalent study.**

As from February 2007 the College Committee has begun to approve “cross-credit forms” for each of the faculties of Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. Under this procedure, state faculties will be authorised to grant cross-credit for subjects completed at ACT Colleges and Moore Theological College in accordance with the respective cross credit forms. The committee has resolved to review cross credit forms annually. Copies of these forms are available from the respective State faculties.

#### **College Committee Regulation 10.7.6 – CC Minutes 203.19, 22, 25**

- a) "English, History, Philosophy" mean first year university level lectures intended to provide background study in the use of English language and literature, the principles of historiography and a synopsis and critique of the various major world-views throughout history.
- b) "Old Testament Exegesis" and "Exegesis" that follows "New Testament Greek" mean biblical studies (including "themes" or "theology") with exegesis taken in original Bible languages and that this is four semester-length subjects in each testament.
- c) "Church History" includes three strands:
  - a year's introductory-level study

- Reformation Church History
  - Australian Presbyterian Church History
- d) "Systematic Theology" includes three strands:
- four semester-length subjects of advanced-level theology
  - ethics
  - Westminster Confession of Faith (studied in its Australian context)
- e) "Pastoral Theology and Training" means a range of subjects developed under the supervision of each faculty appropriate to and adapted for local needs, and that this range be not fewer than the equivalent of eight semester-length subjects (*excluding Field education requirements – see ‘minute 205.13 – Field Education Requirements’ below*).
- f) The faculty exemption clause for Hebrew means that:
- a student, having undertaken the study of Biblical Hebrew for one year, and who has clearly struggled to cope with the language, may be granted an exemption from Old Testament Hebrew Exegesis provided he completes the prescribed OT exegesis studies in English; OR
  - a student who, having undertaken Hebrew Exegesis for one year, and who has clearly struggled to cope with the original language exegesis, may be exempted from further Hebrew, provided he completes the prescribed OT exegesis studies in English; such exemption is always at the discretion of the faculty.

**College Committee Regulation 10.7.6 – CC Minute 205.13 – Field Education requirements**

It was resolved that candidates for the ministry be required to fulfil four semesters of supervised Field Experience, two semesters of which comprise a component of ten semesters required for pastoral-based ministry training;

**College Committee Regulation 10.7.9 – CC Minute 206.6 - Length of Exit Thesis**

It was resolved that the length of exit thesis be 4,000 - 8,000 words, or 15,000 words when the thesis forms part of an accredited award.

**College Committee Regulation 10.7.10 – CC. Minute 203.22 – Who grants exemptions?**

The word “executive” as used in regulation 10 means the “Grading Committee”.

**Reception of Ministers Regulation 10.14 .9 – CC Minute 204:22 – Determining Equivalence to College Committee standard.**

It was resolved that in interpreting the Reception of Ministers Committee's Regulation 3.14 section 9 on Theological Training, the words "a course of theological training equivalent to the standard set by the College Committee" is to be interpreted as the equivalence of required competencies and not necessarily on the basis of a subject by subject equivalence. The three areas of Australian Presbyterian Church History, the Westminster Confession of Faith (in its Australian context) and PCA polity would ordinarily form the minimum.

**Admission to the Course of Training 10.7.4 (c) – CC Minute 208:8 – Abolition of Entrance Exam**

It was resolved to abolish the entrance exam on basic knowledge of the Bible and of the Westminster Confession of Faith as a requirement for admission to the course of training.

**Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis 10.7.6 – CC Minute 209:9**

It was resolved that ‘Hebrew and Old Testament exegesis’ in the College Committee regulations shall mean ‘one year of introductory Hebrew, then two years of Old Testament exegesis, of which at least

one year must be in the Hebrew language, and one year in either Hebrew or English at the student's discretion.'

**College Committee Regulation 10 Special Cases – CC Minutes 209:9**

It was resolved that the College Committee counsel its Grading Sub-Committee, acting as its Executive under Clause 10 of the College Committee regulations, that the Committee considers that reduction in the requirements of the course of training ought to be made under Clause 10 where a student is aged 45 or older, so that the requirement to study introductory Hebrew should be waived, and the student may study Old Testament exegesis in the English language.

**College Committee Regulation 10.7.9 – CC Minute 209:11 – Emendation to Guidelines for Exit Theses**

It was resolved that when an essay produced for another purpose is accepted as an exit thesis and where the subject matter relates to the subject matter in church's confessional standards and has not been explicitly dealt with in the essay, the student should demonstrate an awareness of and interact with the church's confessional position in an appendix of no more than 1000 words.

**Visitation of Colleges: Guidelines CC Minute 208:18**

The College Committee may conduct both regular and special visitations of the theological colleges recognised by the General Assembly. A special visitation may be deemed appropriate to address specific issues of which the Committee may become aware, and may call for a more in-depth report with stronger recommendations. The College Committee should conduct a regular visitation of at least one of the theological colleges every three years, determining at its first annual meeting after the regular meeting of the General Assembly the college to be visited and the composition of the visitation panel.

At least two and up to three persons should be appointed by the College Committee as a visitation panel to conduct a particular visitation, at least one of whose members should be a principal or senior member of the faculty of one of the other colleges, with one of the members of the visitation panel to serve as convener. At least two states other than the state of the college being visited should be represented on the panel. Provided that two members of the visitation panel (including the convener) are members of the College Committee, the third could be a person with appropriate expertise outside of the membership of the College Committee and of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The convener of the visitation panel should contact the principal of the college to be visited at least twelve weeks in advance of a proposed visit to arrange a suitable time for the visit. Such visits work best (in view of the time constraints listed above and below) if conducted late in first semester or early in second semester.

It would not be normal for a visitation to be conducted during the absence of the principal.

The visitation should be held over at least one and up to two days at a time when the college is in session.

Not later than ten weeks prior to the visitation date, the convener should send to the principal a set of questions or pro forma reporting form to be completed and returned to the convener not less than four weeks prior to the visitation date. This report is to serve as a basis for the conduct of the visitation.

The panel may request a report covering such matters as

- compliance with the standards, regulations and directives of the General Assembly;

- academic staffing (full-time and part-time), their qualifications and experience and teaching load;
- provisions for the encouragement of staff development and research, provision of appropriate study leave and resourcing for these;
- adequacy of the number of support staff;
- student numbers and numbers of candidates, with any trends observable;
- spiritual development and community life;
- plans for development;
- examples of communication with staff and students such as handbooks and manuals or links to website;
- a typical timetable;
- reports to the state assembly and decisions of the state assembly relevant to theological education;
- any relevant governance or policy documents of the faculty or committee affecting the conduct of the training of candidates;
- where any special arrangements apply (e.g. a consortium), any documents relevant to the implementation of the special arrangement (e.g. a memorandum of understanding).

The visitation should include at a minimum, an interview with the principal and with the convener of the committee responsible to the state assembly for theological education. If possible, it is desirable to meet with other members of the committee responsible for theological education. If so, the invitation is to be extended to all members to meet with the panel at a particular time.

Likewise it is desirable to meet with the faculty, or with individual

members of the faculty, particularly full-time staff. If so, again, the invitation should be extended to all full-time staff (including any on leave who may wish to make themselves available) to meet with the panel at a particular time, together or separately as the panel thinks appropriate.

While the general logistics may be left to the principal (e.g. the timing of certain interviews within agreed parameters, hospitality arrangements etc.), it should not be left to the principal to determine with whom the panel meets.

The panel may decide to meet more than once with a particular individual if other matters not canvassed in an initial interview arise in the course of the visitation which it would be beneficial to discuss with that individual.

The panel may attend lectures or seminars with reasonable notice being given to the lecturers.

A meeting with representative students is desirable. If there is a meeting with students, these should not be handpicked by the principal or faculty. If a representative student body exists, it would be an appropriate body to select representative students to meet with the panel.

The panel may meet with other members of staff such as a business manager, administrator or librarian by arrangement if the visitation takes place on a day when these members of staff are normally at the college.

The panel may inspect the minute books of the faculty or committee and seek access to any other documentation reasonably within its purview in the conduct of the visitation.

The panel should inspect the facilities, including library, to ascertain if these meet standards which the panel believes the General Assembly would expect of an approved theological college.

In all of this, the visitation is to be conducted in a Christian spirit of mutual respect, goodwill and cooperation on the part of all parties concerned, with a view to the promotion of the best theological education in each state church, to the glory of God and the advancement of the gospel. The panel should be conversant with the responsibilities of the General Assembly (the Articles of Agreement and the regulations granted by the General Assembly), and not prioritise those aspects of the life of a college which lie outside this sphere, and in particular, not focus on those aspects of the administration of a college which are the responsibility of the state assembly. Any criticisms are to be constructive, with a view to strengthening the hands of all of those involved in the task of theological education.

Following the visitation, the panel is to draft a report (normally three to six pages) on the visitation, including its findings and a deliverance with any recommendations. It should send a draft to the principal, faculty and committee and any other parties it deems appropriate, inviting corrections and adjustments in case any misconception has been formed, or any inaccuracy of information is contained in the draft report. The panel is then to finalise its report, taking into account any corrections or adjustments recommended by others as it deems appropriate and should send a copy of the revised report to the principal, faculty and committee not later than twelve weeks prior to the next regular meeting of the College Committee. The principal, faculty or committee may formulate a response to go to the College Committee to be received when the visitation report is before the Committee but are not required to do so.

The College Committee receives the report (and any response of the principal, faculty or committee) and adopts the report (or so much of it as it deems fit) and deliberates on the deliverance. It formally communicates its report and deliverance to the principal, faculty and committee on theological education of the relevant college. The

principal, faculty and committee should consider any matters raised in the report over the ensuing twelve months and report to the next regular meeting of the College Committee on any matters affecting their area of responsibility, indicating what steps have been taken to comply with any instructions, or heed any advice.

The College Committee may determine whether a special or follow-up visit to any college is required.

### **Alternative Approach to the Course of Training CC Minute 210:9**

That the College Committee counsel its Grading Sub-Committee, acting as its Executive under Clause 10 of the College Committee regulations, that the Committee considers that reduction in the requirements of the course of training ought to be made under Clause 10:

- (1) where a student is aged 45 or older and has 10 years of ministry experience in a pastoral or congregational leadership and teaching ministry, as an assistant, home missionary or equivalent in the Presbyterian Church of Australia or in a mission agency with a connection to Mission Partners, or in a capacity the relevant state Faculty deems to be an equivalent to this, and
- (2) the sub-committee has received a report from the relevant state Faculty of an assessment made along the lines of the principles in the next minute (which shall be known as an ‘Assessment for an Alternative Course of Training’,) and noting that the sub-committee may give any advice it considers appropriate to a state Faculty before, during or after such an assessment, and shall determine the reduced course of training having regard to the Faculty’s assessment, but nevertheless retaining the discretion to determine the course of training as the Sub-Committee deems fit.

That the College Committee considers that a Faculty’s Assessment for

an Alternative Course of Training under the previous minute should observe the following principles:

- a. The process will involve an assessment panel. The assessment panel should be made up of:
  - two Faculty members, plus
  - one member of the candidate's presbytery nominated by that presbytery, plus
  - between one and three others persons nominated by the faculty. The nominee or nominees of Faculty could include a person from the Presbyterian Church of Australia beyond the Faculty's State to add to the objectivity of the process and/or a representative of the relevant State's Home Missions Committee.
- b. A candidate should first receive any possible cross credits to the course of training from previous study. Either advice or a ruling may be sought from the Grading Sub-Committee of the College Committee about these cross credits if the Candidate desires.
- c. The candidate would then be examined in any of the following areas in which he had not received full cross credits:
  - exposition of scripture;
  - preaching;
  - pastoral practice and leadership;
  - theological discussion and reflection;
  - ethical discussion and reflection;
  - awareness of church history including the ancient church, reformation, evangelicalism and Australian Presbyterian history;
  - implementing ministry strategies;
  - awareness of the Reformed theology and practice and the confessional position of the Presbyterian Church of Australia;

- Presbyterian polity.
- d. These areas of assessment do not include a requirement for original language exegesis. The demonstration of competency in exposition of scripture and theological discussion would, in these cases, be considered to remove the need for study of original languages.
  - e. A candidate would be made aware of the areas of assessment and would be able to prepare in general. He would also be invited to indicate areas in which he did and did not consider himself competent.
  - f. The candidate would be required to provide some measurable evidence of ministry experience and the Faculty would establish criteria for these (such as evidence of regular preaching, the conduct of funerals, evangelistic and pastoral ministry and continued reading and ministry development).
  - g. A report from the candidate's Presbytery regarding strengths and weaknesses may be part of the competency assessment.
  - h. Each State Panel would be free to develop its own processes of assessment but as an example it might:
    - ask a candidate to prepare an exegetical paper on a set passage and to preach a sample sermon on that passage and to then discuss the paper and sermon.
    - ask a candidate to role play a pastoral situation or give a verbatim of a pastoral discussion.
    - ask a candidate to prepare a discussion paper on a theological or ethical issue.
    - set an examination in areas such as knowledge of Old and New Testaments, Theology, Westminster Confession of Faith and Church History.
  - i. Since successful demonstration of competency is likely to reduce the time for study in an area for which the candidate seeks exemption, the assessment process shall be rigorous and extensive and should include a written examination in all relevant areas.

- j. The panel reports to the Faculty that a candidate is competent or below competent in the various areas. The Faculty then proposes a course of training to the Grading Sub-Committee.
- k. On receipt of Faculty's advice, and following any ensuing discussion or communications as the Grading Sub-Committee deems appropriate, the Grading Sub-Committee shall determine the candidate's course of training.