

**DOCTOR OF MINISTRY (AQF LEVEL 10 DOCTORAL DEGREE)****Course Rationale**

The Doctor of Ministry is an AQF level 10 research doctoral award whose graduates make a significant and original contribution to knowledge as applied in the context of professional Christian ministry practice.

The degree is designed to enable men and women to produce significant and original research outcomes and as beginning researchers demonstrate the capacity to design, implement, gather and interpret data, and communicate the results of the research for research projects undertaken in specific fields of knowledge applied to various areas of professional ministry.

The degree would be for theological and non-theological graduates already in significant leadership positions in churches, denominational offices, para-church agencies and non-church agencies and institutions where people wanted to enhance their research by also applying insights from Christian traditions.

Graduates with a Doctor of Ministry have already been employed in significant denominational positions for strategic planning as well as teaching pastoral and missions courses at theological colleges, bible colleges and seminaries in Australian and overseas and would continue to do so.

**Admission Requirements****1. Academic Qualifications**

Candidates will normally have one of the following Australian College of Theology awards or its equivalent as determined by the Research and Research Studies Committee.

(a) Bachelor of Ministry (Honours) or Bachelor of Theology (Honours) with at least 2A honours level  
OR

(b) Master of Divinity with a GPA of at least 2.8  
OR

(c) Master of Theology (Research) with at least 2A honours level  
OR

(d) Master Arts (Theology) or Master of Arts (Ministry) with a GPA of at least 2.8  
OR

(e) Master of Arts (Christian Studies) with a GPA of at least 2.8

*Other Academic Prerequisites*

A coursework masters, research Masters or Doctorate in another field of study which is considered to contribute significantly to the proposed research topic

*Recognised Prior Learning*

The Research and Research Studies Committee will consider applications from those who do not meet the above academic prerequisites where extensive experience and expertise have been developed by the candidate. The normal rules for establishing RPL will apply.

**2. Ministry Experience Prerequisites**

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a minimum of five years of significant contribution in their ministry context since completion of their first degree. All applications would include a *curriculum vitae*, outlining various roles they have undertaken, positions held, major goals and most significant achievements.

Applicants would normally currently be ministry practitioners in positions of significant ministry responsibility, aspiring to positions such as senior pastors, mission/denominational board representatives, tertiary educators, denominational leaders, church planters, mission directors, church consultants, department leaders, or senior positions or researcher positions in work contexts where a specific Christian reflection on their work would be beneficial to their employing organisation.

All applicants require a letter of commendation for entry to the course by their denomination, church or institutional employer. This letter must also provide evidence from their employing organisation that the organisation understands the extent of the commitment required over the six years part-time or three years full-time of the degree and agrees to support the candidate to enable them to complete the course.

### 3. Evidence of Aptitude for Research and Training

- (i) Candidates who do not have any theological training in their previous academic work must submit a preliminary essay of 8,000 words (25 pages) to their potential sponsoring college. This essay should outline the structure of their personal ministry theology. It must also demonstrate the capacity to integrate their learning from their reading in their area of interest and theological reading related to their area of interest and their understanding of themselves as ministry practitioners. This should be presented in a format expected of post-graduate work. It will be marked at coursework masters level by the faculty member of their sponsoring college who is anticipated to be their supervisor and will need to receive at least a credit grade. Candidates who do not show an aptitude for theological reflection will not be presented as applicants to the Research and Research Studies Committee.
- (ii) Candidates who meet all other requirements but do not receive the required grade in the preliminary essay may be invited to enrol in the Graduate Certificate of Ministry consisting of two 700 level units. If they achieve a distinction average in this course they will receive leave to reapply to the Research and Research Studies Committee for candidature in the Doctor of Ministry course.

### 4. Professional References

Personal commendation from three referees should be provided on application for entry into the course. These should include one from their local church, one from an executive of an external denominational or mission organisation or the organisation they work for, and an academic referee who can vouch for their capacity to handle the demands of the study and research.

### Language Qualifications for Non-English Speaking Background Applicants (NESB)

- (i) NESB applicants who (a) have an assessable qualification that was undertaken solely in English in one of a set of prescribed countries OR (b) who have been resident in Australia with English being the language spoken at home and at work for ten (10) or more years are NOT required to provide proof of English Language proficiency for consideration for admission to an ACT course. All other domestic and international candidates MUST provide proof of English Language proficiency for consideration for admission to an ACT course. Such proof will be by provision of the results of an IELTS test (Academic Version) or its recognised equivalent.
- (ii) For admission to the Doctor of Ministry, the minimum IELTS result required is 7.5 overall with a minimum of 7.5 in reading and writing, 7.0 in listening and 6.5 in speaking.

### Course Structure

The course is normally taken over 3 years full time or up to 8 years part time.

Minimum candidature from admission to submission of thesis is two years.

Maximum duration of candidature including suspension of candidature and extension of candidature is 9 years.

Coursework Phase: 32cps (33%) (1 year full time or part time equivalent)

Research Phase: 64cps. (67%) (2 years full time or part time equivalent)

### Coursework Phase

In the coursework phase candidates would take 4 x 8cps units as follows. Assessments for these units would be 8,000-10,000 words.

1. MD801 - Research Methods Seminar (Pass/Fail)
2. MD802 - Theological Research Seminar; (Graded)
3. MD803 - Theoretical Research Seminar; (Graded)
4. MD804 - Thesis Proposal and Ethics Preparation Seminar. (Pass/Fail)

In **MD801** candidates would empathetically and critically assess the various research methods available for applied research, especially those that have been used in their field of research. They would also undertake a theological critique of the epistemological approaches of the paradigms underpinning the various research methods. They would be required to demonstrate their capacity to interpret findings based on different methodologies and to draft a valid piece of research that conforms to the ethical requirements of human subject research. Candidates would submit two pieces of work totalling 7500-8000 words, comprising a critique of research methodologies as they intersected with their research topic and a draft research proposal.

Candidates would also be required to submit a non assessable personal reflection essay of 1500-2000 words that showed how undertaking the unit has contributed to their development to their life long learning and their personal development within their ministry context.

**MD802** would allow a student to focus on the resources of the various fields of Christian studies of History/Theology/

Biblical Theology/ Spirituality/Ethics as they intersect with the field of their research topic. In their assessments students would not only provide evidence of their capacity to empathetically report, critically analyse and demonstrate capacity to begin synthesising and developing new approaches in their research topic, but also be preparing material that would be the basis of their chapter of theological assessment of different approaches to their research topic and contribute to their literature review. Candidates would submit one piece of assessment of 7500-8000 words which would be graded.

Candidates would also be required to submit a non assessable personal reflection essay of 1500-2000 words that showed how undertaking the unit has contributed to their development to their life long learning and their personal development within their ministry context.

**MD803** would allow students to focus on the social sciences, Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, Organisational Theory and the like as they intersect with their research topic. This would include critiquing specific research methods that had been used in the literature the student is reading for their research topic. Again they would need to demonstrate capacity to empathetically report, critically analyse and demonstrate an ability to begin synthesising and developing new approaches. Students would effectively be writing a draft of their methodology chapter and a defence of the methodology they intend to use for their research. Candidates would submit one piece of assessment of 7500-8000 words which would be graded.

Candidates would also be required to submit a non assessable personal reflection essay of 1500-2000 words that showed how undertaking the unit has contributed to their development to their life long learning and their personal development within their ministry context.

**MD804** would bring together the knowledge and skills acquired from MD801, MD802 and MD803 in the preparation of a final thesis/project proposal and any required Ethics Protocol. Candidates would have their research proposals and ethics protocols peer reviewed through the normal confirmation of Candidature process. Final approval of thesis/project proposals would be given by the Research and Research Studies Committee, and final approval of Ethics Protocols would be given by the ACT's Human Research Ethics Committee. In this unit candidates would demonstrate the capacity to: design a piece of research that will produce valid/verifiable outcomes; design a piece of research that meets the Ethical requirements of the Ethics Committee; communicate their research topic to their peers and an audience of non-specialists through the peer-review process incorporated in their Confirmation of Candidature processes.

#### **Research Phase**

Research Thesis/Project 60,000 words

#### **Learning Outcomes**

The Learning Outcomes of the Doctor of Ministry aligns with AQF level 10 research doctoral award whose graduates make a significant and original contribution to knowledge as applied in the context of professional Christian ministry practice.

The learning outcomes may be organised into four distinct yet overlapping aspects that are addressed and reinforced by various phases and structures within the course.

##### **(a) Knowledge and Understanding Aspects**

- Systematic and critical understanding of a substantial and complex body of knowledge of theological, biblical-hermeneutical and, sociological methods as related to the research topic.

##### **(b) Skills**

- Independently and systematically engage in critical reflection, synthesis and evaluation of the body of knowledge related to their research topic.
- Develop, adapt and implement research methodologies to extend and redefine existing professional practice.
- Disseminate and promote new insights to peers and the community.
- Generate original knowledge and understanding to make a substantial contribution to the professional practice of their research topic.

##### **(c) Applied knowledge and skills**

- Demonstrate their autonomy, authoritative judgement, adaptability and responsibility as an expert and leading practitioner in the field of their research topic.
- Demonstrate their capacity to plan, execute, evaluate research
- Demonstrate their skills as communicators by disseminating their finding to their peers and the wider community

##### **(d) Personal Developmental Aspects.**

- Doctor of Ministry graduates should demonstrate the capacity of life long learners committed to their on-going

development with particular emphasis on their own personhood as Christians within a professional ministry context.		
Course Content		Credit Points
<b>Core Units</b>	MD801 Applied Research Method Seminars	8
	MD802 Theological Research Seminar	8
	MD803 Theoretical Research Seminar	8
	MD804 Thesis Proposal and Ethics Preparation Seminar	8
Rules		
<p>Candidates must achieve at least a Distinction grade in both MD802 and MD803, as well as passing grades in MD801 and MD804, before progressing to the Research phase.</p> <p>Candidates who do not achieve a Distinction grade in either MD802 or MD803 may seek leave from the Research and Research Studies Committee to put a case for continuation to the research phase.</p> <p>Candidates must also satisfactorily complete all Confirmation of Candidature requirements by the end of their first full-time year (or part-time equivalent) of candidature.</p>		
Other Protocols of the Course		
<p>Candidates and their supervisors must complete and submit the Higher Degree by Research Annual Progress Report to the Postgraduate Student Officer of the ACT via the postgraduate coordinator in the candidate's sponsoring college by the due date. Where unsatisfactory progress is reported the Research and Research Studies Committee may require the candidate to 'show cause' why candidature should not be terminated.</p> <p>It is the candidate's responsibility to be aware of and comply with all rules and regulations related to the Doctor of Ministry.</p> <p>A completed Notice of Intention to Submit Thesis or Project form must be submitted by the supervisor to the ACT's Postgraduate Student Officer at least three months prior to the anticipated submission of the thesis. Included with the completed signed Notice of Intention to Submit Thesis or Project form supervisors should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a list of 5-6 potential examiners</li> <li>• potential examiners' contact details (phone [if in Australia or NZ], email address, mailing address)</li> <li>• a concise statement of the appropriateness of each to examine the thesis</li> <li>• an abstract of the thesis of no more than 300 words.</li> </ul> <p>The supervisor should forward a copy of this material to the Postgraduate Co-ordinator or Registrar of the candidate's sponsoring college.</p> <p>Three examiners—all external to the candidate's sponsoring college, and at least two external to the ACT, and at least one from outside Australia / New Zealand—are appointed by the Higher Degree Research Examination Panel. No contact should be made with the suggested examiners by candidates, supervisors or sponsoring colleges.</p> <p>The Higher Degree Research Examination Panel, a standing panel of the Research and Research Studies Committee, determines the order in which examiners are to be approached.</p> <p>Membership of Higher Degree Research Examination Panel consists of the three Departmental Representatives of the Research and Research Studies Committee and the Executive Officer of the Research and Research Studies Committee. The Higher Degree Research Examination Panel has power to co-opt specialists to give advice on potential examiners.</p> <p>The abstract along with examiner's guidelines and schedule of payments will be forwarded to potential examiners when inviting them to examine the work.</p> <p>When the thesis is ready for examination three soft bound copies and a 'read only' electronic copy of the thesis from which the soft copies were printed are to be submitted to the ACT Postgraduate Student Officer.</p> <p>Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, the Research and Research Studies Committee may, in any case in which it may deem it appropriate to do so, vary, dispense with or suspend any requirement or prescription by these regulations, and report forthwith to the Academic Board of the Australian College of Theology.</p>		

**RATIONALE FOR COURSE****(a) Philosophical basis for the course design**

- (i) While the course involves rigorous scholarly inquiry, it locates such inquiry within the context of the ministry practice.
- (ii) The course structure enables development both in the ministry person and the organisations they serve during and beyond the course.
- (iii) The course focuses upon five critical domains of biblical theological reflection, critical analysis, development of the person, communication skills and decision-making.
- (iv) The ultimate purpose of the course is to assist ministry practitioners to be able to exploit their full potential, obtain a deepened understanding of their calling as a foundation for effectiveness through their middle and later years of service.

**(b) Primary pedagogical concerns**

To the end identified in (a) (i) above, the Doctor of Ministry has the following primary pedagogical concerns:

- (i) The research of the candidates' actual ministry issues via a critical application of appropriate theories and enhanced levels of theological reflection.
- (ii) The development of theoretical foundations critical in the analysis of institutions and ministry contexts.
- (iii) The integration of the assumptions, values and espoused theology of the candidates through theological reflection.
- (iv) The development of the candidates' capacity as agents of change in chosen ministry sites.
- (v) The development of skills for research into human subjects and contexts.
- (vi) The enhancement of the communication skills of ministers, with a view to the provision of resources for their peers in ministry.

The range of assessment modes across the whole course involves the completion of coursework units, robust engagement with their peers in ministry, the production of publishable articles, and the completion of a significant project that would warrant publication in its own right or resource their peers within ministry.

**(c) Characteristics of the Doctor of Ministry include:**

- (i) The development of advanced knowledge in a specialised ministry area.
- (ii) The capacity to foster one's self-awareness, congruence of thought and practice while deepening a sense of one's unique ministry.
- (iii) The capacity to initiate organisational or community change.
- (iv) Application of high order skills demonstrated by sophisticated theological reflection, critical thinking and contextual interpretation in a sustained body of research that exhibits high levels of originality, theoretical insight and a substantial critique of the relevant literature, all of which meet international standards for the award.

**(d) Occupational Functions of Graduates***The Ideal Candidate*

While not a formal prerequisite for admission, the Doctor of Ministry course is especially suitable for candidates who are aged in their mid-thirties or older, whose responsibilities would have involved them in strategic thinking and whose vocation requires well-developed levels of ministry competence.

*Vocational Outcomes*

Ministry practitioners who take out this degree would, depending on the specialisation, be equipped to take up significant roles and responsibilities such as—

- Senior pastors, or
- Specialist pastors with departmental responsibilities
- Regional pastors with inter-church responsibilities beyond their own congregation,
- Denominational, mission and para-church agency leaders
- Consultants to churches, mission agencies and other Christian organisations,
- Educators of ministers in training in the fields of pastoral and theological education in theological colleges

Graduates holding the ACT DMin award enter their mature years of ministry as thoughtful and able practical theologians with a capacity to lead groups of Christians in ministry in ways that reflect the Gospel in contextually sensitive ways while they themselves enjoy a deepened faith and a more coherent theology of ministry.

**OFF-SHORE CANDIDATES**

DMin applicants who meet the normal ACT admission criteria for the particular award and who in addition to

these criteria display a strong chance of completion as indicated by one or more of the following indicators:

- Personal knowledge of them by supervisors within the sponsoring institution, or
- A record of publication in refereed publications,
- Previous academic research theses, or
- Sponsorship by a reputable denomination or mission sending agency known to the sponsoring institution, or a
- Sponsorship by a theological training trust fund (e.g. Langham Partnership, International Teams etc.)

*Upon the supply of:*

- Commendation from two reputable academic referees, and
- Written declaration from their denominational, or mission directors or other current employer, that such bodies understand the time commitment involved and approve of the candidate's application as with local candidates,

*And who possess the following access to resources or facilities such as:*

- Electronic journals, 'Skype' or other, internet links with supervisor and the sponsoring college library. And preferably
- Access to libraries at an overseas theological institution accredited by ATEA, ATESEA, or equivalent
- Adequate adjunct supervision in their country of origin.

*May be admitted as postgraduate candidates in the DMin award in either part or full time status on the understanding that*

- (i) They engage in a minimum of an initial 4-week induction period involving the particular college's normal induction process and any back-grounding deemed necessary for the particular candidate.
- (ii) They are resident at the sponsoring college for a minimum of two weeks each year (10 working days) from then on in any combination of number of days, as negotiated with their sponsoring college's postgraduate coordinator.
- (iii) Allowance will be given that in their final year a student may apply to forgo their residential opportunity if in the opinion of their supervisor and their college's postgraduate coordinator, the project will be completed without further face to face interaction.
- (iv) During such residency periods they must engage in the academic life of their sponsoring institution through such means as presentation of

postgraduate seminar papers, attendance at available conferences, audit courses and confer with their supervisor.

- (v) The candidate will supply evidence of progress according to normal ACT annual review processes along with a statement by their sponsoring college's postgraduate coordinator that they are meeting the residential minimums.
- (vi) The sponsoring institution would supply the ACT with evidence of their arrival and departure dates along with their Annual Review of Progress forms.
- (vii) It is advisable that the primary supervisor is supplied from the full-time faculty of the ACT sponsoring college to ensure continuity.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS OF DMIN RESEARCH SUPERVISORS**

All supervisors of DMin major projects must be senior practitioners with doctoral qualifications (or deemed equivalent to such). They must be familiar with the current state of the academic debate in the units that they are teaching. A record of publishing in refereed journals in their field is essential.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF RESEARCH SUPERVISORS**

- (i) The supervisor of an ACT DMin candidate's project is in a very real way the agent of the ACT in ensuring that the high standards of its professional doctoral program are maintained and that the candidate is making steady progress throughout the term of his/her candidature. The supervisor should be aware of both the level of academic performance and expertise expected in the degree and the ACT's requirements for the presentation of the finished project.
- (ii) No supervisor should accept the invitation of the Research and Research Studies Committee to supervise a candidate unless confident of his/her ability to act as a supervisor of the proposed topic and assured that he/she is not required to supervise so many other candidates that effectiveness will be impaired if the invitation is accepted.
- (iii) It is the responsibility of the sponsoring college to nominate a supervisor for each candidate for the approval of the Research and Research Studies Committee. If the topic is multi-disciplinary a co-supervisor may also be suggested and appointed.
- (iv) Supervisors and co-supervisors will normally be drawn from the ranks of full-time ministry practitioners or from the faculty of theological and Bible colleges and the universities, and will normally possess academic qualifications at least equivalent to the DMin degree. It is advisable that the principal supervisor be located in the college in which the candidate is affiliated.

- (v) Where state regulations so prescribe, the principal supervisor should have successfully supervised to completion an equivalent piece of research.
- (vi) The ACT Research and Research Studies Committee appoints the co-supervisor if one is deemed necessary. The co-supervisor will provide expertise in a particular area in which he/she is competent. The co-supervisor should also act as supervisor when the principal supervisor is unable to perform his/her function. However, unless prevented by the demands of approved study leave or unforeseen circumstances the principal supervisor remains responsible for directing the research of the candidate and for ensuring that the candidate meets all administrative and academic requirements. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring college to divide the annual supervision fee, set by the ACT, between the supervisor and co-supervisor.
- (vii) Arrangements for supervision should be agreed to by the candidate, the supervisor, the sponsoring college and the Research and Research Studies Committee.
- (viii) When a supervisor becomes unavailable the Committee, in collaboration with the candidate's sponsoring college, will assist the candidate in locating a suitable replacement, or even transferring the candidate to another college.

#### **DUTIES OF SUPERVISORS**

- (i) The (principal) supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that the candidate is aware of the ACT's expectations of academic competencies required to be demonstrated in the project, as well as the regulations concerning the time of candidature and the word length of the project.
- (ii) The supervisor is responsible for monitoring compliance with the candidate's signed intention to abide by the stipulations outlined in the ACT's academic misconduct policy.
- (iii) A report to the Dean must be submitted by 11 December each year by the candidate, the supervisor, and the Dean of Postgraduate Studies of the college sponsoring the candidate. The report must have been first submitted to the sponsoring college by 11 November. The report provides a check on the progress of the research undertaken by the candidate and on the quality and frequency of meetings between the supervisor and candidate. In more serious cases, problems surfacing during the time of candidature are brought to the attention of the Research and Research Studies Committee.
- (iv) The supervisor must monitor the candidate's progress during the first year of the research phase of candidature (Phase 3) and advise the ACT office through the annual report that the candidate's candidature should be confirmed. They must also be proactive in advising the candidate about publishing his or her research during and after candidature.
- (v) The supervisor (and co-supervisor, if one is appointed) has an obligation to inform the candidate of the details of any of their own research and professional leave, and any retirement plans relevant for the period of candidature.
- (vi) The supervisor (and co-supervisor, if one is appointed) should be sufficiently aware of any special needs of the candidate so as to be able to report in an informed manner the progress being made.
- (vii) Normally, the candidate and the main supervisor will be located in the one college. Frequency of meetings should be negotiated in accordance with the nature of the candidate's research program. Frequency of contact is particularly critical in the early stages of candidature. Face to face contact between the supervisor and the candidate should occur at least twice a year. If the supervisor is on approved leave of absence, regular communication should still be maintained between him/her and the candidate.
- (viii) Supervisors should provide constructive, critical, and (where requested) written responses to the candidate's work to the candidate within one month of the submission of the work. Matters relating to English usage, presentation, and argumentation should be addressed at all stages of the research. A supervisor might expect the candidate to take a unit in a field of knowledge, in the discipline of research methodology, or the technique of writing a project if the candidate evidences serious deficiencies in any of these areas.
- (ix) It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that when advising submission of the project that it is free from major errors of typing and presentation, and to certify to that effect in writing. A project which does not possess such a certificate will not normally be acceptable to the Research and Research Studies Committee. Supervisors must also be fully conversant with the procedures by which the project will be examined.
- (x) A supervisor may advise against submission of the project when the final version has been prepared if further work seems necessary, but cannot forbid the candidate to submit the project to the Research and Research Studies Committee. The supervisor is entitled to submit a report detailing criticisms of the project to the Committee. This report will not be communicated to the examiners before the examination process is completed. The Committee will determine whether the project will be submitted for examination. In such circumstances the candidate must remove all references to the supervisor in the project.

- (xi) A co-supervisor should maintain close contact with the candidate and the principal supervisor, and be involved at all stages of the candidate's research relevant to their expertise. If either supervisor considers a candidate's progress to be unsatisfactory, he/she shall communicate this opinion and a recommendation to the Dean for the consideration of the Research and Research Studies Committee.

#### **DUTIES OF CANDIDATES**

- (i) The candidate has the responsibility to be well-informed about the regulations governing the degree in which they are enrolled and the academic standards of the degree for which they are enrolled.
- (ii) The candidate should expect to submit to the supervisor coherent accounts of the research they have undertaken to date. Candidates must ensure that errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar of written submissions are corrected.
- (iii) It is the candidate's responsibility to communicate with and submit material to his/her supervisors in accord with a mutually agreed schedule. Normally, the supervisor and the candidate are located in the same sponsoring college. Personal contact is preferable to merely submitting work by mail. If a supervisor considers a candidate's progress to be unsatisfactory, he/she shall communicate this opinion and a recommendation to the Dean for the consideration of the Research and Research Studies Committee.
- (iv) The Committee may decide to terminate candidature or may warn the candidate that his/her status is under review. The candidate shall be invited to comment on the recommendation before it is implemented.
- (v) The candidate is well advised to keep a diary of meetings with his/her supervisors.
- (vi) The candidate should not hesitate to seek clarification if unsure about the expectations of his/her supervisor.
- (vii) The candidate should accept responsibility for maintaining negotiated regular communication with his/her supervisor(s) and the progress of research agreed upon. If impediments arise, these should be immediately discussed with the (principal) supervisor.
- (viii) When submitting the dissertation for examination, candidates must lodge with the supervisor a copy of the dissertation in the form in which it has been submitted.

#### **DUTIES OF SPONSORING COLLEGES**

- (i) Each affiliated college will be required to demonstrate to the ACT's Research and Research Studies Committee that administrative procedures relating to the progress of the candidate are efficiently exercised. The college must ensure that the annual report to be submitted to the Dean is completed on time.
- (ii) Each college will be expected to have in place a Board of Postgraduate Studies to ensure the proper oversight and supervision of candidates in their care and to communicate with the DMin Coordinator (and to the Dean and the Research and Research Studies Committee) on all matters effecting the progress of the candidate through the research Phase of the degree.

#### **DUTIES OF THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY**

- (i) Candidates have the right to be well-informed about the ACT's examination procedures, the research profile of the supervisors, the presentation requirements of the ACT, and any facilities and services to which they are entitled.
- (ii) Problems arising from supervision and disputes that cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the candidate, his/her supervisors, and sponsoring college should be referred to the DMin Coordinator, and then to the Dean and the Research and Research Studies Committee for mediation.
- (iii) The Research and Research Studies Committee will deliberate upon all questions of a candidate's progress in the degree, will formally confirm candidature at the end of the first year of the candidate's participation in the research phase of the degree, and will consider examiners' reports, and recommend the outcome of the examination to the ACT's Academic Board.

#### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND WITHDRAWAL FROM STUDY**

Candidates may be granted leave of absence in any phase of the course, and relief from any of these restrictions on the grounds of major illness, life crises in one's immediate family, change of roles or locations. Otherwise, a lack of progress without sufficient reason may lead to cancellation of candidature.

A candidate may also withdraw from study if in their considered opinion there is no way that they can foresee a future circumstance that will enable them to devote the required time to the course.

Both the withdrawal and application for suspension may happen through the completion of a form available from the candidate's sponsoring college.

## THESIS SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION

### Certification

The following signed certifications should accompany each copy of the submitted thesis. The certificate signed by the candidate should also be placed in the final bound copies of the thesis.

#### *Candidate*

I certify that the substance of this dissertation of ..... words has not previously been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree. I also certify that any assistance received in conducting the research embodied in the dissertation, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in the text or notes.

#### *Supervisor*

I consider that this dissertation is in a form suitable for examination and conforms to the requirements of the Australian College of Theology for the degree of Doctor of Ministry.

Examiners will be asked to report on the thesis in one of the following terms:

1. That the degree be awarded.
2. That the degree be awarded *provided that minor* corrections and/or additions as specified in my report are carried out to the satisfaction of the Research and Research Studies Committee.
3. That the degree be awarded *provided that major* corrections and/or additions as specified in my report are carried out to the satisfaction of the Research and Research Studies Committee.
4. That the candidate be asked to rewrite and resubmit the thesis for examination taking into account recommendations in my report.
5. That the candidate not be awarded the degree.

Examiners' reports will first be submitted to the Principal Supervisor who will then submit a response to the Higher Degree Research Examination Panel. The Principal Supervisor's response should include, where relevant, suggested amendments and revisions.

The Higher Degree Research Examination Panel will consider whether any qualifications of the supervisor's response should be made, and forward the examiners' reports and the Principal Supervisor's response with its recommendation to the Research and Research Studies Committee.

In instances of doubt or conflict among examiners, the Research and Research Studies Committee may seek the views of an additional examiner.

After considering the examiners' reports, the Committee will make a recommendation to the Academic Board. Before reaching a final decision, the Research and Research Studies Committee may send the reports of each examiner to the other examiners and invite their comments.

The Research and Research Studies Committee may require the candidate to undergo an oral examination.

Where a thesis or project is to be re-written and re-submitted:

- All submissions for re-examination must be accompanied by a list of the corrections and amendments completed by the candidate.
- Normally the same examiners will be asked to re-examine the thesis. Examiners will be asked if they are prepared to re-examine the thesis if that is their recommendation.
- During the period of re-writing and re-submission the candidate must re-enrol with the ACT while undertaking revisions for a period not less than six months prior to re-submission and must be enrolled at the time of re-submission.
- The Research and Research Studies Committee will set a time limit of not more than 12 months for the candidate to make corrections or to revise the thesis for re-submission for re-examination.
- In cases where a re-examination is recommended, the Higher Degree Research Examination Panel may also recommend that examiners reports may be circulated to the other examiners.
- Only one resubmission for re-examination will be allowed.

The Higher Degree Research Examination Panel has the authority to approve the final version of the thesis and to recommend the awarding of the degree to Research and Research Studies Committee, which make recommendation to the Academic Board that the degree be awarded.

No more than six months will be the expected time for **major** corrections and emendations.

No more than three months will be the expected time for **minor** corrections and emendations.

An electronic version of the corrected thesis which clearly identifies all changes must be submitted to Higher Degree Research Examination Panel for confirmation that the required corrections have been made **before** the final hardbound copy of the thesis is produced.

Submission of the final hardbound copies of the thesis to the ACT and sponsoring college must be accompanied by a 'read only' electronic version of the thesis from which the hardbound copies were printed.

### Appeals

If a candidate is not awarded the degree of Doctor of Ministry he/she may wish to appeal. Students are referred to the *Policy on Student Appeals under Research Degree Rules* listed on the ACT website.

