



Uniting Church in Australia
ASSEMBLY
Assembly Standing Committee

12-14 November 2021

DOCUMENT 10

Title	Report from the Standards for Ministries Committee
Type of Paper	For information and decision.
Assembly or ASC Minute	21.22 (ASC, March 2021)
Consultation	Standards for Ministries Committee SA Synod Ministerial Education Board (MEB), Uniting College for Leadership and Theology (Uniting College)
Purpose	Report to ASC regarding issues related to Phase 4 and Supervision, and provide information and a recommendation regarding the SA Synod MEB and Uniting College.
Rationale & Findings Summary	This report includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. General report of the SFM, including a response to the ASC Minute 21.222. The full SA Synod consultation report (Appendix A)3. A recommendation to approve Uniting College for the formation, education and training for specified ministries.
Attachments	Appendix A – Report of the SA MEB / Uniting College Consultation Team
Proposal/s	That the Assembly Standing Committee: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Receive the report;2. Determine that the courses offered under the SA MEB, through Uniting College of Leadership and Theology, be recognised as fulfilling the Regulations of the Uniting Church for the ministries concerned; and the Standards of formation, education and training for the specified ministries.
Submitted by	Rev Dr Rob McFarlane (Committee Chairperson) sfmchairperson@nat.uca.org.au Please copy questions to Lindsay Cullen (Rob is unavailable for some of the time leading up to ASC) lindsayc@nat.uca.org.au

Report from the Standards for Ministries Committee

Introduction:

Since last reporting to the ASC in March 2021, the Standards for Ministries Committee has met once, in June 2021 prior to the Assembly. At the Assembly, a new Chairperson, Rev Dr Rob McFarlane was appointed. The Chairperson attended a handover meeting with the previous Chair, Kaye Roberts-Thomson along with staff from the Assembly Resourcing Unit in August 2021 and the Committee has met once since the appointment of the new Chair, in September 2021.

The SFM Committee would like to go on record in conveying their gratitude and appreciation for the work of the former Chair, whose significant contribution to this Committee and its predecessor was also noted at the Assembly.

Phase 4 and Supervision matters:

The SFM took a number of proposals to the March 2021 ASC Meeting regarding matters related to Phase 4, and to Supervision and oversight of a number of specified ministries. The ASC (minute 21.22) provided the Committee with feedback via the Associate General Secretary and asked the Committee to do further work on these proposals and to bring back a report to the November 2021 meeting.

The Committee needs to inform the ASC that due to the complexity of these issues and the focus on transitioning to a new Chairperson, the Committee is not yet ready to bring amended proposals and rationale back to the ASC but will do so in due course.

Consultations with Heads of Colleges and MEB Chairs:

In the past the SFM (or its predecessor committees) has regularly convened meetings of the Heads of Colleges, often appended to the regular meeting of Theological Educators. Our intention is to continue such gatherings on at least an annual basis, and further, to similarly meet with the Chairs of Ministry Education Boards (MEB) on an annual basis in order to ensure good two-way communications with these key stakeholder groups.

With the current uncertainties brought by the COVID pandemic, it is unclear when the next Theological Educators gathering might be held, so the SFM is currently underway in planning for meetings with the Heads of Colleges and the MEB Chairs late this year or early in the new year.

Consultations:

Since last reporting SFM Committee has engaged in Consultations with the SA MEB and Uniting College, and with the WA MEB. The team's report regarding the WA consultation has not yet been circulated back to the WA MEB and finalised by the SFM Committee, and so will be brought to the next ASC Meeting.

The consultation with the SA MEB and Uniting College was a very positive engagement and leads to a strong affirmation from the SFM Committee that the ASC should recognise the courses offered under the SA MEB as fulfilling the Church's requirements (Recommendation 2, below). The full report from the SA Consultation is attached as Appendix A for the information of the ASC.

I look forward to further reports to the ASC over the coming Triennium,

Rev Dr Rob McFarlane, Chairperson Standards for Ministries Committee

PROPOSALS:

That the Assembly Standing Committee:

1. Receive the report;
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