

**The Uniting Church in Australia – National Assembly Risk Appetite Statement - ASC Nov 2023**

Responsibilities of the Assembly: The Assembly shall have determining responsibility in matters of doctrine, worship, government and discipline including the promotion of the Church' s mission. Extract from s 38(a) of the Constitution of The Uniting Church in Australia. **Changes are in RED (Note no changes made for the Nov 2023 ASC)**

		<b>Risk Appetite</b>	<b>Our Approach</b>
	<p><b>Mission and Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear identity and mission (why do we exist?)</li> <li>- Trusted, well-resourced and equipped religious leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low Appetite for a lack of clarity</li> <li>- Low Appetite for not training and supporting our leaders</li> <li>- Low appetite for activities/behaviours which adversely impact our standing in the community</li> <li>- Zero tolerance for not living out our Covenant relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure all communication from the Assembly reflects a clear set of values and purposes for the Uniting Church</li> <li>- Equip our leaders with the tools and information to be effective</li> <li>- Lead the alignment of mission across the church</li> <li>- We will encourage and equip our members to live out the Covenant in their local context, embracing self determination as a guiding principle</li> </ul>
Mission of the Church	<p><b>Doctrine &amp; Worship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Determining responsibility in matters of doctrine</li> <li>- Determining responsibility in matters of worship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Zero appetite for the work of doctrine to step outside the Basis of Union and the proper decision-making processes of the UCA</li> <li>- High appetite for diversity in worship (ordered liberty) but expect specific liturgies to be followed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approve confessional statements on behalf of the Church consistent with the Basis of Union and following process that respects the inter-conciliar nature of the UCA</li> <li>- Approve orders of service for general use within the Church</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Ministry Standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishment of standards for theological education</li> <li>- Admission of Ministers from other denominations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Zero appetite for theological training and ongoing training that does not meet standards</li> <li>- Zero appetite for admission processes that do not meet standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standards for Ministries Committee (SFM) will review standards for ASC approval.</li> <li>- SFM will monitor compliance of Ministry Education Boards and Admission bodies</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Ecumenical Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Affiliate with ecumenical and other bodies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High appetite for diversity and difference.</li> <li>- High appetite to be in fellowship and active dialogue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actively seek out ecumenical partners to live out the mission of the church.</li> <li>- Actively participate in ecumenical bodies in Australia and beyond</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Be a voice for justice (advocacy)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Speak out on issues of national significance</li> <li>- Be a voice for change in society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High appetite for speaking out within the decisions and policies of the UCA.</li> <li>- Moderate appetite for civil disobedience of ministers and staff (non-violent, aligned with Church position).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advocate strongly against government policies that are unfair particularly for vulnerable people.</li> <li>- We may speak out in ways that will be unpopular in the community but in line with UCA governing documents and decisions.</li> <li>- We may speak out in ways that strain our ecumenical relationships. We will continue to do so, also taking time to explain our position and reiterate the value we place on the ecumenical relationship</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Safe place, inclusive, respectful, accountable Church for all</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safe and respectful Church for all people, especially vulnerable</li> <li>- Acknowledgement of the wrongs</li> <li>- Actively support Redress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Zero appetite for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harm to anyone in our care or programs</li> <li>• Not owning and apologising for wrongs</li> <li>• Not participating in Redress fully</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our Church will be a safe place for all people, especially vulnerable people.</li> <li>- Participate fully in any inquiry.</li> <li>- Own our mistakes, apologise and participate fully in any Redress processes.</li> <li>- Clear policies for engaging safely including in online presences</li> </ul>

		Risk Appetite	Our Approach
Government and Discipline	<b>Governance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstrate Highest level of Governance and Compliance</li> <li>- Fully engaged, transparent in external scrutiny</li> <li>- Provide necessary support and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Zero appetite for any non-compliance of good governance practices</li> <li>- Zero appetite to deviate from legal and regulatory frameworks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hold governance meetings regularly with appropriate documentation to ensure proper oversight.</li> <li>- Maintain up to date policies and procedures</li> <li>- Train members of governance committees.</li> <li>- Resource governance committees appropriately to do their work</li> <li>- Maintain a strong governance culture with continual focus on risk management</li> <li>- We will place governance responsibilities in those places best equipped to deal with them</li> </ul>
	<b>Discipline</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compliance with laws and organisational policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Zero appetite for staff / ministry agents not complying with the law and governance policies</li> <li>- Zero appetite for failure to address non-compliance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work within appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks at all times</li> <li>- Proactive in training staff and holding to account in line with the Code of Ethics/Code of Conduct</li> </ul>
	<b>Operational</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health, safety, physical and mental well-being of participants, staff &amp; volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Zero appetite to any practices that expose participants, staff, volunteers or associated persons to personal harm</li> <li>- Zero appetite for unethical and illegal behaviour (with the exception of Civil disobedience within the parameters identified under Justice and Advocacy)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prioritise the health, safety, physical and mental wellbeing of Assembly employees, participants in our programs and associated persons</li> <li>- Ensure a culture of health and safety</li> <li>- Act ethically and sustainably (financially and environmentally)</li> </ul>
	<b>Financial and Property</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial solvency</li> <li>- Protect of Assets including real property</li> <li>- Managing Investments</li> <li>- Ethical funding/procurement sources</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Zero appetite for fraud or dishonest behaviour</li> <li>- Moderate appetite towards investment risk and diversification</li> <li>- Zero appetite for accepting funding from unethical organisations</li> <li>- <b>Very low appetite for future Budget Deficits (given current negative Assembly balance sheet) and only if extenuating circumstances apply</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure the Assembly and its agencies remains solvent at all times ensuring the future financial sustainability</li> <li>- Comply with all financial and regulatory obligations</li> <li>- Hold appropriate insurance</li> <li>- Ensure security and compliance with data privacy legislation</li> <li>- <b>Financial Discipline</b></li> </ul>
	<b>Polity and Organisational Alignment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make guiding decisions and collaborate where appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low appetite for behaviour that steps outside the Constitution and Regulations</li> <li>- High appetite for collaborating, ideas, innovation and creativity</li> <li>- High appetite for initiating national pieces of work that further the Church's mission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respond nationally and in a united manner to national matters of concern.</li> <li>- Seek out opportunities to create organisational value by leading national initiatives.</li> <li>- Collaborate wherever it is appropriate to do so</li> </ul>