



## Standards for Ministry Committee

### 17 Amend UCA Regulations Regarding Processes Connected with Assembly-Issued Certificates

#### That the Assembly resolve:

To request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.1.6 (j)(vii) relating to Statements of Satisfactory Completion to read:

- (vii) **prescribing the conditions under which a candidate qualifies for ordination and/or recognition, and receiving from Presbyteries statements certifying that the requirements of Phase Two have been completed in respect of each candidate, as issued by the Ministerial Education Board concerned;**

#### Rationale

There has been confusion in some Synods around processes whereby MEBs request “Statement of Satisfactory Completion of Phase 2 Studies” certificates from the Assembly (hereafter referred to as “certificates of completion”). In some instances, people had subsequently been ordained without a certificate of completion having been requested; in other instances, there has been confusion around who within the Synod requests the certificate of completion: College or MEB. These issues alerted SFM to the fact that the current process is somewhat unwieldy. This paper proposes a process which is more streamlined and makes sense within the current unfolding of our polity.

#### Current Process

1. Theological College determines that a candidate for ordination has completed their studies and reports this to the MEB.
2. MEB confirms that the candidate has completed all formation requirements and requests a certificate of completion from the Assembly.
3. MEB communicates to Presbytery that the candidate has completed their formation.
4. Presbytery, having determined to ordain the candidate requests a numbered certificate of Ordination from the Assembly.

#### Suggested Process (Proposed changes underlined)

1. Theological College determines that a candidate for ordination has completed their studies and reports this to the MEB.
2. MEB confirms that the candidate has completed all formation requirements and produces a certificate of completion.
3. MEB communicates to Presbytery that the candidate has completed their formation and provides the certificate of completion to the Presbytery.
4. Presbytery, having determined to ordain the candidate requests a numbered certificate of Ordination from the Assembly, and provides a copy of the certificate of completion to the Assembly as part of this request.

## Benefits of the Proposed Changes

The proposed process:

1. Reflects that Assembly, through the ASC on the recommendation of SFM, approves Colleges every five years as meeting the standards for formation of candidates for ministry. SFM does not assess each candidate. Thus, this process reflects appropriate accountability and control in governance, devolving authority to MEBs to issue certificates under the authority of their five-yearly accreditation.
2. Makes the relationship between Colleges and MEBs clear.
3. Both simplifies and speeds up the issuing of certificates while ensuring that all steps have been completed.

## Changes to Regulations Required

Modification of 3.1.6 (j)(vii) to indicate that Assembly sets the general conditions for qualification for ordination, rather than those for individual candidates, and that the Assembly receives certificate.

### Existing regulation 3.1.6

*Without limiting the generality of the responsibilities of the Assembly as set out in Paragraph 38 and 39 of the Constitution, the Assembly shall be responsible for:*

*(j) for the oversight of standards of ministerial education and for establishing policies relating to standards of formation, education and training for the specified ministries, including continuing education, professional development and training. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:*

- (i) recognition of colleges as approved centres for training for ministry;*
- (ii) determining the pre-requisites for admission to candidature and the standards of ministerial education to be required of a candidate to qualify for recognition as a Minister, including the requirements for completion of the period of discernment;*
- (iii) prescribing the areas of study and the minimum requirements within each area which shall comprise an acceptable course of study for the various ministries of the Church, including the requirements for mentoring and support for newly ordained ministers during the first three years of their ministry;*
- (iv) receive annually for review from each Ministerial Education Board a report on ways in which the prescriptions specified under (iii) are being met;*
- (v) maintain a roll of candidates;*
- (vi) setting standards for qualifying examinations where appropriate for applicants seeking acceptance as candidates for specified ministries and arranging for the administration of such examinations;*
- (vii) prescribing the conditions under which a candidate qualifies for ordination and/or recognition and issues statements certifying that the requirements of Phase Two have been fulfilled in respect of each candidate on receipt of advice*



*from the Ministerial Education Board concerned that all requirements of the course have been satisfactorily met;*

- (viii) arranging regular consultations of staff of the several theological colleges as may be appropriate; and*
- (ix) determining guidelines whereby Ministers and Youth Workers shall fulfil the requirement for three to five year continuing education agreements with their Presbytery or other appointing body;*

**Proposed change to Regulation 3.1.6 (j)(vii)**

Amend to read:

- (vii) prescribing the conditions under which a candidate qualifies for ordination and/or recognition ~~and issues statements certifying that the requirements of Phase Two have been fulfilled in respect of each candidate on receipt of advice from the Ministerial Education Board concerned that all requirements of the course have been satisfactorily met,~~ and receiving from Presbyteries statements certifying that the requirements of Phase Two have been completed in respect of each candidate, as issued by the Ministerial Education Board concerned;*

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