

The background of the cover is a photograph of three hikers on a trail. In the foreground, a woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a black t-shirt and a patterned scarf, is looking off to the side with a smile. Behind her, two men are also hiking. The trail is surrounded by dry grass and shrubs, with a hill in the background. The entire image has a purple and blue color overlay.

Student Handbook 2023

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A smiling woman with her hair in a braid, wearing a patterned shirt, is holding a black bag. She is looking down at the bag with a joyful expression. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with trees and another person partially visible on the left.

Welcome

READY TO START YOUR JOURNEY?

1. Welcome

Thank you for beginning your study with ACOM. Our hope and prayer is that through this training you will be equipped for a lifetime of service.

ACOM is a community of life-long learners, with a central belief that if we stop learning we cease to grow. Thank you for your commitment to learning and growing through ACOM.

ACOM exists to equip those who love God and want to see the gospel proclaimed and lived throughout the world. By studying with ACOM, you are enabling us to partner with you in the gospel mission. We hope you find a deep sense of purpose and connectedness in studying with us.

As a national provider, we are in a unique position to resource you for your mission and ministry. Alongside our academic staff we have a range of ministry practitioners, supervisors and spiritual formation directors who are dedicated to developing your full potential in Christ.

We are always listening to wisdom that feeds our continuous quality improvement processes. In particular, we value student feedback on any aspect of our courses and organisation.

ACOM affirms the rights of students and staff to learn and engage in a non-coersive space.

For those studying with ACOM for the first time, we extend a special welcome. ACOM's model of study requires you to be a self-starter with strong self-discipline and time-management skills. However, we are also committed to supporting you in your studies.

As an ACOM student (whether part-time, full-time, undergraduate or postgraduate) you will find that you will have contact with the National Office in Sydney throughout your studies - especially through enquiries to the National Help Desk (ph. 1800 672 692 OR email: info@acom.edu.au).

We are here to help you in whatever way we can. We aim to process any enquiry (email or phone) within 24 hours of receiving it, either giving you a direct answer, or referring you to the appropriate person for an answer. Please don't hesitate to contact us at any time.

Finally, we wish you well in your course of studies. Your graduation from ACOM will represent a milestone in your becoming a better equipped disciple of Jesus.

The ACOM Team

A grayscale background image showing a person's hands. One hand holds a pen, drawing a line on a map. The other hand holds a ruler. The map shows geographical features like rivers and coastlines. The text 'About ACOM' is overlaid in the center in a bold, purple font.

About ACOM

READY TO START YOUR JOURNEY?

2. About ACOM

ACOM is a learning community focused on transformation. To transform society, we first need to be personally transformed. To be a light in the world we first need to be personally set on fire with God's Spirit.

Operating for over 75 years, ACOM tailors your course to help you meet your calling in life. Our focus on transformational learning is holistic: we know that it is necessary to develop the head, heart and hands to be an effective light in the world. While we are conservative in our approach to Scripture, we are missional in heart.

As our model of training focuses on flexible delivery there is no central campus. Your place of ministry is your campus. As a student, you can stay in your home and your local church, and count your hours in ministry towards your course work.

Our college is committed to serving disciples of Jesus who are serious about kingdom living. We are especially equipped to help develop Christian leaders for a rapidly changing world.

Our strengths are:

- **Spiritual formation is integral to all we do.** We don't merely teach a class on formation, we facilitate face-to-face holistic learning experiences around the country that are deeply forming.
- **Our curriculum is intentionally mission-focused rather than the usual suite of traditional theology units.** This approach equips students to be relevant and effective as they represent God's kingdom in any situation God places them.
- **Our method of delivery is designed to maximise learning-in-action.** While you can study with ACOM from anywhere in the world our approach to distance learning uses cutting edge learning practices that view students as practising professionals.
- **We help students discover how to study the Bible for themselves.** We equip students to learn how to learn and make applications to the complex changing world we live in.
- **Our facilitations are led by "pracademics" not ivory tower academics focused solely on theory.** Rather they are practitioners/academics who are highly qualified but also active in personal discipleship and mission.
- **We personalise the support we provide students.** Each student is appointed their own Student Engagement Manager who is available to assist with their enquiries and student needs.
- **Our academic standards are excellent.** We know that surviving and thriving in any ministry requires the mind of a scholar and the heart of a missionary. Our assessments require students to be stretched in heart, mind and soul.
- **We build a genuine community of learners.** Students and faculty connect in multiple ways, regardless of location, to support and stimulate a mutual learning experience.
- **ACOM graduates are job ready.** This is because they have been learning on-the-job. Their place of ministry and mission has been their campus. With our instruction-action-reflection approach what they learn today they use the next day as theory meets practice.

In a rapidly changing world ACOM continues to pursue its vision to resource Christians to be effective kingdom agents wherever they are serving.

2.1 ACOM's History

The Australian College of Ministries (ACOM) is an international provider of life-changing, ministry training experiences. Originally birthed over seventy-five years ago (1942) as the Churches of Christ in NSW Theological College (Woolwich, Sydney), ACOM has produced thousands of graduates serving as ministers, evangelists, lay leaders, welfare workers, teachers, missionaries and church planters. The college merged with Kenmore Christian College (Queensland) in 1999 to form The Australian College of Ministries.

Originally a campus-based residential college, ACOM now specialises in flexible delivery. It is a hybrid of distance learning experience mixed with targeted in person and online student support through Formation Groups and Unit Facilitations. ACOM has developed a national and international reputation for excellence and innovation. ACOM has staff (ministry support, academic and leadership development), formation leaders, and unit facilitators across Australia.

ACOM has formed partnerships of mutual assistance in ministry development and training with like-minded training organisations such as the Christian and Missionary Alliance of Australia, Fresh Hope NSW, Youth Vision, Arrow Leadership, the Vineyard Movement, Southern Lights Training, and Christian Venues Association.

The sponsorship of Churches of Christ in NSW is an empowering gift that enables ACOM to pursue its mission and partner with other Fresh Hope initiatives such as: The Tops Conference Centre, Fresh Hope Mission and Ministry, and Fresh Hope Care. Churches of Christ has an historic commitment to unity amongst all believers which has ensured ACOM is an authentic and integrated cross-denominational gathering of students, staff, church, and ministry partnerships.

The ongoing investment and partnership of the Christian and Missionary Alliance of Australia (the C&MA) enables ACOM to offer specific mission training courses for Intercultural Engagements. The Alliance Institute for Mission is a catalyst for the development and training of men and women for cross-cultural ministry.

2.2 ACOM's Mission

At the Australian College of Ministries, we develop healthy, effective leaders who can positively impact their own corner of the world.

At ACOM we emphasise a missional focus, flexible learning, deep spiritual formation, work-based learning, and academic excellence.

For over 20 years we have pioneered the innovative *instruction-action-reflection* approach to preparing effective leaders for a rapidly changing world.

Our courses are tailored for God's people wherever they work, minister and live - in the church, workplace and community. Our desire is to equip you to be changed - so you can change your corner of the world.

2.3 ACOM's Governance

Sydney College of Divinity

The Australian College of Ministries (ACOM) is a Member Institution of the Sydney College of Divinity (SCD). SCD is a tertiary education institution providing high quality, accredited awards in ministry and theology and related areas through the teaching colleges that are its Member Institutions.

The Sydney College of Divinity is registered as a Higher Education Provider. Its degrees and awards are accredited by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). The SCD is approved as a Higher Education Provider under the Higher Education Support Act 2003. It is also a CRICOS provider (CRICOS Code: 02948J), providing theological education to full-time, face-to-face, on campus, international students.

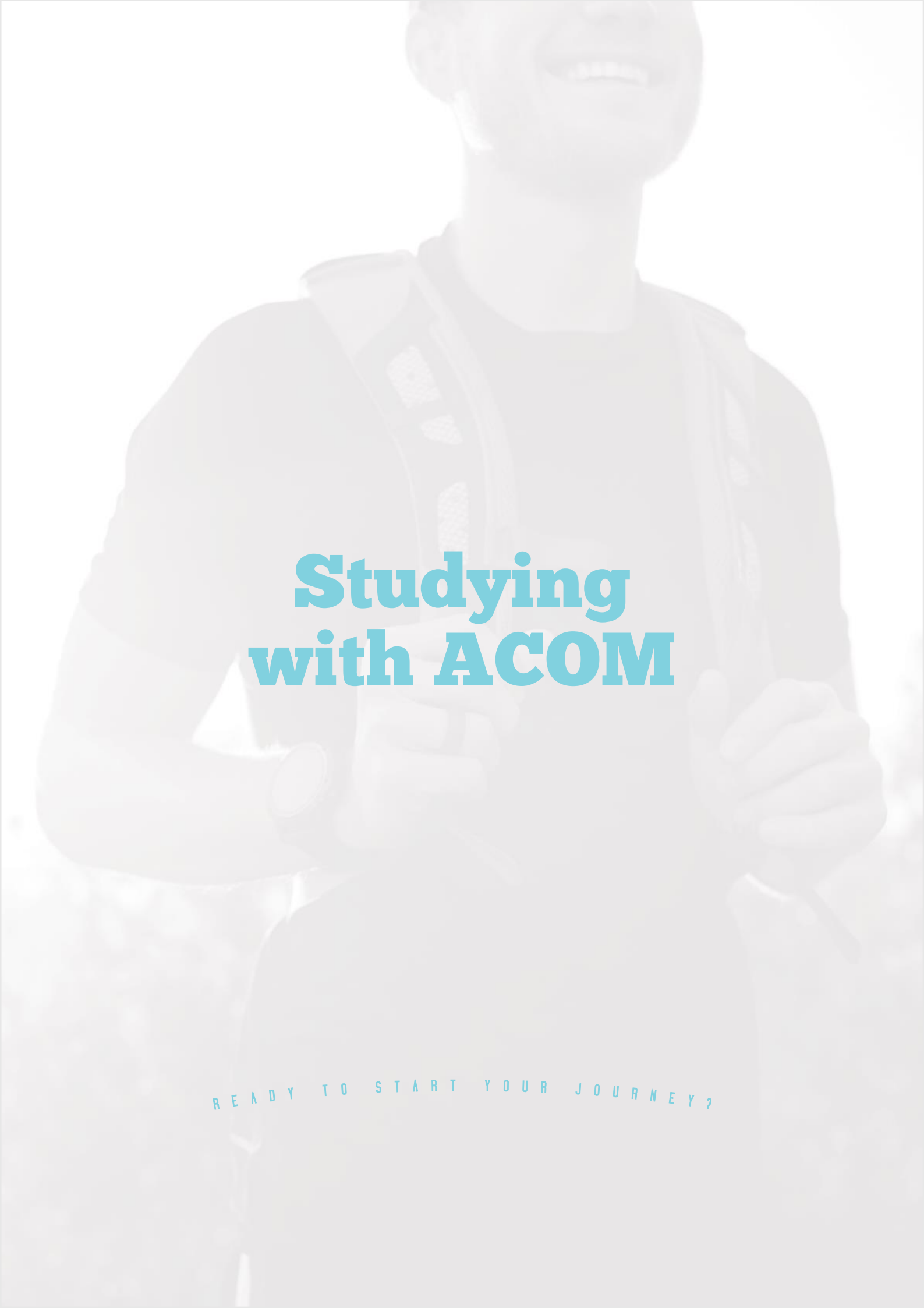
ACOM has been a foundational member of the Sydney College of Divinity since 1983. Through SCD we are able to offer a complete suite of higher education awards ranging from the Diploma of Ministry, Diploma of Christian Studies, Advanced Diploma of Ministry, Associate Degree of Theology and Ministry, Associate Degree of Counselling, Bachelor of Ministry, Bachelor of Ministry (Honours), Bachelor of Theology, Bachelor of Theology (Honours), Bachelor of Counselling. At the postgraduate level awards include the Graduate Certificate in Arts, Graduate Certificate in Leadership, Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Supervision, Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies, Graduate Certificate in Intercultural Ministry, Graduate Certificate in Chaplaincy, Graduate Certificate in Governance and Strategy, Graduate Certificate in Counselling, Graduate Diploma of Arts, Graduate Diploma of Leadership, Graduate Diploma of Professional Supervision, Graduate Diploma of Theological Studies, Graduate Diploma in Intercultural Ministry, Master of Arts, Master of Leadership, Master of Professional Supervision, Master of Intercultural Ministry, Master of Counselling, Master of Theological Studies, Master of Divinity, Master of Theology, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Theology and the Doctor of Ministry.

College Board

ACOM Ltd is a company limited by guarantee. ACOM is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of directors appointed by the Conference of Churches of Christ in New South Wales and the Christian and Missionary Alliance of Australia. The Board sets the policies under which ACOM operates to provide its training throughout Australia and the world.

Academic Board

In keeping with emerging standards of accountability and transparency in the Higher Education sector in Australia, ACOM has an Academic Board to oversee all aspects of its academic functioning. This ensures that ACOM's benchmarks, standards and procedures equal or exceed those of the Higher Educational sector more broadly. The Academic Board is comprised of senior academics from inside and outside ACOM.

A smiling man with a backpack and a watch, holding a pen, standing outdoors. The image is faded and serves as a background for the text.

Studying with ACOM

READY TO START YOUR JOURNEY?

3. Studying with ACOM

ACOM has a rich history of leading the way in innovative ministry training. In the early '90s ACOM shifted its focus from campus based learning to flexible delivery – using an instruction-action-reflection approach.

At ACOM we recognise your place of ministry or work is a living laboratory offering an opportunity for in-depth on-the-job learning. We blend theory and practice in a missional learning adventure tailored to develop your intellectual knowledge, practical skills and spiritual awareness.

Our in person and online facilitations provide an opportunity for students to make sense of Biblical and theological content in the context of their personal spiritual life and ministry. These engaging learning experiences, facilitated by a leader in the field, are designed to help students become sharper theologically, deeper spiritually and stronger professionally.

Our research projects emphasise your ministry situation. We blend action, reflection and theory to produce deep learning that is academically rigorous and practice oriented.

Personal Spiritual Formation is a foundational experience at ACOM. We don't just run classes on formation; we help each student explore their own personal journey of self-awareness, social development, spiritual understanding, and faith surrender. This process is a transformational journey – going deep to be released for personal mission.

At ACOM we don't just want smart graduates – we want graduates who are:

- **Job ready** (skilled to take on new challenges)
- **Mission oriented** (getting their hands dirty in mission and ministry)
- **Spiritually well-formed** (being deeply faithful and spiritual minded)

3.1 ACOM's responsibility in Flexible Learning

ACOM's responsibility is to provide a learning environment, which is:

1. **ACCESSIBLE:** Information relating to units, courses, enrolment, progression, graduation and other important aspects of a student's study is readily accessible and easily understood.
2. **CLEAR:** Instructions relating to expected unit outcomes, assessment requirements, the submission of essays and other required documentation are clearly stated.
3. **COMPREHENSIVE:** Lectures, lecture notes and readers provide detailed and extensive coverage of all required areas of study.
4. **RELEVANT:** ACOM's learning experiences and material directly address pertinent personal and professional issues.
5. **INFORMED:** Teaching staff have received specific training and professional development in flexible delivery education, and provide best practice teaching delivery in this mode.
6. **RESPONSIVE:** Students receive performance feedback on their work within an agreed timeframe.
7. **SUPPORTIVE:** The process of learning is experienced as student-centred and supportive of the student's aspirations for learning and positive achievement.
8. **PERSONAL:** Communication with administrators and facilitators is user-friendly, relevant, personal and transparent; so as to leave the student feeling positively engaged in the process of learning.
9. **EQUIVALENT:** ACOM's flexible learning supports standards, benchmarks, assessments, outcomes and awards that are consistent with traditional modes of educational delivery.

10. COMPARABLE: ACOM displays standards of teaching, delivery, assessment and quality control that are comparable to other relevant tertiary institutions.

3.2 Student Responsibilities in Flexible Learning

Students engaged in ACOM's flexible learning programs must demonstrate a set of attitudes and competencies, which will enable them to be successful in their studies and their ministries. These include:

- 1 **MOTIVATION:** students display a love of learning that extends beyond their formal studies, overflowing into a commitment of lifelong learning.
- 2 **RESPONSIBILITY:** Students effectively manage their time and learning processes, ensuring that their assessment tasks are completed and submitted on time, and at a quality sufficient to satisfy their needs and expectations.
- 3 **OPENNESS:** A willingness to go beyond the devotional to a deeper level of thought about faith and ministry, including consuming a "diet" of good reading, which stimulates renewed thinking, enhanced personal formation, and creative ministry practice.
- 4 **THOUGHTFULNESS:** Students are willing to develop the capacity to think critically, i.e., developing the ability to make informed judgements based on the analysis of information and the exercise of logic.
- 5 **INTEGRATION:** Students see themselves as active learners who develop a habit of disciplined learning while they serve in their ministry contexts.

3.3 Contacting ACOM's Staff

Staff email addresses can be found on the ACOM website: To contact the National Office please call 1800 672 692 or email info@acom.edu.au

3.4 Student Engagement Managers

ACOM Student Engagement Managers (SEMs) act as an on-the-ground leader and point of contact for ACOM students. They are the face of ACOM and work to provide effective learning opportunities and pastoral care for students. Each student is allocated an SEM, usually based on where a student is living, to support and guide them in their academic journey. Contact your SEM for information and questions regarding your unit selection, course plans, facilitations, spiritual formation retreats, and other student support matters.

Students studying through an external Learning Cohort will have pastoral support, and retreat and facilitation information provided by the Student Support Person appointed by the Learning Cohort. An ACOM SEM will provide advice on unit selection and course plans.

3.5 Course structure

ACOM's courses have three key components: course content and assessments, ministry placement, and spiritual formation. These components are explained below.

3.5.1 Course Content and Assessments

Self-Guided Study Materials

ACOM's curriculum is designed to provide students with the knowledge that they need in order to succeed in ministry and mission. All units will be delivered via Moodle, our online learning site, which will provide the content for each unit as well as interaction with staff and other students (some units may require an additional textbook to be purchased by the student, which is not included in the unit fee).

Guided Facilitations

Students who wish to study with others can attend an online or in person facilitation for scheduled units. Each year ACOM schedules a selection of units to offer with facilitations, providing students an opportunity to learn alongside others in a dynamic environment of enquiry and exploration. Please note that facilitation attendance is compulsory in some counselling units). Facilitations are led by experienced leaders, educators and practitioners in their particular fields of study, either in-person or online via Zoom. Facilitations can be scheduled as three consecutive days, three one day events spread over the trimester, or weekly/fortnightly online classes.

The unit and facilitation schedules are available on the ACOM website: <https://acom.edu.au/current-students/schedules/>

Students studying with an external Learning Cohort will attend facilitations arranged by the Learning Cohort.

Integrated Learning Activities

ACOM is committed to ensuring students have the greatest flexibility to study at their own pace in their own place. To enable this all units scheduled in a trimester can be studied online via our digital learning platform. Students who choose this option will be provided with a series of Integrated Learning Activities designed to help them integrate what they are learning into life and ministry practice. These Integrated Learning Activities are available to all students to engage with, however only students who have selected the online Integrated Learning Activities study option are required to complete **all activities** to successfully pass the unit.

Assessments

ACOM assessments are essay based and do not usually involve exams. Units may include online quizzes and practical assessments that are completed in your ministry setting. Essay and assessment dates are clearly published in Moodle and all tasks must be submitted to pass the unit.

3.5.2 Student Placement

Ministry Course Placement

We want our students to be doers, not just hearers. All undergraduate ACOM units, other than Spiritual Formation, require students to engage in 30 hours of ministry practice (included in unit demand hour tally). Student ministry placement provides an opportunity to link academic work into ministry practice through a process of instruction (online readings, facilitations and other learning activities), action (localised ministry) and reflection (thinking about your practice to understand how to improve it). The process of instruction-action-reflection continues across all of our units.

Ministry placement requires students to engage with a ministry supervisor. This helps you integrate what you are learning into your place of ministry practice. Students will be required to identify a local supervisor in their ministry environment (e.g. a church, school, chaplaincy or welfare organisation). The supervisor will assist you as you reflect on your learning.

Counselling Placement

All counselling courses will require students to undertake several practicum units that will allow them to outwork their practical skills through reflection and placements. These units will require students to organise a placement, take part in individual or group professional supervision, reflect and interact with fellow students, and work towards a minimum number of supervised counselling hours required for industry development and ongoing accreditation. See individual units for requirements.

3.5.3. Spiritual Formation

Spiritual Formation is foundational to who we are. For ACOM, the learning process is not simply intellectual - it is about spiritual transformation. We care about the individual you are becoming and here's why: we know that healthy, sustainable and effective graduates will be well grounded spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, physically and socially.

Each ACOM course gives students the opportunity to study our Spiritual Formation units either as core or electives.

Formation Groups

For Spiritual Formation, students meet for 30 hours each year in a small group of 5 to 8 people. Students negotiate within their group as to how these hours are divided into various formation group meetings. Led by a 'Formation Director', formation groups build trust relationships in a confidential environment where students support and encourage each other on their individual faith and life journeys. Formation groups focus on three outcomes as outlined in Table 4.

Table 4 – Outcomes of Formation

Spiritual Formation	Increased spiritual awareness leading to an enhanced relationship with God
Character Formation	Improved self-awareness and emotional health, an increased capacity to connect with others, and a strengthened ability and disposition to be 'real' in the presence of others.
Ministry Formation	Enhanced understanding of God-given gifts and passions, and effective self-care strategies, which together form a foundation for sustainable, safe and effective ministry.

Formation groups are established at the Formation Retreat (held at the beginning of each year for direct students, details can be found on the ACOM website - <https://acom.edu.au/current-students/schedules/>) and are then closed for the rest of the year. These retreats are usually 3-day experiences where students and faculty meet and interact to form an ongoing learning community. Part of the retreat costs are included in the unit fees for Spiritual Formation, the remainder is contributed by ACOM. Students are automatically registered for the retreat when they register in the unit.

The time at Retreat will mostly be spent in a formation group, getting to know fellow group members by telling personal stories. Students find this story telling both a challenging and a deeply rewarding time. Excluding exceptional circumstances, students must attend every formation group meeting to pass their Spiritual Formation unit.

At the end of the year, each student enrolled in Spiritual Formation has an interview with his/her Formation Director to evaluate progress and to provide support. This interview covers the student's

progress during the year, growth in Spiritual Formation, and feedback to ACOM on any relevant matters.

Mentors

While formation groups provide essential support and opportunities for personal growth, there are some aspects of Spiritual formation that are better addressed on a one-to-one basis. As part of their Spiritual formation experience, students choose a 'Spiritual companion' referred to as a **mentor** to meet with face-to-face throughout the year, who assists the student to reach a range of specific self-set personal growth goals. The mentor helps provide a holistic growth experience that covers all of life, not just the student's course or faith-journey. This involves an intentional relationship of trust, covenanted for one year at a time. Students meet with their mentor for a total of 10 hours in 7 face-to-face meetings throughout the year, which generally last for 1.5 hours. The student's Formation Director orients and supervises the mentor, assisting them to provide students with the best experience possible.

3.6 Delivery

3.6.1 Trimesters

Except for a few specialist units, there are no weekly classes at ACOM. Instead, each ACOM unit is delivered by our online learning site, Moodle. Each unit runs over a 12-week period, with assessment tasks to be completed throughout.

There are 3 trimesters each year, with a two-week break between trimesters. Students can choose the number of units they wish to complete in each trimester, however permission is required from the ACOM Academic Dean if a student intends to study more than three (3) units in any one trimester. Students may also choose whether they will attend a facilitation, if one is offered, for the unit they are studying.

Key dates can be found on the ACOM website: <https://acom.edu.au/study/#keydates>

3.6.2 Unit Registration

Registrations for each trimester open 10 weeks before the start of the trimester and close 4 weeks before the start of the trimester. ACOM's Ministry Services Team will send out an email to all students to advise that registrations are open.

Unit descriptions, unit schedules and facilitation schedules can be found on the ACOM website: <https://acom.edu.au/current-students/schedules/>

Direct students must register for units and facilitations using the Online Unit Registration form on the ACOM website. You will receive email confirmation of your registration from ACOM's Ministry Services Team prior to the start of the trimester.

Learning Cohort students will be registered by the Learning Cohort Co-ordinator in the agreed set units.

Students can pay for units upfront (credit card, direct deposit or cheque) or by deferring the payment with FeeHELP (for eligible students). Upfront payments must be made prior to the start of the trimester, unless the student has arranged a payment plan with ACOM's General Manager of Ministry Operations. Please refer to Chapter 8 for further information on fee payment and FeeHELP.

Late fees apply to registrations received after the closing date (registration deadline). Please refer to 8.4 for further information on fees, and the ACOM website for registration deadlines: <https://acom.edu.au/study/#keydates>

Students will not be permitted to register if they owe \$150 or more in fees, or if they have two or more outstanding invoices (even if the combined total is less than \$150). The student will be required to pay all outstanding fees in full before the new unit registration will be processed.

Students registering for units after the start of the trimester must have approval from the Principal and the General Manager of Ministry Operations. Registrations will not be accepted on or after the census date.

For advice on unit selection and your course plan, please contact your Student Engagement Manager.

3.6.3 Withdrawals and Census Dates

Students who wish to withdraw from a unit or facilitation must use the Online Unit Change Form in Moodle. Verbal notification is insufficient to effect a withdrawal.

Fees apply to withdrawals made after the registration deadline for the trimester, including withdrawals from facilitations. If a student changes his/her unit registration from one unit to another (i.e., swaps units in which they are registered) after the unit registration deadline, they will be liable for *both* the unit withdrawal fee from their 'old' unit *and* the relevant late registration fee for their 'new' unit. Please refer to 8.4.2 for further information.

The Census Date is the cut-off date for withdrawals from units with refund of unit fees (less applicable withdrawal fees). The Census Date is the 4th Monday of each trimester (except for year-long units). Students who withdraw *AFTER* the Census Date will be charged the *full cost of the unit*. In practice, this means that students will not have ANY unit fees returned to them after the Census Date and will be liable for any outstanding unit fees not paid at the time of the Census Date.

The Academic Penalty date is the cut-off date for withdrawals from units. The Academic Penalty Date is mid-way through the study period and students who withdraw from units prior to this date will receive a withdrawn grade on their transcript. Students who withdraw *AFTER* the Academic Penalty Date will receive a *failure grade* on their Academic Transcript for the unit. In extenuating circumstances, the Academic Dean may grant a withdrawn grade after the Academic Penalty Date. This must be applied for in writing and is at the discretion of the Academic Dean.

Census dates and Academic Penalty Dates for the current year can be found on the ACOM website: <https://acom.edu.au/study/#keydates>

3.6.4 Attending Facilitations

Unit information, dates, and locations of facilitations for direct students can be found on the ACOM website: <https://acom.edu.au/current-students/schedules/>

All students registered in a facilitation will receive an email from their Student Engagement Manager the week before the facilitation with additional details.

Fees apply to withdrawals from facilitations made after the registration deadline. Students who have registered for a facilitation and do not attend will also incur a withdrawal fee. Please refer to 8.4.2 for further information on fees.

Students who register for a facilitation but attend less than 66% will be required to complete the Integrated Learning Activities for the unit on Moodle. Where the facilitation is compulsory for the unit of study non-attendance will result in a fail grade for the unit.

If a facilitation is cancelled by ACOM, students will have the option of withdrawing from the unit and registering in a different unit without incurring any fees.

Learning Cohort students will receive facilitation details from their Learning Cohort.

3.6.5 Accessing Coursework: Moodle

When a student registers for their first unit, they receive a web-site address and password to log into Moodle, ACOM's online learning platform. Here, students will be able to access their course material

and assessment details, submit assessments, contribute to group forums and contact the marker.
Units will be made available on the first day of the trimester.
New students will be required to complete the ACOM orientation course.

3.6.6 Accessing Results: Paradigm

Students can access their academic and financial records using Paradigm, SCD's Student Data Management Database.

Paradigm is a new system that is still in the process of being set up. ACOM will provide access details and instructions to students once available.

Please note that the financial records of FeeHELP students in Paradigm will often appear to be incorrect. There is a regular delay in FeeHELP payments being received and processed, so it may appear that a payment is outstanding when it is simply scheduled for FeeHELP payment.

3.6. Hardware and Software Requirements

Internet and email access

Our primary means of communicating with students is via email and website, so broadband internet (e.g. ADSL, cable, wireless) access is required for all ACOM students.

ACOM will not be responsible for any emails that are not seen by a student due to the emails being automatically placed in a student's "Junk" or "Spam" email folder.

Students are expected to check emails weekly at a minimum.

Assignments

For all students a suitable word processor (e.g. Microsoft Word, OpenOffice, Pages) is required in order to complete assignments. Regardless of the software used, all assignments must be submitted in .doc or .docx format. There are student and/or home versions of Microsoft Office that are reasonably priced and free software such as OpenOffice can also save files in .doc or docx formats. MAC users can use Pages for word processing, but **must save the file in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) format for submission.**

Accessing Units

The following are recommended browsers and settings that will help improve your experience using Moodle and ensure access to the activities and tools in your Moodle courses.

Browser versions that work best with Moodle

Moodle is compatible with any standards compliant web browser. Moodle is regularly tested with the following browsers:

Desktop:

- Chrome
- Firefox
- Safari
- Edge *Note: Moodle 4.0 does NOT support Internet Explorer 11.*

Safari 7 and below has known compatibility issues with Moodle 4.0.

Mobile:

- MobileSafari
- Google Chrome

Like most of the world's websites and browser producers, we encourage you to keep your browsers current to improve security and functionality.

You may find it useful to have more than one browser installed on your computer. If you run into problems using Moodle, moving to another browser may resolve your issues.

Required browser settings

To ensure you are able to access various types of content and features within Moodle, select the following browser settings:

- Enable cookies
- Enable JavaScript
- Do not block pop-up windows
- Enable Third Party Cookies (instructions can be found [here](#)).

View the procedure for enabling these browser settings at the following links:

- Firefox help: <https://support.mozilla.org/en-US/products/firefox/manage-preferences-and-add-ons-firefox>
- Chrome help: <https://support.google.com/chrome/?hl=en#topic=7439724>
- Safari help: go to Safari > Preferences. You will find these settings available in the Security and Privacy tabs.

Note: if you would like these settings to apply only to Moodle, you can choose to add <https://acm.mrooms.net/> as an exception in the relevant browser settings page.

Recommended browser add-ons

For some specific content, add-ons may need to be installed if your browser is not already configured:

A PDF Reader should be installed on your computer, and a PDF browser plugin will let you view PDFs in a browser window without opening a separate program. You can download Adobe Acrobat Reader at <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>. The download includes the browser plugin. To install this plugin, just follow the prompts.

Apple QuickTime provides easy access to multiple audio and video formats. Macintosh computers come with QuickTime already installed. Windows users can also install QuickTime. You can download QuickTime at <https://support.apple.com/downloads/quicktime>.

Recommended hardware

Some classes will require online attendance via Zoom (an online webinar program). In order to fully participate ACOM recommends using a device with microphone, speaker and video capacity. Most modern laptops, or a smartphone or tablet will have these built in.

3.7. ACOM Digital Library

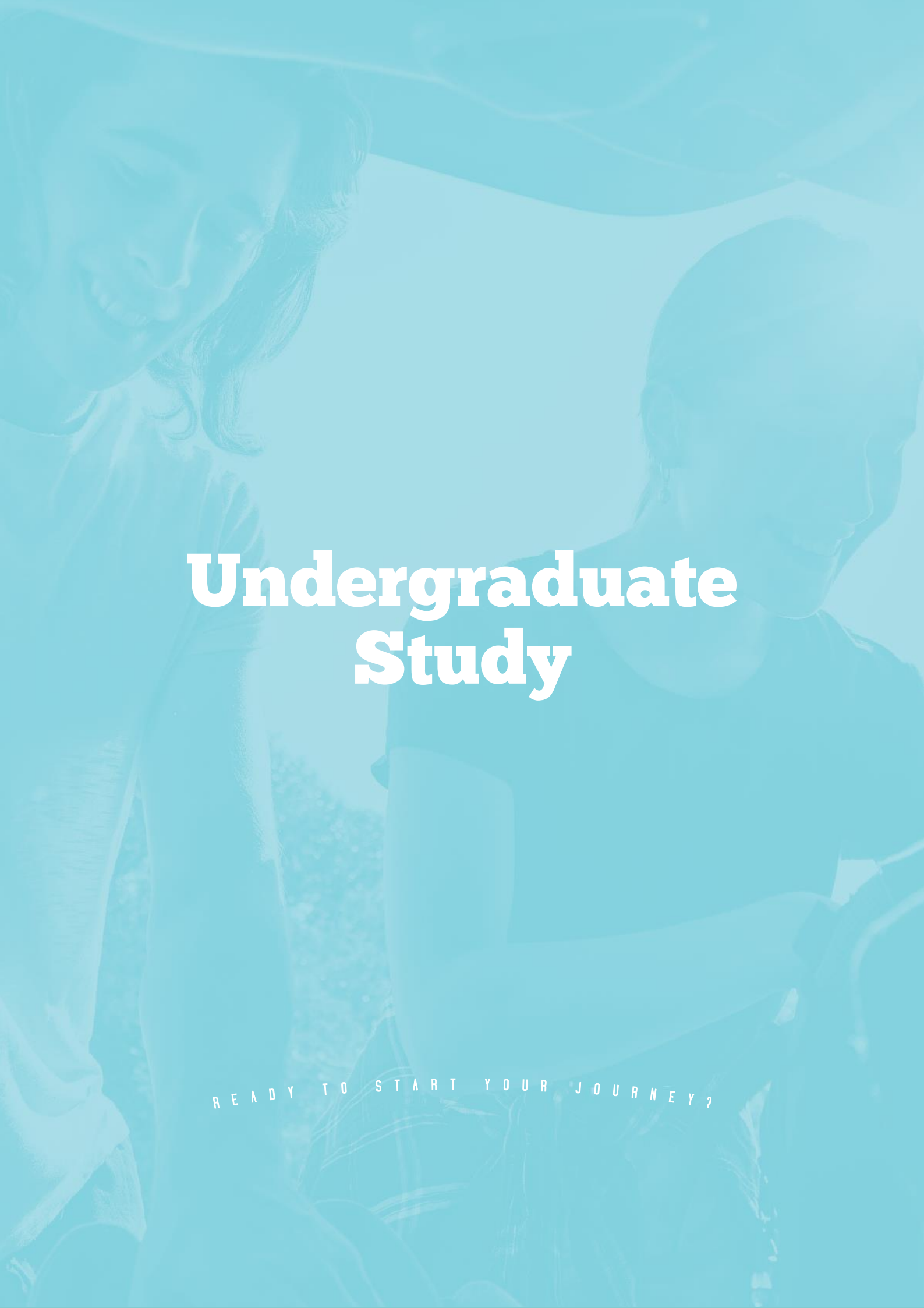
In addition to the targeted academic resources supplied for each unit, ACOM provides extensive library facilities to its students.

Students are able to access academic journal articles and eBooks remotely through the ACOM online library. These resources allow students to access current scholarship conveniently from any location. The collections that make up the ACOM library will be sourced from the ProQuest, Perlego and EBSCO online databases.

Students may also access the physical libraries of other SCD member institutions.

3.8. Student Identification Cards

ID cards are provided free of charge at the request of the student. Requests should be emailed to info@acom.edu.au with a high-resolution head and shoulders photograph. Please note that as ACOM is a distance education provider, students are not eligible for transport concession.



Undergraduate Study

READY TO START YOUR JOURNEY?

4. Undergraduate Study

Undergraduate programs are a dynamic learning experience designed to develop students as disciples, ministers, missionaries and leaders. The program is holistic – developing students intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually. Student learning is based in their place of ministry and consequently graduates are well rounded and job ready.

For admission requirements for all undergraduate courses, see 9.1 Admission Requirements Undergraduate.

4.1 Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework. The AQF was introduced in 1995 to underpin the national system of qualifications in Australia encompassing Higher Education, Vocational Education, and training and schools. The AQF is the agreed policy of Commonwealth, State and Territory ministers. One of the key objectives of the Australian Qualifications Framework is to facilitate pathways to, and through, formal qualifications.

AQF levels and the AQF levels criteria are an indication of the relative complexity and/or depth of achievement and the autonomy required to demonstrate that achievement. AQF level 1 has the lowest complexity and AQF level 10 has the highest complexity. The AQF level summaries are statements of the typical achievement of graduates who have been awarded a qualification at a certain level in the AQF. To view these summaries, or for any further information, please visit www.aqf.edu.au.

4.2 Undergraduate Awards

AQF 5 Awards (Diploma Level)

- Undergraduate Certificate in Ministry
- Diploma of Ministry
- Diploma of Christian Studies *

AQF 6 Awards (Associate Degree Level)

- Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice (no new enrolments, teach out only) *
- Associate Degree of Counselling*

AQF 7 Awards (Bachelor Level)

- Bachelor of Ministry
- Bachelor of Theology
- Bachelor of Counselling

*While the awards of Diploma of Christian Studies and Associate Degree are Level 5 and 6 awards respectively, units included in these awards are drawn from Level 7 units.

Undergraduate Certificate in Ministry (CertMin)

The Undergraduate Certificate in Ministry provides students with the opportunity to undertake study in practical ministry-oriented disciplines and to gain knowledge and skills appropriate for engagement in practical Christian ministry. The diploma is an ideal starting point for those students seeking an entry level ministry training option.

This is a four unit, half-year full-time or two year part-time qualification (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page).

Students who complete this award are able to continue their studies with the Diploma of Ministry, the Diploma of Christian Studies, the Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice, the Bachelor of Theology, or the Bachelor of Ministry.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/diploma-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: Undergraduate Certificate in Ministry

4 x Core Units in Total

Part A - Units



Part B - Units

Choose at least ONE unit from:

Intro to Biblical Studies
(B5101) *from Tri 3 2023*

Intro to the Old Testament
(B5110)

Intro to the New Testament
(B5150)

Intro to Discipleship
(M5109)

Intro to Theological Study
(P5104)

Intro to Christian Doctrines
(T5105)

Choose at least TWO units from:

Intro to Christian History
(H5100)

Intro to World Mission
(M5100)

Intro to Pastoral Theology & Ministry
(P5101)

Intro to Youth Ministry
(P5110)

Children's Ministry
(P5113)

Intro to Christian Worship
(P5148)

Proclaiming the Good News
(P5150)

Intro to Christian Leadership
(P5155)

Supervised Ministry 1
(P5171)

Supervised Ministry 2
(P5172)

Spiritual Formation
(S5101)

Intro to Pastoral Counselling
(C7100) *Bachelor Level Unit*

The Art & Science of Chaplaincy
(C5127) *from Tri 2 2023*

Intercultural Communication
(M7227) *Bachelor Level Unit*

Note: Choose at least ONE other unit from either Part A or Part B

Regulations

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted
- Units may be selected from the 5100 range with some selected available from the 7100 range.
- Students must complete: 9 credit points from units in Part A + 18 credit points from units in Part B + 9 credit points from units in either Part A or Part B.
- Units completed in the Undergraduate Certificate in Ministry make up half of the required units for the Diploma of Ministry

Diploma of Ministry (DipMin)

The Diploma of Ministry is designed to be very practical and experience-based. The emphasis is on giving students a hands-on learning experience that is grounded in their ministry context. The diploma is an ideal starting point for those students seeking an entry level ministry training option.

Students will need to complete eight units over one year full-time or three years part-time. There are four core units plus four electives (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page).

There is great flexibility in the program centred on four themes: the Bible story, Christian beliefs, personal formation and hands-on ministry experiences.

Students who complete this award are able to continue their studies with either the Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice, the Bachelor of Theology, or the Bachelor of Ministry.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/diploma-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: Diploma of Ministry

Core Units

Intro to the New Testament (B5150)

or

Intro to the Old Testament (B5110)

Intro to Christian Doctrines (T5105)

Spiritual Formation (S5101)

+

Intro to Pastoral Theology & Ministry (P5101)

+

Electives

At least 2 Practical Ministry Units

Choose from:

- Supervised Ministry 1 (P5171)
- Supervised Ministry 2 (P5172)
- Intro to Christian Worship (P5148)
- Proclaiming the Good News (P5150)
- Talking to my Neighbour (M5160)
- Intro to Youth Ministry (P5110)
- Developing Cross-Cultural Competence (M5128)
 - Children's Ministry (P5113)
 - Chaplain as Carer (C5192)
- The Art & Science of Chaplaincy (C5127)
from Tri 2 2023
- Intro to Christian Leadership (P5155)

2 Electives

Choose from any Diploma units

Regulations

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted
- Units may be selected from the 5100 range.
- Humanities in the Christian Tradition includes Humanities (A) and Church History (H) units. Christian Life and Ministry (CLAM) includes Christian Spirituality (S), Worship & Liturgy (L), Mission (M), Pastoral Counselling (C), Pastoral Theology (P) and Christian Ethics (E) units.
- Students must complete: 9 credit points in Theology (T) + 9 credit points in Biblical Studies (B) + 36 credit points in CLAM (2 practical) + 18 credit points from available units.
- Up to 36cp of 7100 level units may be selected after the completion of 36cp of 5100 units. Up to 18cp of 7200 units may be selected after the completion of 18cp of 7100 units at a credit average

- ☐ Biblical Studies
- ☐ Theology
- ☐ Humanities in the Christian Tradition
- ☐ Christian Life and Ministry

Diploma of Christian Studies (DipChSt)

The Diploma of Christian Studies introduces students to some of the basics of bible, theology and ministry practice. It is a great place to start building a future in mission and ministry. Through this diploma, students study a broad range of introductory units, and translate foundational academic concepts into practical application.

This diploma has eight units, all at the bachelor level. It is a one year full-time or three-year part-time qualification (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page).

Students who complete this award are able to continue their studies with either the Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice, the Bachelor of Theology, or the Bachelor of Ministry.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/bachelor-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: Diploma of Christian Studies

Core Units

Intro to the New Testament (B7150) or Intro to the Old Testament (B7110)

Intro to Theology (T7101)

Spiritual Formation 1 (S7103) +

Intro to Discipleship (M7109) or Intro to Pastoral Care (P7101)

+

4 x Electives (Choose from any Bachelor units)

Regulations

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted
- Units may be selected from the 7100-7299 range.
- Students must earn a sub-major in either Christian Thought or Christian Practice. A Christian Thought sub-major will include at least 4 units from the sub-disciplines of Biblical Studies, Theology and Church history (B, T & H units). A Christian Practice sub-major will include at least 4 units from the sub-disciplines of Spirituality, Counselling, Liturgy, Ethics, Mission and Pastoral Theology (S, C, L, E, M & P units).
- Humanities in the Christian Tradition includes Humanities (A) and Church History (H) units. Christian Life and Ministry (CLAM) includes Christian Spirituality (S), Worship & Liturgy (L), Mission (M), Pastoral Counselling (C), Pastoral Theology (P) and Christian Ethics (E) units.

- ☐ Biblical Studies
- ☐ Theology
- ☐ Humanities in the Christian Tradition
- ☐ Christian Life and Ministry

Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice (AssocDegChrThPr)

This award is teach out only and is not available for new enrolments.

This Associate Degree continues on from the Diploma of Christian Studies.

This award has sixteen units, all at the bachelor level. It is a two-year full-time or six-year part-time qualification (see Steps to Complete Diagram on p23).

Students who complete this award are able to continue their studies with either the Bachelor of Theology or Bachelor of Ministry.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/bachelor-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete:

Associate Degree in Christian Thought & Practice

Core Units

Intro to the New Testament (B7150)

+

Intro to the Old Testament (B7110)

Intro to Theology (T7101)

The Person & Work of Christ (T7210)

Spiritual Formation 1 (S7103)

+

Intro to Discipleship (M7109)

Spiritual Formation 2 (S7205)

+

9 x Electives (Choose from selected Bachelor units)

Regulations

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted
- Units may be selected from the 7100-7299 range.
- Students must achieve at least one major (54 credit points) in either Christian Thought (Bible, History and Theology) or Christian Practice (Spirituality, Counselling, Liturgy, Ethics, Mission and Pastoral Theology). This will be achieved by completing 2 electives in Christian thought or 3 electives in Christian practice, plus the core units above.
- A major is made up of 54 credit points with not more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units.

- Christian Life and Ministry (CLAM) includes Christian Spirituality (S), Worship & Liturgy (L), Mission (M), Pastoral Counselling (C), Pastoral Theology (P) and Christian Ethics (E) units.

- ☐ Biblical Studies
- ☐ Theology
- ☐ Humanities in the Christian Tradition
- ☐ Christian Life and Ministry

Associate Degree of Counselling

The Associate Degree of Counselling prepares students to counsel in a wide range of professional and community settings such as Christian counselling, spiritual counselling, relationship counselling, family counselling, as well as grief, loss, and trauma counselling. Students will gain a solid understanding of what it means to be a counsellor in individual and group settings, in conjunction with knowledge of supportive and intensive therapies.

This award has eight units, all at the bachelor level and entry requires a completed Diploma of Counselling. It is a one-year full-time or three-year part-time qualification.

The Associate Degree of Counselling provides an exit option for students who do not wish to complete the Bachelor of Counselling. It demonstrates skills and knowledge acquired in the study of counselling and related areas.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/bachelor-unit-descriptions/>

Bachelor of Ministry (BMin)

The Bachelor of Ministry is a practical, grassroots ministry degree aimed at equipping students for real-life missional contexts. In this degree students will gain a strong biblical and theological foundation while focusing on the practice of ministry. The Bachelor of Ministry is tailored for God's people who are seeking to develop ministry skills that work in both church and community.

ACOM's spiritual formation process is interwoven throughout this degree, and aims to enhance the overall personal and spiritual development of students, challenging students to delve deeply into their relationship with God. Students will also develop critical thinking skills that will allow them to foster a culture of reflection in pastoral situations through a biblical and theological framework.

The Bachelor of Ministry is a 24 unit, three-year full-time or nine-year part-time qualification (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page).

Majors in a number of disciplines are available. Students who complete this degree may continue their educational pathway with the Master of Arts, the Master of Theology (provided the Bachelor of Ministry has a suitable mix of units), the Master of Leadership, the Master of Theological Studies or the Master of Intercultural Ministry.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/bachelor-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: Bachelor of Ministry

Core Units

Intro to the New Testament (B7150) + Intro to the Old Testament (B7110)

Hermeneutics (B7203) + The Four Gospels (B7253)

Intro to Theology (T7101)

The Church (T7228) + The Person & Work of Christ (T7210)

Spirit of Life (T7216)

Intro to Christian History (H7100)

Restoration Movement or CMA Distinctives or Elective

Intro to Pastoral Care (P7101) + Spiritual Formation 1 (S7103)

+ 1 x S Unit + Intro to Discipleship (M7109)

Supervised Ministry 1 (P7271) + Spiritual Formation 2 (S7205)

+ 4 x CLAM Unit

+

4 x Electives (Choose from any Bachelor units)

Regulations

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted.
- Units may be selected from the 7000 range.
- Students must complete 216 credit points (24 units of 9 credit points), including at least 1 Major and 1 Sub-Major in Christian Life and Ministry and sub-majors in Biblical Studies and Theology.
- A major in a subdiscipline requires 54 credit points from the subdiscipline, with not more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units.
- A major in a discipline requires 54 credit points from the discipline, with at least 27 credit points in one subdiscipline, with not more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units.

- Churches of Christ students must also study H7263 The Restoration Movement as one of the 9 electives + P7259 Church Movement Distinctives (Alliance).
- Humanities in the Christian Tradition includes Humanities (A) and Church History (H) units. Christian Life and Ministry includes Christian Spirituality (S), Worship & Liturgy (L), Mission (M), Pastoral Counselling (C), Pastoral Theology (P) and Christian Ethics (E) units.
- An optional Biblical Studies Major requires 6 B units PLUS a language unit enrolled in either before or concurrent with B7200 units.

- ☐ Biblical Studies
- ☐ Theology
- ☐ Humanities in the Christian Tradition
- ☐ Christian Life and Ministry

Bachelor of Theology (BTh)

In the Bachelor of Theology, students will develop a strong biblical and theological foundation and be equipped for long-term mission and ministry. The degree is tailored for God's people wherever they work, minister and live in the church, workplace and community. Our desire is to equip students to understand and effect change so that they can transform their corner of the world.

Students will explore biblical and theological issues and develop critical thinking skills that will enable them to foster a culture of reflection in pastoral situations through sound biblical and theological frameworks. The study of biblical languages allows students to engage the biblical text at a new and profound level.

ACOM's spiritual formation process is also interwoven through the Bachelor of Theology, aiming to enhance the overall personal and spiritual development of students, challenging them to delve deeply into their relationship with God.

The Bachelor of Theology is a 24 unit, three-year full-time or nine-year part-time qualification (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page).

Majors in a number of disciplines are available. Students who complete this degree may continue their educational pathway with either the Master of Arts, the Master of Theology, the Master of Leadership, the Master of Theological Studies or the Master of Intercultural Ministry.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/bachelor-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: Bachelor of Theology

Core Units

Intro to the New Testament (B7150) + Intro to the Old Testament (B7110)

Hermeneutics (B7203)

+

The Four Gospels (B7253)

+

Studies in the Pentateuch (B7212)

Romans (B7261)

Intro to Theology (T7101)

The Church (T7228)

+

The Person & Work of Christ (T7210)

+

Spirit of Life (T7216)

The Trinity (T7214)

+

Theological Ethics (T7249)

Intro to Christian History (H7100)

+

Greek I (A7122)

or

Hebrew (A7112)

Restoration Movement or CMA Distinctives or Elective

Spiritual Formation 1 (S7103)

Spiritual Formation 2 (S7205)

+ 1 x S Unit

+

+ 1 x CLM Unit

+

5 x Electives (Choose from any Bachelor units)

Regulations

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted.
- Units may be selected from the 7000 range.
- Students must complete 216 credit points (24 units of 9 credit points), including at least 2 Majors and 1 Sub-Major. The units above will provide Discipline Majors in Bible and Theology and a Discipline Sub-Major in Christian Life and Ministry. Other majors may be achieved also.
- A major in a subdiscipline requires 54 credit points from the subdiscipline, with not more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units.
- A major in a discipline requires 54 credit points from the discipline, with at least 27 credit points in one subdiscipline, with not more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units.

- A submajor requires 36 credit points from units assigned to the major including no more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units.
- Humanities in the Christian Tradition includes Humanities (A) and Church History (H) units. Christian Life and Ministry includes Christian Spirituality (S), Worship & Liturgy (L), Mission (M), Pastoral Counselling (C), Pastoral Theology (P) and Christian Ethics (E) units.
- Churches of Christ students must also study H7263 The Restoration Movement as one of the 6 electives + P7258 Church Movement Distinctives (Alliance)
- A Biblical Languages unit must be studied either before or concurrent with B7200 units.

- ☐ Biblical Studies
- ☐ Theology
- ☐ Humanities in the Christian Tradition
- ☐ Christian Life and Ministry

Bachelor of Counselling

The Bachelor of Counselling provides students with an accredited pathway towards a career as a professional counsellor. Taking a comprehensive and balanced approach to counselling training incorporating theology, psychology, and spirituality, students learn the highest standards of ethics, professionalism and accountability with qualifications that are recognised by the Australian Counselling Association and the Christian Counsellors Association of Australia.

Graduates will have a deep and effective vision of themselves as counsellors, thorough theoretical knowledge in the discipline of counselling and its ethical practice, an ability to evaluate theoretical perspectives of counselling and associated peer-reviewed literature to select case-appropriate counselling practices, specialised counselling skills to work with clients including those with high and complex needs, the ability to assess presenting issues and their causes and select from a range of therapeutic practices the appropriate interventions for specific client contexts, and the ability to communicate effectively in a professional counselling context with both clients and peers.

Graduates will have the ability to apply client spirituality into the counselling experience from an ethical perspective with a critical understanding of Christian worldviews, apply theological and professional reflection to organisational practice, apply innovative professional practice in counselling with diverse people in an unpredictable range of contexts, and apply specialised skills for clients with relationship issues.

The Bachelor of Counselling is a 24 unit, three-year full-time or nine-year part-time qualification.

All ACOM Counselling awards are built around pairs of “spinal” units which provide the backbone on which the awards are built. The Spinal units are a pair of units which must be taken together (normally over a whole year or a number of trimesters).

The Bachelor of Counselling has three pairs of Spinal Units:
Counselling Theory and Practice I and Counselling Practicum I;
Counselling Theory and Practice II and Counselling Practicum II
Counselling Theory and Practice III and Counselling Practicum III

Students who complete this degree may continue their educational pathway with either the Master of Counselling, Master of Arts, the Master of Leadership, the Master of Theological Studies or the Master of Intercultural Ministry.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:
<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/bachelor-unit-descriptions/>

4.3 Sydney College of Divinity Requirements for Undergraduate Studies

All ACOM Higher Education students are also students of the Sydney College of Divinity (SCD), the tertiary institution whose awards we teach. As well as complying with ACOM regulations, students must also comply with all SCD rules.

Students need to ensure that the units they choose will enable them to fulfil the requirements of their course as listed in the Steps to Complete diagrams. **ACOM will not be held responsible for students choosing units incorrectly** or otherwise failing to fulfil the requirements of their course.

SCD Unit Coding System

Each unit has a code number consisting of one letter, followed by four digits, followed by one letter.

First letter: indicates the SCD Unit Sub-discipline

Discipline	Sub-discipline	Letter
Biblical Studies	Biblical Studies	B
Christian Life and Ministry	Christian Spirituality	S
	Worship and Liturgy	L
	Mission	M
	Pastoral Counselling	C
	Pastoral Theology	P
	Christian Ethics	E
Humanities	Church History	H
	Humanities	A
Systematic Theology	Theology	T

First digit: indicates the **AQF Level** of the unit. Refer to **Error! Reference source not found.** for further information.

Second digit: indicates the **unit level** at which the unit is taught.

Introductory (1 st year level)	1
Advanced (2 nd and 3 rd year level)	2

Third and fourth digits: identifies the specific unit.

Final letter: indicates the SCD Member Institution teaching the unit - ACOM has been designated the letter 'C'. Please note: the letter 'C' will only appear on official SCD documents.

Time Limitations

The following are the maximum periods of time to complete any course of study:

Undergraduate Certificate of Ministry	2 years
Diploma of Ministry	3 years
Diploma of Christian Studies	3 years
Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice	6 years
Associate Degree of Counselling	6 years
Bachelor of Ministry	9 years
Bachelor of Theology	9 years
Bachelor of Counselling	9 years

A leave of absence for up to one year may be applied for by writing to the Registrar at registrar@acom.edu.au. Students should maintain continuous enrolment by registering for units in at least two trimesters per calendar year.

Estimated Workloads

The below workload guidelines are based on 9 credit point units:

Full-time	6-9 units per year
$\frac{3}{4}$ time	5-6 units per year
$\frac{1}{2}$ time	3-4 units per year
$\frac{1}{4}$ time	1-2 units per year

To be classified as 'full-time' by Centrelink, students must be registered in 75% of a full-time load. In practice, this means students must be studying at least six units per calendar year to be eligible for benefits.

Demand Hours

Each 9 credit point unit requires 143 demand hours of study. The demand hours outlined in the following table represent the notional number of hours needed to meet all the requirements of the unit, including reading, researching and writing assignments and essays, and supervised fieldwork.

Online study sessions, required interactive activities and reading	40 hours	
Assessments	52 hours	5000 words (or equivalent)
Integrated Learning Activities*	20 hours	
Supervised Fieldwork	30 hours	
Meeting with Supervisor	1 hour	
Unit Total	143 hours	

*Or credit for three day in person/online facilitation attendance.

A man and a woman are hiking up a grassy hill. The woman is on the left, wearing a beanie and a backpack, and the man is on the right, wearing a jacket. They are both smiling and looking towards the camera. The image has a purple overlay.

Postgraduate Study

READY TO START YOUR JOURNEY?

5. Postgraduate Study

Postgraduate courses are designed for professional development and continuing education beyond the undergraduate theological level. The courses and their units are focused on effective leadership, wide practical applications, and contextualised ministry and mission.

For admission requirements for all postgraduate courses, see 9.1.2 Admission Requirements Postgraduate.

5.1 Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework. The AQF was introduced in 1995 to underpin the national system of qualifications in Australia encompassing Higher Education, Vocational Education, and training and schools. The AQF is the agreed policy of Commonwealth, State and Territory ministers. One of the key objectives of the Australian Qualifications Framework is to facilitate pathways to, and through, formal qualifications.

AQF levels and the AQF levels criteria are an indication of the relative complexity and/or depth of achievement and the autonomy required to demonstrate that achievement. AQF level 1 has the lowest complexity and AQF level 10 has the highest complexity. The AQF level summaries are statements of the typical achievement of graduates who have been awarded a qualification at a certain level in the AQF. To view these summaries, or for any further information, please visit www.aqf.edu.au.

5.2 Postgraduate Awards

AQF 8 Awards:

- Graduate Certificate in Arts
- Graduate Diploma of Arts
- Graduate Certificate in Leadership
- Graduate Diploma of Leadership
- Graduate Certificate in Professional Supervision
- Graduate Diploma of Professional Supervision
- Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies
- Graduate Diploma of Theological Studies
- Graduate Certificate in Counselling
- Graduate Diploma of Counselling
- Graduate Certificate in Chaplaincy
- Graduate Certificate in Governance and Strategy

AQF 9 Awards:

- Master of Arts
- Master of Leadership
- Master of Professional Supervision
- Master of Theological Studies
- Master of Counselling
- Master of Intercultural Ministry
- Master of Theology
- Master of Divinity

5.2.1 Graduate Certificate in Arts (GradCertArts)

The Graduate Certificate allows students to focus on a specific area of postgraduate study or sample a number of topics that interest them. Students who select this qualification are adding to existing educational qualifications or are using this as an entry point into studies after years of other study and/or professional activity. Many students engaging in cohort study choose a graduate certificate as an ideal way to specialise.

This is a four unit, half-year full-time or one and a half year part-time qualification. Concentrations in a number of disciplines are available.

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Master of Arts, the Graduate Diploma of Arts, the Master of Leadership, the Graduate Diploma of Leadership, the Master of Divinity, the Master of Theological Studies or the Master of Theology (with the correct requirements).

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.2 Graduate Certificate in Leadership (GradCertLead)

The Graduate Certificate in Leadership focuses on building leadership capacity for people involved in a wide scope of religious, non-profit, community-focused enterprises. Students may be working for denominationally based organisations in education, welfare, aged care, local church or other ministries requiring specific leadership training for ministry or mission.

This four unit, half-year full-time or one and a half year part-time qualification includes one compulsory unit (Foundations of Christian Leadership), one core unit taken from the approved Master of Leadership core unit list, and two electives.

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Master of Arts, the Graduate Diploma of Arts, the Master of Leadership, the Graduate Diploma of Leadership or the Master of Divinity.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.3 Graduate Certificate in Professional Supervision (GradCertPSupervision)

The Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Supervision focuses on building supervisory leadership capacity for people involved in a wide scope of religious and/or non-profit and/or community-focused enterprises. Students may be working for denominationally based organisations in education, welfare, aged care, local Church or other ministries requiring specific leadership training for ministry or mission.

This four unit, half-year full-time or one and a half year part-time qualification is comprised of four compulsory units (Practice of Pastoral Supervision, Issues and Ethics in Professional Practice, Fundamental Principles of Pastoral Supervision, and Pastoral Supervision Practicum).

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Graduate Diploma of Professional Supervision and the Master of Professional Supervision.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.4 Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies (GradCertThSt)

The Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies is for students seeking foundational postgraduate theological studies. It is ideal, and provides entry, for those considering a Master in Theological Studies.

This four unit, half-year full-time or one and a half year part-time qualification is comprised of two core units (Introduction to Theology, and Introduction to the Old Testament or Introduction to the New Testament) and two elective units.

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Graduate Diploma of Theological Studies, Master of Theological Studies, Graduate Diploma of Arts, Master of Arts, Graduate Diploma of Leadership, the Master of Leadership, the Master of Divinity or the Master of Theology (with the correct requirements).

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.5 Graduate Certificate in Counselling

The Graduate Certificate in Counselling is designed for those who hold an undergraduate qualification in any field, who wish to pursue a graduate qualification in counselling to enhance their professional work. Graduates will be equipped with advanced theoretical knowledge and practice-based counselling skills.

This four unit, half-year full-time or one and a half year part-time qualification is comprised of three core units (Supervised Counselling Practice, Foundational Theories of Ethical Counselling, and Fundamentals of Psychology) and one elective unit in the sub-discipline of Counselling or Pastoral Theology.

All ACOM Counselling awards are built around pairs of “spinal” units which provide the backbone on which the awards are built. The Spinal units are a pair of units which must be taken together (normally over a whole year or a number of trimesters).

The Graduate Certificate in Counselling has one pair of Spinal Units:

Fundamentals of Counselling Theory and Practice and Supervised Counselling Practicum I

Entry to the program is through an AQF7 award or equivalent in any discipline and successful completion of an interview with a designated coursework coordinator.

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Graduate Diploma of Counselling, Master of Counselling, Graduate Diploma of Arts or Master of Arts.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.6 Graduate Certificate in Chaplaincy (GradCertChap)

The Graduate Certificate in Chaplaincy focuses on building capacity in Chaplaincy for people involved in a wide scope of religious, non-profit, community-focused and industrial enterprises. Students may be working for denominationally-based organisations in education, welfare, aged care, local church or other ministries requiring specific leadership training for ministry or mission.

This four unit, half-year full-time or one and a half year part-time qualification is comprised of two core units (The Art and Science of Chaplaincy and Focused Study in Chaplaincy or Supervised Ministry 1) and two elective units from the approved list of specialist units (Working with Grief and Trauma, Introduction to Pastoral Counselling, Pastoral Counselling in Ministry, Well-being and Resilience for People Helpers, Focused Study in Chaplaincy, and Supervised Ministry 1).

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Master of Arts, the Master of Leadership, the Master of Theological Studies, the Master of Divinity or the Master of Theology (with the correct requirements).

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.7 Graduate Certificate in Governance and Strategy (GradCertGov&Strategy)

The Graduate Certificate in Governance and Strategy focuses on building capacity for people involved in a wide scope of non-profit, community-focused enterprises. Students may be working for denominationally-based organisations in education, welfare, aged care, local church or other ministries requiring specific leadership training for professional development.

This four unit, half-year full-time or one and a half year part-time qualification is comprised of three core units (Strategic Thinking and Decision Making, Non-Profit Governance for Ministry, and Accounting for Not for Profits) and one elective unit from the approved list of specialist units (Focused Study in Governance and Strategy, Financial Management for Ministry, and Administrative Leadership and Management for Ministry).

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Master of Arts, the Master of Leadership, the Master of Theological Studies, the Master of Divinity or the Master of Theology (with the correct requirements).

5.2.8 Graduate Diploma in Theological Studies (GradDipThSt)

The Graduate Diploma of Theological Studies continues on from the Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies. It is designed for students seeking foundational postgraduate theological studies.

This eight unit, one-year full-time or three year part-time qualification is comprised of four core units (Introduction to Theology, The Person and Work of Christ, Introduction to the Old Testament and Introduction to the New Testament) and four elective units.

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Master of Theological Studies, Master of Arts, the Master of Leadership, the Master of Divinity or the Master of Theology (with the correct requirements).

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.9 Graduate Diploma of Counselling (GradDipThSt)

The Graduate Diploma of Counselling is designed for those who wish to exit the Master of Counselling prior to attaining the requirements for that award. Graduates must have completed 54 credit points (6 units) in the Master of Counselling in order to be eligible for the award. The offer of the Graduate Diploma of Counselling recognises that graduates have been equipped with advanced theoretical knowledge and practice-based counselling skills.

This award is not open to admissions. It is only available as an exit award for students who are enrolled in the Master of Counselling and have completed 54 credit points of study and who do not wish or are unable to complete the Master of Counselling.

Students who exit with a Graduate Diploma of Counselling may re-enrol in the Master of Counselling at a later point but will be subject to the requirements of that award.

5.2.10 Graduate Diploma of Leadership (GradDipLead)

The Graduate Diploma of Leadership focuses on building leadership capacity for people involved in a wide scope of religious, non-profit, community focused enterprises. Students may be working for denominationally based organisations in education, welfare, aged care, local church or other ministries requiring specific leadership training for ministry or mission.

This eight unit, one year full-time or three year part-time qualification includes two compulsory units (Foundations of Christian Leadership and Non-Profit Governance for Ministry), two core units taken from the approved Master of Leadership core unit list, and four electives.

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Master of Arts, the Master of Leadership or the Master of Divinity.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.11 Graduate Diploma of Arts (GradDipArts)

The Graduate Diploma of Arts is an ideal qualification for students who are building on previous study, but without the commitment of undertaking a master's degree. Students can focus on new areas of specialisation, sample a range of new unit areas or build on previous study. Due to the flexible nature of this qualification, students can select numerous exciting pathways for study.

This is an eight unit, one year full-time or three year part-time qualification. Specialisations in a number of disciplines are available. Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Master of Arts, the Master of Leadership, the Master of Divinity, the Master of Theological Studies or the Master of Theology (with the correct requirements).

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.12 Graduate Diploma of Professional Supervision (GradDipProfSupervision)

The Graduate Diploma in Professional Supervision focuses on building supervisory leadership capacity for people involved in a wide scope of religious and/or non-profit and/or community-focused enterprises. Students may be working for denominationally based organisations in education, welfare, aged care, local Church or other ministries requiring specific leadership training for ministry or mission.

This four unit, half-year full-time or one and a half year part-time qualification is comprised of two compulsory units (Human Sexuality in Helping Professions, and Advanced Skills in Professional Supervision), one unit from the counselling sub-discipline, and one unit focused on research into supervisory practice in the context of a place of work, ministry or mission.

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Master of Professional Supervision.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.13 Master of Professional Supervision

The Master of Professional Supervision is designed for those possessing an AQF8 Graduate Certificate in Professional Supervision who wish to pursue a further qualification in the area of supervisory practice as part of their continuing education.

The Master of Professional Supervision focuses on building supervisory leadership capacity for people involved in a wide scope of religious and/or non-profit and/or community-focused enterprises. Students may be working for denominationally based organisations in education, welfare, aged care, local Church or other ministries requiring specific leadership training for ministry or mission.

This eight unit, one year full-time or three year part-time qualification is comprised of two compulsory units (Pastoral Counselling in Ministry, and Advanced Skills in Professional Supervision), three units from the counselling sub-discipline, one unit focused on research into supervisory practice in the context of a place of work, ministry or mission, and two electives.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.14 Master of Arts (MA)

The Master of Arts is a high quality professional development program for students wanting to update their leadership capacities, missional orientation and ability to relate to emerging postmodern cultures.

The flexible nature of this degree allows students to sample a range of topics within the theological and leadership sphere or to focus on a particular area of study. The exact degree requirements depend on previous study and the entry pathway. This degree can be pursued as the continuation of theological studies or as an entry level theological qualification offering a foundational set of units with some electives.

This twelve unit, one and a half year full-time or four and a half year part-time qualification is comprised of two core units and ten elective units (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page).

Specialisations in a number of disciplines are available. Students who complete this degree may continue their educational pathway in numerous directions, depending on previous study and the shape of their MA. Future pathways could include the Master of Divinity, Master of Theology, Doctor of Ministry and the Doctor of Philosophy.

Students with a non-theological undergraduate degree wanting to do the MA will need first to enrol in the four-unit Graduate Certificate, before completing the final eight units in the MA itself.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: **Master of Arts**

Core Units

Spiritual Formation 4
(S8103)

Research
9 cp

or

IGS
9 pc

or

Capstone
9 pc



6 x Electives*

Any Level (Choose from any Postgraduate units)

or

10 x Electives

Any Level (Choose from any Postgraduate units)

* For those students who are completing the MA following a Graduate Certificate

Note: First four units to be completed in a Graduate Certificate

Regulations

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted
- Units may be selected from the 8100 and 9200 range.
- Students may earn an optional "specialisation" by studying 54 credit points in any discipline or sub-discipline, including at least 18 credit points at 9200 level.
- A maximum of 36 credit points may be studied in Research and Independent Guided Study units, with no more than 18cp in any one unit type.

5.2.15 Master of Leadership (MLead)

The Master of Leadership focuses on building leadership capacity for people involved in a wide range of religious, not-for-profit, social enterprises. Students may be working for organisations in education, welfare, aged care, disability services, local church, or other ministries requiring specific leadership training for ministry or mission.

The increasingly sophisticated religious not-for-profit sector now demands its leaders have both great spiritual leadership depth as well as professional management skills tailored to the unique needs of a mission based organisation.

Built on a strong biblical and theological framework, the Master of Leadership is designed to help students become effective leaders for a rapidly changing world. Regardless of their context, effective leaders will be agents of change who can help ignite and manage the transformation of their organisation and our society.

Entry to the program is through a Graduate Certificate (or Graduate Diploma).

This eight unit, one and a half year full-time or three year part-time qualification is comprised of six core units and two elective units (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page). The first four units should be studied in a Graduate Certificate in Leadership.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: Master of Leadership

2 x Core Units

Foundations of Christian Leadership (P8155)

+

Non-Profit Governance (P8107)

Select 3 x Specialist Leadership Units

Admin Leadership & Management for Ministry (P8106)

or

The Art of Discernment (S9262)

or

Solution Focused Coaching (C8160)

or

Conflict Management (P9221)

or

Strategic Thinking & Decision Making (P9258)

or

Leading in a Ministry Team Setting (P8158)

or

Leading the Larger Church (P9259)

or

Team Ministry Skills (P8158)

Spiritual Formation 4 (S8103)

or

Well-being & Resilience for People Helpers (C8166)

or

Practice of Pastoral Supervision (P8172)

or

Accounting for Not-for-Profits (P8106)

or

Spiritual Leadership (P8163)

or

Mastering Change (P9222)

1 x Leadership Practice

Leadership focused research project, independent guided study, capstone unit, field placement or action research project.

6 x Electives

(Choose from any Postgraduate Unit)

Note: First four units to be completed in a Graduate Certificate

Regulations

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted
- Units may be selected from either the 8100 or 9200 range
- Students must complete 8 units (72 credit points) including two core units (18cp), three core units (taken from the list of approved Master of Leadership units- 27cp) and one unit (9cp) focused on leadership practice
- The program must include at least two 9200 series units
- The course may be taken with or without a specialisation
- A specialisation comprises 4 units (36cp) from the list of approved leadership units
- A specialisation in the Master of Leadership comprises 54 credit points in the discipline of Christian Life and Ministry or one of its sub disciplines with at least two 9200-series units. The Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma entry award units may be used towards the 54 credit points required for the specialisation.
- Christian Life and Ministry includes Christian Spirituality (S), Worship & Liturgy (L), Mission (M), Pastoral Counselling (C), Pastoral Theology (P) and Christian Ethics (E) units

5.2.16 Master of Theological Studies (MThSt)

The Master of Theological Studies is an advanced course of study for students wishing to acquire expertise in biblical and theological studies. It allows students to explore these areas in depth, while still having the flexibility to supplement this with studies in other disciplines. Specialisations include Biblical Studies and Theology.

Entry to the program is through a Graduate Certificate (or Graduate Diploma).

This eight unit, one and a half year full-time or three years part-time qualification is comprised of four core units and four elective units. (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page). The first four units should be studied in a Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies.

Students who complete this award can continue their educational pathway through a number of options, including the Master of Arts, the Master of Leadership, the Master of Divinity, the Master of Theology, the Doctor of Ministry or Doctor of Philosophy.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: **Master of Theological Studies**

Core Units

Introduction to the New Testament
(B8150)

Introduction to the Old Testament
(B8110)

Hermeneutics
(B9203)

Introduction to Theology
(T8101)

The Person and Work of Christ
(T9210)



Other

Research unit - (IGS, Capstone, Project or Essay)
in B or T Discipline

6 x electives
(Choose from any Postgraduate units)

Note: First four units to be completed in a Graduate Certificate

Regulations

- The course may include a specialisation which comprises 54 credit points in either Biblical Studies or Systematic Theology with at least two 9200-series units. The Grad Cert entry award can be used towards the 54 credit points required for specialisation.
- Units coded "A" are not counted towards a specialisation in any discipline or subdiscipline.
- A candidate may take a maximum of 36 credit points in units listed as Generic (Research) units in the Schedule of Units of Study with a maximum of 18 credit points in Independent Guided Study units, 18 credit points in Research Project units, and 18 credit points as a Research Essay.
- A candidate may include 18 credit points in the Research Essay (10,000-12,000 words in length and written in the area of specialisation under supervision) providing the candidate completes a 8100 Research Methodology unit (9 credit points) before or concurrently with the Research Project.
- Candidates wishing to proceed to the degree of Master of Philosophy must include one 18 credit point research unit at Distinction level.

5.2.17 Master of Counselling

The Master of Counselling provides students with advanced professional skills for counselling ministry and for pastoral and spiritual formation. It nurtures the formation of professional identity and vision suitable for individual and relational counselling. The course equips graduates to engage in supportive and intensive therapies with psychological competence and theological congruence.

Committed engagement in supervision for personal and professional integration is essential to successful completion of the course.

This course meets the accreditation standards of the Australian Counselling Association (ACA) for the Counselling industry.

This twelve unit, two year full-time or five year part-time qualification is comprised of two core units (Supervised Counselling Practice Integration (Practicum) II and Counselling Theories, Processes and Strategies II), six units in the sub-discipline of counselling, two units from the sub-discipline of Counselling or Pastoral Theology, and two elective units or an 18 credit point Minor Research Essay (if the Minor Research Essay option is chosen, then Research Methodology unit must also be taken)

All ACOM Counselling awards are built around pairs of “spinal” units which provide the backbone on which the awards are built. The Spinal units are a pair of units which must be taken together (normally over a whole year or a number of trimesters).

The Master of Counselling has one pair of Spinal Units:
Advanced Counselling Theory and Practice and Advanced Counselling Practicum

Entry to the program is through a Bachelor of Counselling/Graduate Certificate in Counselling (or Graduate Diploma) and successful completion of an interview with a designated coursework coordinator.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:
<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

5.2.18 Master of Intercultural Ministry (MIM)

The Master of Intercultural Ministry is a specialist award designed for those who want training in cross-cultural ministry and who already have an undergraduate degree in another field.

Designed with input from missiologists and past and current missionaries, this award allows the student to immerse themselves in cross-cultural engagement from the very outset. Throughout the award you will connect with missiologists, current and past international workers and be given practical field instruction and experience.

This focused award which is biblically grounded and theologically astute will prepare you for effective intercultural service where ever God may call you.

Entry to the program is through a Graduate Certificate (or Graduate Diploma).

This eight unit, one and a half year full-time or three year part-time qualification is comprised of six core units and two elective and practicum units (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page). The first four units should be studied in a Graduate Certificate in Leadership.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: **Master of Intercultural Ministry**

Core Units

Intro to Biblical Studies
(B8101)

Biblical Theology of Mission
(T8140)

Intro to Intercultural Mission
(M8100)

Anthropology for Christian Mission
(M8120)

Intercultural Communication
(M9227)

Spiritual Preparation for Intercultural Ministry
(S8104)

Encountering Living Faiths of the World
(M8140)

or

Ministering to the Muslim World
(M8143)



Electives

Choose 2-4

Cultural Dynamics in Team Ministry
(P8158)

Spiritual Warfare and Mission
(M9232)

Global Community Development
(M9275)

Missiological Hermeneutics
(M8101)

Missional Spirituality
(M8191)

The Missional Leader
(M9291)

Practicum

Choose 1-3

Engaging in Intercultural Ministry
(Mission Fieldwork)
(M8128)

Research Project in Mission
(M9296)

Action Research Project (18cp)
(M9295)

Capstone Unit in Mission
(M9299)

Note: First four units to be completed in a Graduate Certificate

Regulations

- The program must include at least two 9200-series units
- A specialisation is based on a list of units approved by the Academic Board and may vary from time to time
- Units from the entry Graduate Certificate (or Graduate Diploma) if equivalent, to units required for the award may be considered for inclusion as specialist and/or practical units and in the forming of the missions specialisation (54cps, including at least 2 x 9200 level units) within the Master of Intercultural Ministry.

- Units coded "A" are not counted towards a specialisation in any discipline or subdiscipline.
- Candidates who have previously studied a Bth/BMin or equivalent may not enrol in units with content similar to those covered by their previous studies

5.2.19 Master of Theology (MTh)

This award builds on previous theological study. Students engaged in this degree can focus on a particular area of interest and develop a significant research project. The program exposes students to various methodological tools and helps them develop advanced research skills. The purpose of the academic rigour of this degree is to provide fresh biblical and theological insight for ministry. The student will also continue the formation process.

This twelve unit, one and a half year full-time or four and a half year part-time qualification is comprised of three core units (including one 18 credit point unit) and eight elective units (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page).

Specialisations in a number of disciplines are available. Students who complete this degree may continue their educational pathway with the Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Ministry.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: Master of Theology

Core Units



Electives

Research Methodology

(Enrolled in the Discipline of Research Project or Essay)
(X8190)

Spiritual Formation 4

(S8103)

Major Research Project

(X9297) 18 cpt

or

Minor Research Essay

(X9298) 18 cpt
(X299 Major Research Essay 36cpt is also available)

8 x Electives

Including no more than 3 other 8100 level electives
(Choose from any Postgraduate units)

Regulations

- Students considering higher study may enrol in X9299 instead of X9298 – a 36cpt Research Essay.
- All units are 9 credit points (cpt) unless otherwise noted, and may be selected from the 8100 and 9200 range.
- No more than 3 electives may be taken from 8100 units (ie a maximum five 8100 units, with 3 electives plus SF4 and Research Methodology)
- A maximum of 54 credit points may be studied in Research and Independent Guided Study units, with no more than 18cpt in Independent Guided Studies or Research Projects or 36 credit points for a Research Essay.

- Students must do either a specialisation of 54 cpt in one sub-discipline or discipline or 27cpt in
- 2 sub-disciplines or disciplines. These can be B, T, S, C, L, M, P or H units.

Pre-requisites to note:

- Research Methodology – must be done before the Research Essay or Project, and is done in the same discipline as the research. RM has a pre-requisite of 36cpt in ANY area.
- Research Project – RM is the only pre-requisite.

5.2.20 Master of Divinity (MDiv)

The Master of Divinity is aimed at students who have already completed an undergraduate degree in a discipline other than bible or theology, and are seeking to be endorsed as a minister of religion.

Over the course of the award, students will be challenged to explore biblical and theological issues at a deep level and develop critical thinking skills that will set them up for effective full-time pastoral or other ministry.

This award allows students to engage with independent research in areas of specific interest and to participate in ACOM's spiritual formation process. The study of biblical languages also allows students to engage the biblical text at a new and profound level.

This twenty-four unit, three and a half year full-time or nine year part-time qualification is comprised of seven core units and five elective and practicum units (see Steps to Complete Diagram on the next page).

Specialisations in a number of disciplines are available. Students who complete this degree may continue their educational pathway with the Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Ministry.

Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website:

<https://acom.edu.au/current-students/unit-descriptions/graduate-unit-descriptions/>

Steps to Complete: Master of Divinity

16 Core Units

Intro to the New Testament (B8150)

+

Intro to the Old Testament (B8110)

Hermeneutics (B9203)

+

The Four Gospels (B9253)

Intro to Theology (T8101)

+

The Trinity (T9213)

The Person and Work of Christ (T9210)

+

Could this be Spirit of Life (T9216)

Intro to Discipleship (M8109C)

+

Intro to Pastoral Care (P8101C)

Spiritual Formation 4 (S8103C)

+

Spiritual Formation 5 (S7105C)

Intro to Christian History (H8100C)

+

The Restoration Movement (H8163C)

or

C&MA Distinctives (P8159)

or

Elective

• Internal Research Unit

+

9 Electives

Including

18cp 9200 units in S, M or P with at least 18cp M9200, 18cp P9200 or 9cp S9200

Students considering Doctoral Studies should enrol in at least
Research Methodology and Minor Research Essay (18cp)

Regulations

- At least two units at 9200 level must be used to create a six-unit specialisation in any of Christian Life and Ministry, Theology or Biblical Studies. Christian Life and Ministry includes any units in Spirituality (S), Counselling (C), Worship and Liturgy (L), Christian Ethics (E), Mission (M) and Pastoral Theology (P). Specialisations require six units, including at least four 9200 level units. Research Projects may be used to satisfy the specialisation requirements.

- Any student wishing to pursue Doctoral Studies should enrol in X9297 Research Project (18 credit points) instead of X9296 Research Project (9 credit points) and the externally reviewed X9298 Research Essay (18 credit points).
- Specialisations require 6 units in that discipline, including at least 4 units at 9200 level.
- Sub-specialisations require 4 units in that discipline, including at least 2 units at 9200 level.

■ Biblical Studies
■ Theology
■ Humanities in the Christian Tradition
■ Christian Life and Ministry

5.3 Sydney College of Divinity Requirements for Postgraduate Study

All ACOM Higher Education students are also students of the Sydney College of Divinity (SCD), the tertiary institution whose awards we teach. As well as complying with ACOM regulations, students must also comply with all SCD rules.

Students need to ensure that the units they choose will enable them to fulfil the requirements of their course as listed in the Steps to Complete diagrams. **ACOM will not be held responsible for students choosing units incorrectly** or otherwise failing to fulfil the requirements of their course.

5.3.1 SCD Unit Coding System

Each unit has a code number consisting of one letter, followed by four digits, followed by one letter.

First letter: indicates the SCD Unit Sub-discipline

Discipline	Sub-discipline	Letter
Biblical Studies	Biblical Studies	B
Christian Life and Ministry	Christian Spirituality	S
	Worship and Liturgy	L
	Mission	M
	Pastoral Counselling	C
	Pastoral Theology	P
	Christian Ethics	E
Humanities	Church History	H
	Humanities	A
Theology	Theology	T

First digit: indicates the **AQF Level** of the unit. Refer to 5.1 for further information.

Second digit: indicates the **unit level** at which the unit is taught.

All postgraduate units should be either 8100 or the more advanced 9200 level. Students may study either level, but MTh students are restricted to a maximum of five 8100 level units.

Third and fourth digits: identifies the specific unit.

Final letter: indicates the SCD Member Institution teaching the unit - ACOM has been designated the letter 'C'. Please note: the letter 'C' will only appear on official SCD documents.

5.2.1 Time Limitations

The following are the maximum periods of time to complete any course of study:

Graduate Certificate in Arts	1.5 years
Graduate Certificate in Leadership	1.5 years
Graduate Certificate in Professional Supervision	2 years
Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies	1.5 years
Graduate Certificate in Intercultural Ministry	2 years
Graduate Certificate in Counselling	2 years
Graduate Certificate in Chaplaincy	2 years
Graduate Certificate in Governance and Strategy	2 years
Graduate Diploma of Arts	3 years
Graduate Diploma of Leadership	3 years
Graduate Diploma of Leadership	3 years
Graduate Diploma of Professional Supervision	3 years
Graduate Diploma of Theological Studies	3 years
Graduate Diploma of Intercultural Ministry	3 years
Graduate Diploma of Counselling	3 years
Master of Arts (8 units)	3 years
Master of Arts (12 units)	4.5 years
Master of Leadership	3 years
Master of Professional Supervision	3 years
Master of Theological Studies	3 years
Master of Intercultural Ministry	3 years
Master of Counselling (12 units)	5 years
Master of Theology (12 units)	4.5 years
Master of Divinity (24 units)	9 years

A leave of absence for up to one year may be applied for by writing to the Academic Dean and emailed to info@acom.edu.au. Students should maintain continuous enrolment by registering for units in at least two trimesters per calendar year. Students who do not register in units for a period of two years will need to re-apply for admission if they wish to continue with their course.

5.2.2 Estimated Workloads

The below workload guidelines are based on 9 credit point units:

Full-time	6-9 units per year
$\frac{3}{4}$ time	5-6 units per year
$\frac{1}{2}$ time	3-4 units per year
$\frac{1}{4}$ time	1-2 units per year

To be classified as 'full-time' by Centrelink, students must be registered in 75% of a full-time load each trimester. In practice, this means students must be studying at least two units each trimester to be eligible for benefits.

5.2.3 Demand Hours

Each 9 credit point unit requires 143 demand hours of study. The demand hours outlined in the following table represent the notional number of hours needed to meet all the requirements of the unit, including reading, researching and writing assignments and essays, and supervised fieldwork.

Online study sessions, required interactive activities and reading	40 hours	
Assessments	52 hours	6000 words (or equivalent)
Integrated Learning Activities*	20 hours	
Supervised Fieldwork	30 hours	
Meeting with Supervisor	1 hour	
Unit Total	143 hours	

*Or credit for three days in person/online facilitation attendance.

A hiker with a backpack is seen from the side, looking out over a vast mountain valley. The hiker is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. The background shows rugged mountain peaks and a winding road in the valley below. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

Research and Self-Guided Study Units

READY TO START YOUR JOURNEY?

6. Research and Self-Guided Study Units

ACOM has a long history of providing innovative, transformational learning experiences. Self-Guided units and research units are learning vehicles designed to integrate theory and practice, producing well-formed thought leaders who will provide solutions to the challenges of today and tomorrow.

6.1 Self-Guided Study Units

Self-directed study units provide an opportunity for a student to explore and learn more about a **specialised topic** of their choice. This is an opportunity to explore independently their own interests at a deeper level or work practically through an issue that is relevant to their place of work or ministry. Typically, a student and an appointed supervisor agree upon a topic and after some initial guidance the student is free to work independently to produce a final piece or pieces of assessment which may include a final essay, report, survey, manual, book review and/or portfolio.

The units offered are:

Undergraduate

P5171 Supervised Ministry 1 (9cp)
P5172 Supervised Ministry 2 (9cp)
X5195 Independent Guided Study (9cp)
X5099 Capstone Unit (9cp)
P7271 Supervised Ministry 1 (9cp)
P7272 Supervised Ministry 2 (9cp)
X7295 Independent Guided Study (9cp)
X7296 Independent Guided Study (18cp)
X7290 Capstone Unit (9cp)

Postgraduate

P8171 Supervised Ministry 1 (9cp)
P9271 Supervised Ministry 2 (9cp)
X9293 Independent Guided Study (9cp)
X9294 Independent Guided Study (18cp)
X9290 Capstone Unit (9cp)

The P units are in Pastoral Theology. The X units may be done in any discipline you want to do Independent Guided Study or a Capstone Unit in.

6.2 Research Units

Learning how to do useful research helps students discover how to identify a problem that needs a solution, ask effective questions, challenge assumptions, collect data, and establish clear conclusions. These are essential skills for leaders who must adapt quickly to a complex and changing community context. This process is linked to rigorous scholarship and deep personal spiritual formation.

The focus of research at ACOM is designed to:

- Be useful for life and ministry,
- Provide thorough leadership for innovation and deep theological understanding, and
- Point people towards action in kingdom-focused mission.

Research units always require a **tailored research question** developed in collaboration with a supervisor and the final product is always an essay. Postgraduate research units require the student to enrol in the Research Methodology unit (X8190) as a prerequisite. ACOM research units are: a research project, research essay, or an action research project (see unit descriptions for the differences between these units). Research Methodology and research units are listed as X units because they may be done in any discipline you want to do and will appear on your transcript as such; i.e. B for Biblical, M for Mission, P for Pastoral, S for Spirituality, C for Pastoral Counselling, H for History, T for Theology).

Students electing to take a research unit should discuss this with their Student Engagement Manager and ACOM's Head of Department – Research who will arrange a suitable supervisor with expertise in the student's chosen research discipline. Students are encouraged to leave sufficient time in the lead up to enrolment in research units to consider their topic and discuss this with their SEM and Head of Research and then develop a project plan for their research with their supervisor.

The units offered are:

Undergraduate

X7298 Research Project (9cp)
X7299 Research Project (18cp)
X7297 Action Research Project (18cp)

Postgraduate

X9296 Research Project (9cp)
X9297 Research Project (18cp)
X9295 Action Research Project (18cp)
X8190 Research Methodology (9cp)
X9298 Research Essay (18cp)
X9299 Research Essay (36cp) (Note: MTh only)

Please note: all 18 credit point units are taken over two (or three) trimesters.

MA – while an MA student may undertake a maximum of 18 credit points of Independent Guided Study or 18 credit points in Research Projects or an 18 credit point Research Essay, the Sydney College of Divinity permits no more than 36 credit points to be taken from research units combined in any single degree (not including Research Methodology).

MTh - while an MTh student may undertake a maximum of 18 credit points of Independent Guided Study or 18 credit points in Research Projects or 36 credit points as a Research Essay, the Sydney College of Divinity permits no more than 54 credit points to be taken from research units combined in any single degree (not including Research Methodology).

The “Research Essay” and “Honours Thesis” are examined externally through the Sydney College of Divinity by two examiners other than the supervisor, at least one of whom is external to ACOM. They are suitable pathways for students seeking admission to the Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Ministry, Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Theology.

6.3 Unit Descriptions

There are different tailored projects that a student can undertake, depending on the degree in which they are enrolled. They are:

6.3.1 Independent Guided Study

An Independent Guided Study (IGS) allows a student to independently pursue a topic of interest that has been approved by ACOM, such as an area covered by other units or a particular issue in ministry or theology facing the student. A maximum of 18 credit points may be obtained this way.

Independent Guided Study units are advanced level units and can be taken in a range of disciplines. They give the student an opportunity to develop independent research and study skills. Before an IGS can be undertaken, a student must have completed at least 36 credit points previously.

In undergraduate courses the requirements and nominal demand hours for a 9 credit point IGS are:

- 40 hours of ministry, workplace or community placement (which in some instances may require the submission of a placement journal).
- 62 hours of reading and assignment preparation (equivalent to 750 pages of reading).
- A 1500-word reflective paper on the field placement.
- A 2500-word academic assignment.

In postgraduate courses the requirements and nominal demand hours for a 9 credit point IGS are:

- 102 hours of reading and assignment preparation (equivalent to 1200 pages of reading).
- 6000 words of assessment.

Reading and assignment topics are negotiated between the student and their Supervisor appointed by ACOM, and the Supervisor usually also grades the assessment.

6.3.2 Research Methodology

Research Methodology is a coursework unit which teaches the student skills and frameworks for proposing, designing and undertaking a research project. The assessment includes a research proposal for a future research project or research essay. This unit is a pre-requisite (or co-requisite if you want to enrol in it together) for the Research Project and Research Essay for postgraduate students, and recommended and valuable for undergraduate students too doing Research Projects or Research Essays especially for practical projects.

6.3.3 Research Project

Students considered capable of doing so may complete up to 18 credit points of Independent Research Project(s), taken either as one or two 9 credit point Research Project units or one 18 credit point Research Project Units. A Research Project is marked internally, usually by the Project Supervisor.

These units build on the theological background, capacity and interests of a student enabling the pursuit of broad research, often of a survey nature, into an area or topic within a discipline or across disciplines. This research is the sort of investigation that cannot usually be done within the constraints of individual coursework units or the focused study of a particular topic.

Postgraduate students must complete "Research Methodology" before enrolling in the Research Project.

Undergraduate research projects are 5000/10000 words and postgraduate research projects are 6000/12000 words (for 9 credit point or 18 credit point projects).

6.3.4 Research Essay

This unit enables students who have generally excelled in their coursework to research and write in an area of specialisation and to demonstrate an ability to pursue further research at the Masters, BTh Honours and Doctoral levels. Applicants for Sydney College of Divinity research degree programs are required to have completed this unit at Distinction level or demonstrate equivalence in achievement. A Research Essay is marked by two examiners, at least one of whom is external to ACOM.

A Research Essay can be done for 18 credit points or, in the MTh, 36 credit points.

X9298 18 credit points, available for postgraduate students only, requires submission of a 12,000-word paper, taken over a two-trimester period.

X9299 36 credit points, available for Master of Theology students only, requires submission of a 23-25,000-word paper taken over a three-trimester period.

The essay proposal requires the approval of the Sydney College of Divinity Research Committee, with a proposal on an SCD form (from <http://scd.edu.au>), which a student submits through their supervisor and ACOM's Head of Department – Research.

6.3.5 Capstone Unit

Towards the end of a degree, a Capstone unit is an opportunity for students to prepare and write a paper that explores a particular ministry issue or theological theme by drawing on the breadth and depth of all the student has studied in their degree; biblical, theological and missiological units. The result will not be an essay or project paper that solely draws on one theological sub-discipline, but seeks to integrate different disciplines together with the student's experience of ministry, personal growth and professional development. 9 credit point Capstone units are 5000 words at undergraduate level or 6000 words at postgraduate level.

6.3.6 Action Research Project

Action Research is about using qualitative research methods (interviews, focus groups and/or participant-observation) and working with a group to identify ministry issues and developing appropriate responses. The result is thus not just what the student thinks are good ideas, but solutions developed in conversation with the group, church or organisation. 9 credit point Action Research Projects are 5000 words at undergraduate level or 6000 words at postgraduate.

6.3.7 Honours Thesis

An Honours Thesis provides students the opportunity to pursue a research project to deepen theological knowledge and investigate a chosen topic, and develop experience in research methods and design, with a small-scale research project. It provides students the opportunity to embark on a significant piece of research in a comprehensive and systematic manner that is not possible in course work. This program provides a suitable pathway for students wanting to pursue further research at Masters or Doctoral level (dependent on attaining a suitable grade level, usually at least Distinction). An honours thesis topic proposal must be submitted to the SCD Research Committee through your supervisor and the ACOM Head of Research. The thesis is 20,000 words in length, and is graded by two examiners, both usually external to ACOM. This thesis is for students who are enrolled in the Bachelor of Ministry (Hons) or Bachelor of Theology (Hons).

6.4 Pre-requisites

Research Essays, Research Projects and Action-Research Projects require an extra level of critical engagement and self-discipline from students. Student who would like to enrol for research essays or projects:

- a. Are encouraged to enrol in research units towards the end of their course of studies.
- b. Are required to have a Credit average in their course of studies, and at least one unit with at least a Distinction level result.
- c. Graduate students are required to do the unit Research Methodology prior to enrolling in a research unit (or may request to do it in the first semester of also being enrolled in the research essay).
- d. Are usually required to have at least some disciplinary background, such as 36 credit points or 3 units, in the research discipline; e.g. if you want to do an undergraduate research project in Pastoral Theology, you need to have already some other coursework units in that discipline.

Students who do not meet these requirements may only enrol with special exemption permission of the Head of Research and their Student Engagement Manager.

6.5 Registering for Units/Getting Started

If you are interested in registering for a research unit, the first step is to speak to your Student Engagement Manager. Your SEM will get you started and connect you to ACOM's Head of Department – Research. You will then be assigned a supervisor who will guide you in the next steps to get started. Both your Student Engagement Manager and your Supervisor will liaise with you to help you through the research process and any administrative requirements along the way.

As with any unit, students must register online for research units. However, before that formal registration, students should discuss these plans with their SEM and develop an outline for what the research will look like. In the case of the Research Essay and Research Project, these units should only be enrolled in after the completion of Research Methodology and the development of a proposal for research. In practice, students may do much of the research work such as topic negotiation, readings and planning outlines before actual enrolment in the unit.

6.6 Ethical Considerations

When ACOM approves your research proposal, consideration will be given to the ethical implication of the research method you are using. All research involving living human subjects must be carried out in such a way that protects the welfare and rights of the participants in accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans*. This includes:

- Information collected directly from or through a person (e.g. via interviews, questionnaires, observation)
- Accessing secondary sources or non-public materials (e.g. interview transcripts, personnel records, student records)
- Identifiable private information about a living individual (e.g. private papers).

Approval is required by the Sydney College of Divinity Ethics Review Committee (SCDERC) for the use of the following research tools:

- Questionnaires and surveys (paper or online)
- Qualitative methodologies (tapes or notes from focus groups, interviews etc.)
- Behavioural observation (whether known or unknown to participants)

- Accessing data you, or another individual, have collected for another purpose (e.g. in a database or archive)
- Psychological experiments
- Psychiatric or clinical psychological studies
- Other qualitative methods.

Your ACOM Supervisor will guide you through any ethics approval process. The forms for research students (and staff who are undertaking research) to submit are on the SCD website at this location: <http://scd.edu.au/research/information-research-students/>.

For coursework applications and smaller projects, the supervisor needs to be familiar both with that clearance form for research students and with the SCD Guidelines, and write to the SCD Ethics Review Committee chair with a modified submission, certifying that they are familiar with the Guidelines and have sufficient research experience to apply them – or alternatively, that a senior supervisor with appropriate research experience will have oversight of the assignment.

The application should be accompanied by the unit outline and any relevant additional material that would enable the Committee to understand what students are doing for their research and paper. (Individual students do not need to and should not communicate with the Committee directly.)

Remember that ethical considerations of human research, as well as all the other aspects of research units, takes considerably more time and focus than other coursework units. So students are encouraged to allow sufficient time, do the necessary background work early in their enrolment. It can even be a good idea to get started on your proposal and reading before enrolling to get a head start into your project.

6.7 Presentation Requirements

Presentation requirements for assignments can be found on the Student Support section on Moodle under "Writing Skills".



Doctoral and Other Postgraduate Research

READY TO START YOUR JOURNEY?

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7. Doctoral and other Postgraduate Research

ACOM works with Sydney College of Divinity who offer a range of four Masters and Doctoral research programs at the highest level of academia and reflection on professional practice:

- Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- Doctor of Ministry (DMin)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Theology (ThD)

For exact details about SCD entry requirements and Conventions for writing a thesis, please refer to the Regulations for MPhil, DMin, PhD and ThD degrees, which can be found on the SCD website: <http://scd.edu.au/>. Here is a summary of the programs:

7.1 Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

The Master of Philosophy provides men and women with the opportunity to pursue advanced study in a theologically related area by research at a high academic level. It is designed for those who seek to further their study in such an area, including interdisciplinary study, for academic, vocational, professional and/or personal reasons. It also offers research training that would support research at doctoral level.

The MPhil requires a 30,000-word thesis and is normally done over one year full-time or two years part-time.

Entry into the MPhil requires a four-year Bachelor Degree to Distinction standard, or equivalent (e.g., BTh (Hons) or Bachelor and GradDip, including studies that prepare for the proposed research area (e.g., if you want to research in biblical studies, you usually need to have done a related Major)).

After satisfactory completion of 20,000 words, students may apply to transfer to a doctorate if the project is of sufficient scope and depth for a doctoral thesis.

7.2 Doctor of Ministry (DMin)

The Doctor of Ministry provides women and men with the opportunity to pursue advanced study in Christian Life and Ministry by research at the highest academic level in the context of professional practice, with supporting specialist coursework. It is designed for those who seek to expand their own understanding and develop new knowledge in such an area for professional reasons and, additionally, as relevant to the individual, for academic, vocational and/or personal reasons.

In contrast to a PhD or ThD, which is generally seen as preparing people for academic vocations, a DMin is designed to equip practitioners in the practice of their ministry. DMin focus on practical theology or related field (liturgy, mission, ethics, pastoral counselling or congregational studies). A DMin is not the only doctoral degree in which a student can pursue practical theology, but DMin are normally focused on practical matters, albeit perhaps drawing on other disciplines. Whereas a PhD or ThD may add to theoretical frameworks and discussions, a DMin may develop a ministry resource or strategy or artefact.

The DMin is undertaken by a combination of two units of specialist coursework (Advanced Seminar in Pastoral Ministry [RP895] and Advanced Seminar in Pastoral and Practical Methodology [RP896]) and research with a 60,000-word thesis.

The DMin is normally done over 3-4 years full-time or 7-8 years part-time.

Entry into the DMin requires a four-year Bachelor degree to high Credit standard (i.e., an honours degree or GradDip, MA or MTh with a 10,000+ word research essay at high Credit standard), or equivalent qualifications, prior studies that prepare the student for research related to Christian Life and Ministry, and four years ministry experience.

7.3 Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The Doctor of Philosophy provides women and men with the opportunity to pursue advanced study in a theologically related area by research at the highest academic level. It is designed for those who seek to further their study in such an area, including interdisciplinary study, for academic, vocational, professional and/or personal reasons. It also offers research training and experience that would support an academic or professional career involving research. It provides the opportunity for candidates to embark on a significant, extended piece of research, which investigates a theologically related topic in a systematic, creative and comprehensive manner that is not available in coursework programs. The research will contribute to knowledge in an original way. A PhD can be interdisciplinary, including bridging a theological discipline and another discipline (e.g., sociology and New Testament), and the discipline may also be practical theology (i.e., a DMin is not the only degree for researching practical theology matters).

The Doctor of Philosophy is undertaken by research and an 80,000-word thesis.

The PhD program is normally 3-4 years full-time or up to a maximum of 12 years as a part-time student.

Entry to the PhD requires a four-year Bachelor Degree to Distinction standard or equivalent (i.e., an honours degree or GradDip, MA or MTh with a 10,000+ word research essay with at least Distinction or GPA3+), including studies that prepare for the proposed research area.

7.4 Doctor of Theology (ThD)

The ThD is the same as the PhD in requirements and scope, but requires a focus on a theological discipline topic, or may bridge different theological disciplines (e.g., mission and New Testament), but would not normally be interdisciplinary outside theology. ThDs can focus on practical theology as well.

7.5 More information for all research degrees

All research degrees require the candidate to identify a significant research question, identify appropriate research methodology, execute a research process to explore the question, and show evidence of capacity to work independently and develop and communicate a sustained scholarly argument. Those completing any doctoral degree are expected to produce significant and original research – although this will likely extend or expand on the work of others.

All research candidates operate under the supervision of the Sydney College of Divinity research committee and SCD Director of Research.

All research candidates must also participate in their Orientation Workshop, Research Degree Workshop and regular evening Research Seminars.

To apply, download [application forms](#) from the SCD website, fill out the 'Research Degree Application' and 'Summary of Research Intentions' forms and send them to the Director of Research at SCD at least 10 days before a research committee meeting (usually 2nd Monday of each month).

If you are currently doing foundational theology studies and thinking about getting ready for postgraduate research then be encouraged to:

1. Get a good broad and deep foundation, especially in the discipline area of research
2. Do a research essay or project of 12,000 words (18 credit points), to an excellent standard (at least Distinction or 75%)

3. See if you can publish some of your work; e.g. turning your research essay into an article. This is not a requirement, but will set your application apart and show evidence of your potential as a researcher and emerging scholar.

More information is available from ACOM's Head of Research or the SCD Director of Research.



Financial

READY TO START YOUR JOURNEY?

8. Financial

8.1 Centrelink Allowances

Under Commonwealth Government guidelines, study allowances are available for full-time theological students who are working towards accredited awards. "Full-time" is defined by the Government to mean at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of a maximum load. Enquiries about eligibility and applications for Youth Allowance, Austudy and Abstudy should be directed to the closest Centrelink Office. Please note that:

1. Youth Allowance (age 17-24) and Austudy (25 years and above) are available for eligible full-time students. Abstudy is available to eligible full-time students with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait backgrounds.
2. Centrelink requires a student to be studying 75% of a full-time load. In practice this means a student must be studying 6 units (and will include any year long units).
3. Where a student is enrolled in a year long unit, Centrelink will assess the study load against what the student is enrolled in for the whole year in which the annual unit is being undertaken. As long as the student maintains 75% over that year they will consider them full time.
4. It is the student's responsibility to keep Centrelink informed of any program changes or changes of address during each year. If a student's study load falls below full-time, then Centrelink may require repayment of any funds received.
5. ACOM's administration system reports in real time to Centrelink and other government agencies.
6. Students studying at Master of Arts level are not eligible for Austudy, however Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma students may be eligible.

8.2 Fee-HELP

Fee-HELP is a Government financial loan scheme that assists eligible fee-paying students to pay their fees. All ACOM enrolled students who are Australian citizens (or on a Permanent Humanitarian Visa) may be eligible for Government Fee-HELP loans for both undergraduate and postgraduate study.

For information about Fee-HELP loans and eligibility please visit the Study Assist website:

<http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/help-payingmyfees/fee-help/pages/fee-help->

Fee-HELP online application forms are available for admitted students by request from the ACOM National Office. Please email registrar@acom.edu.au to request a form.

Students who have previously applied for Fee-HELP at ACOM (or another institution) may still access Fee-HELP for new courses in which they are enrolled/enrolling at ACOM. Students applying for Fee-HELP are required to complete a new application form for each qualification. Students are to advise ACOM of their previous CHESSN and their Unique Student Identifier (USI) if possible.

Students are required by the government to maintain a minimum pass rate of 50% of their units to remain eligible for Fee-HELP. Students who fall below this will not be able to defer any further unit fees on Fee-HELP and will have to pay for units upfront until their pass rate is back up to 50%.

Further information can be found in the FeeHelp Information Booklet on the Study Assist website:

<https://www.studyassist.gov.au/need-more-information/help-publications>

8.3 Tuition Assurance Scheme (TAS)

The Sydney College of Divinity (ABN: 39 002 653 036) is a body corporate and is registered on the Australian Qualifications Framework in the States of New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania. Before a body corporate or its students can receive grants or other assistance under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, the body corporate must meet the requirements specified in the Higher Education Provider Guidelines. Amongst other things, the SCD must publish to all enrolling students a “statement of course assurance”, explaining the course assurance requirements and the method by which the requirements have been met in the course concerned. The SCD’s Course Assurance is as follows:

The SCD advises that, in the event that it is unable to continue to provide any of the courses listed in the schedule below, the Australian College of Theology (ACT) will allow students enrolled in that course of study to enrol in the similar course or courses of study and to receive full credit for the units of study successfully completed as part of the course of study with the SCD.

In such an instance, the Australian College of Theology will:

1. provide incoming students with a place in the designated Alternative Course;
2. provide incoming students with “block credit” for all completed units;
3. recognise all the grades awarded at the previous institution;
4. upon completion of the outstanding units of study, allow all students to receive the award of the programme into which they have been transferred (even in cases where the students have undertaken less than 50% of their degree at the Australian College of Theology).

At the same time, the SCD will:

1. refund to students the money that they have paid for incomplete units in which they are currently enrolled or (with the student’s agreement) transfer such fees to the Australian College of Theology;
2. convert any “incomplete” grades that are the result of student error to “fail”;
3. refund students the tuition fees in any unit of study in which their grade remains “incomplete” where that “incomplete” grade is the result of institutional error.

Students are further advised that, in the event that the course assurance arrangements are required:

1. the Australian College of Theology might have a different student contribution or tuition fee for the course of study, so that the amount required to be paid might vary;
2. there is no obligation to enrol in the course in which an offer of enrolment has been made under the course assurance arrangement, but, if the offer is taken up with the Australian College of Theology, then there will be a full credit transfer for the units of study already completed. Should a student decide to enrol with a different provider other than the Australian College of Theology, there would be no obligation on that provider to offer full credit transfer for the units of study completed.

The alternative suitable courses of the Australian College of Theology (ACT) in which students would be placed if necessary are detailed below:

Alternative Courses (Tuition Assurance Scheme)

Sydney College of Divinity	Australian College of Theology
Diploma of Theology	Diploma of Theology
Bachelor of Theology	Bachelor of Theology
Bachelor of Ministry	Bachelor of Theology
Graduate Certificate in Arts	Graduate Diploma of Theology
Graduate Diploma of Arts	Graduate Diploma of Bible and Ministry
Graduate Diploma of Arts	Graduate Diploma of Christian Studies
Graduate Diploma of Arts	Graduate Diploma of Theology
Graduate Diploma of Arts	Graduate Diploma of Ministry
Master of Arts	Master of Arts in Christian Studies
Master of Theology	Master of Theology
Master of Divinity	Master of Divinity

8.4 Fees and Charges

8.4.1 Tuition Fees

Undergraduate Fees

Please note that FeeHELP is not available for audit units.

AQF 5 Units	Audit	9 credit point	18 credit point
Standard Unit	\$450	\$1690	\$3380
Pensioner Standard Unit (must pay upfront)	\$450	\$1490	\$2980
Spiritual Formation Units	\$800	\$2290	-

AQF 7 Units	Audit	9 credit point	18 credit point
Standard Unit	\$450	\$2190	\$4380
Pensioner Standard Unit (must pay upfront)	\$450	\$1990	\$3980
Spiritual Formation Units	\$800	\$2790	-
Research Units	-	\$2490	\$4980
Standard Counselling Unit	-	\$2390	-
Spinal Counselling Unit	-	\$2790	-

Postgraduate Fees

Please note that FeeHELP is not available for audit units.

AQF8-9 Units	Audit	9 credit point	18 credit point
Standard Unit	\$450	\$2690	\$5380
Pensioner Standard Unit (must pay upfront)	\$450	\$2490	\$4980
Spiritual Formation Units	\$800	\$3290	-
Research Units	-	\$2990	\$5980
Standard Counselling Unit	-	\$2890	-
Spinal Counselling Unit	-	\$3790	-

8.4.2 Table 3 – Non-tuition Fees and Charges

Please note that FeeHELP is not available for non-tuition fees.

Fee/Charge	Amount
Late Unit Registration Fee (after Registration Deadline, i.e., 3 weeks before the start of each trimester)	\$25
Late Unit Registration Fee (on or after start of trimester)	\$50
Unit Withdrawal Fee (after Registration Deadline, before Census Date)	\$50
Unit Withdrawal Fee (After Census Date)	Full cost of unit
Withdrawal from Facilitation (after Registration Deadline)	\$50
Transfer of Unit Registration (after Registration Deadline but before start of Trimester)	\$50
Transfer of Unit Registration (from start of Trimester to Census Date)	\$50
Issue of Transcript other than at Graduation	\$25
Issue of Testamur other than at Graduation	\$110
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Price upon request

8.5 Facilitation Expenses

Students should allow for an additional cost for living and travelling expenses when attending facilitations away from their local region.

8.5.1 Due Dates

Students paying upfront must pay the tuition fee for each unit **prior to the start of each trimester** (unless the student has arranged a payment plan with ACOM's General Manager of Ministry Operations).

For trimester dates for the current year refer to <https://acom.edu.au/study/#keydates>

8.5.2 Withholding of Unit Material

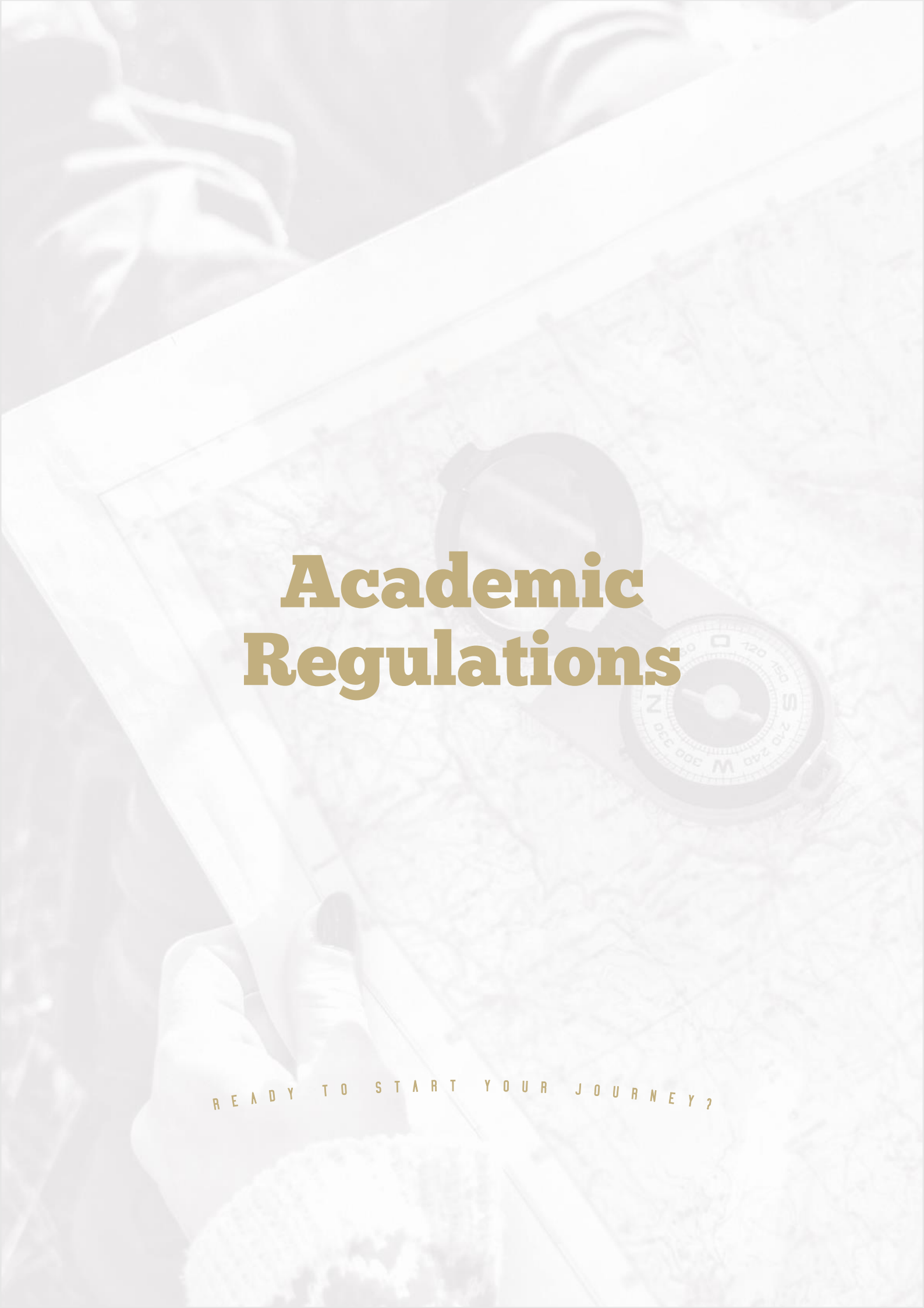
Students will not be given access to unit material until payment of all **relevant fees and charges** has been arranged. These fees and charges include any outstanding Late Registration and/or Withdrawal Fees.

In addition to the above, **no time extensions** will be given to students to complete work if a student receives access to their course material late due to late payment of fees.

8.5.3 Withdrawals and Refunds

1. Administrative dates including Census Dates and Deadlines for Changes to Enrolments will be published on ACOM's website.
2. Students do not incur a financial liability for a unit until after the Census Date, however a withdrawal fee may still apply. This applies to all eligible students whether they pay their tuition fees upfront or seek loan scheme assistance.
3. Students are to advise ACOM in writing by the published Census Date that they intend to withdraw from a unit or course.
4. Students should follow the withdrawal procedures outlined in the Higher Education Handbook.
5. In the event of a student withdrawing on or prior to the published Census Date:
 - a. 100% of tuition fees paid will be refunded (less any applicable withdrawal fees);
6. In the event of a student withdrawing after the published Census date no refund is applicable. The student will pay the full tuition fee for the unit and will incur a fail grade for the unit on their transcript.
7. Should a student become seriously ill or suffer exceptional circumstances of a compassionate nature (such as death or severe illness in the immediate family) after the Census Date and can no longer continue their studies, ACOM may refund the balance of the unused fees.
 - a. This fee refund is wholly at the discretion of ACOM.
 - b. The application must be in writing and appropriate evidence, such as a medical certificate, will be required. You will need to show that what affected you was beyond your control, did not make its full impact on you until on or after the census date of the unit, and made it not practicable for you to complete the unit.
 - c. Flare ups of chronic or pre-existing conditions will not normally be considered, however an Enabling Plan can be set up to provide assistance in these circumstances.
 - d. A student may make an application within 12 months of the withdrawal date for a unit or, if the student has not withdrawn, within 12 months of the end of the period in which the unit was to be undertaken.
 - e. The 12 months period may be extended on the grounds that it was not possible to apply within the 12 months period.
8. If a refund is approved, ACOM will either
 - a. arrange for a reversal of the FeeHELP debt or
 - b. pay by cheque or transfer to the person or organisation who paid the fees. Payment will be made within four weeks.
9. Where ACOM determines that exceptional circumstances do not apply in a student's case, the student has the right to apply for a review of that decision. ACOM will apply a student review procedure for reconsidering such decisions.

10. If the student wishes to request a review of the decision, this must be made within 28 days of receipt of the original decision. The request must include:
 - a. The date of the original decision
 - b. The reasons for applying for the review
 - c. Any additional relevant evidence
11. In reviewing a decision, ACOM will:
 - a. appoint a review officer who is not the same officer who made the original decision and who occupies a position that is senior to that occupied by the original decision-maker;
 - b. reconsider the decision with the reviewer's available options being to confirm the original decision, vary the decision, or set the decision aside and substitute a new decision.
12. After the decision has been reconsidered, ACOM will:
 - a. notify the person, in writing, of the reviewer's decision and the reviewer's reasons for making the decision (confirming the original decision, varying the decision, or setting the decision aside and substituting a new decision);
 - b. advise the person of their right to appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) for a review of the reviewer's decision if the applicant is unsatisfied with the outcome.
13. This Policy and Procedure does not remove the right to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws. ACOM's dispute resolution processes, Student/Client Complaints Policy and Procedure do not restrict the student's right to pursue other legal remedies.

The background of the entire page is a faded, light-colored image. It shows a person's hands holding a large, unfolded map. A semi-transparent compass is overlaid on the map, positioned towards the right side. The compass face is visible, showing cardinal directions (N, S, E, W) and degree markings. The overall tone is soft and inspirational, suggesting a journey or exploration.

Academic Regulations

READY TO START YOUR JOURNEY?

9. Academic Regulations

9.1 Admissions

9.1.1 Admissions Policy

All applicants wishing to study a unit with ACOM must be “enrolled students” and, therefore, need to complete the full application process for admission as a student in the College. An “enrolled student” may be full-time or part-time.

Applicants admitted to an ACOM course must meet the standard academic entry requirements of the relevant academic award or be accepted according to one of the published alternative entry options.

Admission to any Sydney College of Divinity (SCD) course taught by ACOM is conditional upon the student’s acceptance by SCD.

Applications for admission to any ACOM program must be supported by appropriate documentary evidence of qualification for entry.

Applicants who have completed all their previous study in a language other than English will be required to demonstrate an appropriate level of English proficiency.

9.1.2 Admission Requirements

Undergraduate Courses

Admission may be granted to an undergraduate course on one or more of the following bases:

1. Successful prior completion of an accredited Certificate IV, Degree or Diploma recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework (or equivalent).
2. Attainment of a satisfactory standard for the Higher School Certificate (or its equivalent), such as to gain entry to a university. For all undergraduate awards (excluding the Diploma awards) the ATAR must be 65 or greater; or in QLD the OP score must be 16 or lower. While Diploma awards require the completion of Year 12, they do not require an ATAR/OP score.
3. Mature Age entry: To qualify for mature age entry for an AQF 7 award, the applicant needs to have reached the age of 21 years by the commencement date of the course. To qualify for mature age entry for an AQF 5 award, the applicant needs to have reached the age of 20 years by the commencement date of the course.
4. Special Entry: To qualify under this category, the applicant must be able to produce evidence that substantiates their ability to complete a tertiary course.

Applicants who do not meet the above criteria should contact the Registrar to discuss alternative admission options.

Applicants for Counselling awards must also successfully complete an interview with a designated coursework co-ordinator.

Applicants who have completed all their previous study in a language other than English will be required to achieve an IELTS test (or equivalent) score of 6.5 or greater, with no score less than 6.0 in each band.

Postgraduate Courses

Graduate Certificate (GradCert Arts)(GradCert Theological Studies)(GradCert Chaplaincy)(GradCert Governance and Strategy) (GradCert Intercultural Ministry) (Grad Cert Leadership Coaching): The admission requirement is a three-year bachelor award or equivalent in any discipline.

(GradCert Lead): The admission requirement is a three-year bachelor award or equivalent in ministry/theology.

(GradCert Counselling): The admission requirement is a three-year bachelor award or equivalent in any discipline and successful completion of an interview with a designated coursework co-ordinator.

Graduate Diploma (GradDipArts)(GradDip TheologicalStudies) (GradDip Intercultural Ministry), and the Master of Divinity (MDiv): The admission requirement is a three-year bachelor award or equivalent in any discipline.

(GradDipLead): The admission requirement is a three-year bachelor award or equivalent in ministry/theology.

Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Supervision (GradCertPSupervision): The admission requirement is a three-year bachelor award or equivalent in ministry/ theology or an allied helping profession (social work, social science, counselling or psychology). Applicants also require to have at least 5 years professional experience within a helping profession and submit a recommendation from their employer, professional association, or ordaining body at the time of application.

Graduate Diploma (GradDipProfSupervision) and Master of Professional Supervision (MProfSupervision): The admission requirement is an AQF8 Graduate Certificate in Supervision.

Master of Arts (MA). The admission requirement for the Master of Arts is a three-year bachelor award or equivalent in the discipline of Ministry or Theology. Applicants whose undergraduate award is not in Ministry or Theology will need to enrol first into the four-unit Graduate Certificate before doing their final eight units in the MA.

Master of Theological Studies (MThSt). The admission requirement for the Master of Theological Studies is a Graduate Certificate in Master of Theological Studies or equivalent.

Master of Leadership (MLead). The admission requirement for the Master of Leadership is a Graduate Certificate in the field of Ministry or Theology.

(Master of Counselling): The admission requirement is an AQF 7 Bachelor Degree in the field of Counselling (such as the SCD Bachelor of Counselling) or in a closely related field in the helping professions as approved by the SCD Academic Board (e.g. nursing, chaplaincy, psychology, ministry, social work) or an AQF 8 Graduate Certificate in Counselling (or higher) from an institution approved by the Academic Board, and successful completion of an interview with a designated coursework coordinator.

Master of Intercultural Studies (MIM). The admission requirement for the Master of Intercultural Studies is a Graduate Certificate in the field of Ministry or Theology.

Master of Theology (MTh). The admission requirement for the Master of Theology is a three-year Bachelor of Ministry (with at least two majors), Bachelor of Theology, or a Master of Arts with a specialisation in any discipline. The latter applicants will need to undertake their MTh in that same discipline of specialisation.

Applicants for any postgraduate course who have completed all their previous study in a language other than English will be required to achieve an IELTS test (or equivalent) score of 7.0 or greater overall and in all bands of the test.

Applicants who do not meet the above criteria may apply for Professional Entry based on previous relevant work experience into the Graduate Certificate in Arts. This entry requires the applicant to possess a minimum of 5 years' relevant work experience in a full-time senior ministry leadership role.

9.1.3 Provisional and Full Admission

Since admission to an SCD course is conditional upon the student's acceptance by SCD, applicants must complete and submit a full admission application to ACOM for entry into advertised courses. On the basis on information supplied on the admission form, ACOM will confirm full acceptance once confirmed by SCD.

Postgraduate students provisionally admitted under Professional Entry will be required to complete one 8500 (entry) level postgraduate biblical or theology unit at a credit grade or above to be confirmed as a full admission, upon the approval of the Registrar, with full credit given for the unit successfully completed.

9.1.4 Documentation

Undergraduate Courses

For successful admission into an ACOM undergraduate course, a full admission application must be completed by submitting the following documents:

- Application for admission form;
- 100pts ID, including a birth certificate or passport;
- Transcripts and certificates of previous study;
- Ministry Placement form (Bible, Theology, Ministry Awards);
- Confidential reference form (Bible, Theology, Ministry Awards);
- Certificate of Insurance and Professional Membership (Counselling Awards);
- FeeHELP electronic Commonwealth Assistance form (eCAF) (if applicable)
- Unique Student Identifier (USI)

Postgraduate Courses

For successful admission into an ACOM postgraduate course, a full admission application must be completed by submitting the following documents:

- Application for admission form;
- 100pts ID, including a birth certificate or passport;
- Transcripts and certificates of previous study;
- Ministry placement form (Bible, Theology, Ministry Awards, Leadership Awards, Mission Awards);
- Certificate of Insurance and Professional Membership (Counselling Awards);
- FeeHELP electronic Commonwealth Assistance form (eCAF) (if applicable)
- Unique Student Identifier (USI)

If applying for professional entry, please note that two (2) professional reference letters will be required affirming that the applicant has had 5 or more years' previous work experience in a full-time senior ministry leadership role. A current resume will be required with relevant referees.

If applying for the Graduate Certificate in Professional Supervision, please note that a recommendation letter from either employer, professional association, or ordaining body will be required to affirm that the applicant has had 5 or more years' previous work experience in a full-time senior ministry leadership role.

9.2 Credit from Previous or Concurrent Study

9.2.1 Credit Transfer Policy

As a Member Institution of Sydney College of Divinity, and in accordance with SCD Transfer Credit Policy, ACOM gives full recognition of studies that are comparable in content, outcomes and level of study to units within ACOM delivered awards, successfully completed at other tertiary institutions. The limits of such credit in any particular award are determined by the SCD Academic Board.

9.2.2 Credit Transfer Procedures

Undergraduate Courses

Credit Transfer may be granted for up to two thirds of an undergraduate award for completed units/award at or above vocational Certificate IV level previously studied at accredited institutions. The units/awards must have been completed no more than 10 years prior to the date of the credit application.

Postgraduate Courses

Credit Transfer may be granted for up to half of a postgraduate award for completed units/award at or above Graduate Certificate level previously studied at accredited institutions in religious studies. Units must be equivalent to current postgraduate units to be considered for credit. The units/awards must have been completed no more than 10 years prior to the date of the credit application.

9.2.3 Documentation

Students applying for credit **must** submit full documentation. This will include:

1. certified copies of original transcripts;
2. evidence of the course structure, i.e., number of credit points (or units) allotted to each unit studied, and the total number of points required for the award.

Students are advised to apply to the Registrar for credit as soon as possible after being admitted into ACOM. Credit transfer applications will be processed by the Registrar and approved by SCD through the Student Support and Administration Committee (or equivalent body), which meets monthly between February and November.

Students may also apply for credit under the principle of Recognition of Prior Learning (fees are applicable). To apply for Recognition of Prior Learning please contact the Registrar.

9.2.4 Advanced Standing

Advanced standing enables a student to begin courses at an advanced level without having to undertake the first level units in those courses. Advanced standing does not reduce the total number of units required for an award. To apply for advanced standing please contact the Registrar.

9.3 Re-enrolment

9.3.1 Re-enrolment because of Incompletion

A student will be allowed to re-enrol in a unit that they have failed due to incompletion once only. Students must complete all requirements of the unit, but will be allowed to resubmit previously complete work for re-assessment as appropriate. Normal unit fees apply.

9.3.2 Re-enrolment because of Poor Standard

When a student fails a unit because of poor standard, or failure to meet minimum standards, the unit must be re-taken in its entirety if the student chooses to attempt the unit a second time. Normal unit fees apply.

9.3.3 Failing a Unit Twice

A student who has failed a unit twice, for any reason, is not eligible to enrol in that unit a third time. This may impact a student's ability to complete their award if it is a core unit.

9.4 Extensions and Late Submission

9.4.1 Extensions Policy

It is a requirement of a student's course that all assignments be completed by the due dates set by ACOM and published on Moodle and in the Unit Introduction Book. However, at times, extenuating circumstances will arise that warrant the granting of extension to the scheduled due date. To accommodate such cases, ACOM implements a clear set of guidelines for the fair consideration of requests for extensions, which balances compassion for legitimate requests with equitable treatment of all students.

9.4.2 Extensions Procedures

All applications for extension must be made using the "Request for Extension" form on Moodle with attendant evidence emailed to info@acom.edu.au before the due date. Requests for extension will not be accepted on or after the due date.

An extension of up to 21 days (including weekends and holidays) from an assignment's due date (longer may be considered in extraordinary circumstances) may be granted on the following grounds:

- a. medical illness (certified by a Medical Certificate);
- b. extreme hardship (refers to major adverse life events that could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against by the student, and caused substantial disruption to the student's capacity for effective study and/or the completion of required work);
- c. compassionate grounds (will be based on a significant pastoral concern that is not considered part of a pattern of behaviour on the part of the student).

Circumstances that will NOT normally be considered as acceptable grounds for an extension are:

- a. demands of employment;
- b. minor family problems such as domestic tension with or between parents, spouses, and other people closely involved with the student;
- c. the demands of academic work;
- d. financial difficulties;
- e. the demands of travel, sport, social commitments or other activities.

Students should allow three working days from submission of an extension request for a response from ACOM.

9.4.3 Late Submission Policy

Assignments without an approved extension may be submitted up to 10 days after the due date of the assignment but will attract an automatic penalty deduction of 5% of the marks available for the item of assessment for every day past the ORIGINAL due date. Assignments submitted more than 10 days after the due date without an approved extension will be accepted for purposes of meeting the requirement for submission, but will receive a zero mark and will NOT be annotated by the marker.

Where an extension is granted, assignments may be submitted up to 10 days after the due date of the extension but will attract an automatic penalty deduction of 5% of the marks available for the item of assessment for every day past the EXTENSION due date. Assignments submitted more than 10 days after the extension due date will be accepted for purposes of meeting the requirement for submission, but will receive a zero mark and will NOT be annotated by the marker.

9.5 Disabilities and Enabling Plans

The Australian College of Ministries (ACOM) is committed to continuing to support a diverse and inclusive community based on the principles of equity and non-discriminatory practice. The College aims to create and maintain a learning experience that is inclusive of the needs of students with a disability and which optimises their participation, retention and success through accessible and equitable learning, teaching and assessment practices.

The College is required to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth). This policy outlines the rights and responsibilities of staff and students in relation to the provision of reasonable adjustments to learning, teaching and assessment.

To read the full Disability policy please download [here](#).

To request support for a disability through the application of reasonable adjustments to your course, please submit the [Enabling Plan request form](#) through the ACOM website.

9.6 Assessment

9.6.1 Completion of all Assessment Requirements

1. ACOM students are required to attempt and submit ALL assigned work in every unit in which they are enrolled. Assigned work includes both assessed work (including, but not limited to, essays, examinations, and field assignments) and unassessed work (including, but not limited to, Integrative Learning Activities, reading logs, reflective journals, and logs of field, formation and ministry work).
2. Students not submitting ALL assigned work with a weighting of 20% or more for a unit will receive a fail grade for the unit, regardless of whether or not their cumulative marks on other (submitted) pieces of assigned work for the unit are numerically sufficient to obtain a pass grade or above.
3. It is not necessary to pass all assigned tasks unless specified – however, the cumulative mark of all pieces of work must be numerically sufficient to obtain a pass grade or above.

9.6.2 Incomplete or Inadequate Work

Under certain circumstances, a student submitting all pieces of assigned work, and achieving a total unit mark of at least 50%, may still be awarded a fail grade under the provisions of this policy if, in the opinion of the Academic Dean, one or more pieces of submitted work are demonstrably inadequate or incomplete. Such inadequate or incomplete work may include, but is not limited to:

1. Essays or other written work containing 60% or less of the assigned word limit, e.g., a 550 (or less) word assignment submitted in response to an essay topic with a 1,000-word requirement.
2. Essays or other written work that clearly does not address the set topic in any substantive, comprehensive, coherent or systematic fashion.
3. Essays or other written work with major sections, sub-topics, or other required material missing.
4. Essays or other written work without a bibliography, or with only a minimal bibliography, where a bibliography was a required part of the assignment.
5. Compilations of portfolios of field, formation or ministry work with one or more major elements missing.
6. Absence of any administrative material or documentation (e.g., assignment title pages, reading logs, facilitation attendance sheets) that would allow the Facilitator, Marker or other official to determine that the student has met the set requirements of the unit.
7. Failing to meet the minimum standards and criteria for assessment for Higher Education essays and other written assignments.

Usually inadequate or incomplete pieces of work will be assigned a mark of less than 35% of the available marks, or a fail grade if the assignment is graded pass/fail.

In practice, this policy specifies that not only must students submit all work with a weighting of 20% or more, but also that all submitted work must be of a certain minimum standard. Students may not pass a unit without reasonable attempts at all pieces of assessment weighted 20% and above AND any other required work being demonstrated by designated minimum standards being met.

9.7 Assignment Writing and Submission

All assignments submitted to ACOM must conform to the guidelines below, unless the assignment instructions specifically allow a variation.

The Student Support Section on Moodle has numerous guides to assist students in writing assignments.

9.7.1 Assignment Writing

The following is a guide to the minimum standards expected of ALL Higher Education written work submitted to ACOM for assessment. Students should be aware that assignments that do not meet these requirements will fail.

In order to gain a PASS grade or above, written assignments submitted to ACOM for assessment must AT LEAST:

Be presented as formal assignments

All assignments MUST be presented as formal academic assignments unless specified within the assignment.

Rough notes, draft copies and unfinished work are always unacceptable and will result in automatic failure. A cover page is mandatory.

Be presented using the following guidelines

File Type	All assignments must be submitted electronically in either Word “.doc” or “.docx” format
Line Spacing	Assignments must be 1.5 or double-spaced. Footnotes should be single-spaced.
Margins	Assignments must have at least a 2.5cm margin on all sides

Be written in formal English

Essays MUST use grammatically and syntactically correct sentences, and all conventions of the English language (e.g. correct spelling, correct and consistent use capitals, full stops, commas, inverted commas, question marks, quotation marks etc.) must be followed consistently. Isolated errors will not usually result in failure. Consistent errors will result in failure.

Be within required word limits

Aim carefully to write the required number of words. We encourage you to write no more than 10% more or 10% less than the required number of words. As using concise language is important, it is generally considered worse to write an excessively long essay than one too short. But you may also fail if you write too few words as this does not satisfy assessment requirements. Please also note that cover pages, footnotes and bibliographies are not to be included in word counts.

Be arranged in coherent paragraphs

Essays must not, for example, be arranged in one block or in single sentences. Bullet points are unacceptable in any assignment, including field assignments. However, proper (i.e. consistent and careful) use of number or lettering within, or between paragraphs, is acceptable.

Begin with an introduction and finish with a conclusion

Introductions should describe how the student plans to answer the question. Conclusions should ONLY include issues dealt with in the main body of the essay.

Be free from slang, colloquialisms and conversational language

- Isolated examples of using slang, colloquialisms or conversational language will not usually result in failure. Consistent use of slang and colloquialisms will result in failure.
- A very short list of some slang words (and some suggested formal alternatives in brackets) include:
 - “Cool” (“popular”), “crappy” (“poor quality”), “I reckon” (“it is my opinion that...”), “hang around” (“wait”), “boss” (“employer”), etc.
 - “Well the best way to...”
Using “well” to begin a sentence is colloquial (and redundant). Simply start the sentence with “The...”. Instead of using “best” use, for example, “most appropriate”, or “most widely accepted”.
 - “The methodology used to reach this conclusion is really bad.”
Neither “really” nor “bad” is properly defined. Instead of “really bad” use, for example, “highly inappropriate”, or “obviously unjustified”.
 - “You will agree that...”
Never address the reader directly in an essay, and never speculate about the reader’s beliefs or opinion(s). Instead say, for example, “There is strong evidence that...” or “This conclusion seems inevitable”.
 - Avoid use of the first person (e.g., “I”, “We”)
- Academic essays should generally be written in the third person. Use of the first person MAY be justified in some circumstances e.g., where the question/topic asks for personal responses to, or reflections on, certain issues or material. If in doubt, the third person should be used.

Use gender inclusive language

Students are required to use gender inclusive language in all academic papers and oral presentations. This is recognised practice across tertiary education. It also reflects the inclusive nature of the gospel (Galatians 3:28) and is good practice and preparation for ministry and worship leading. So, refer to “people”, “humanity” or “women and men”, rather than “man” or “men” when you are referring to people in general.

Address the question or topic

Assignments not addressing the questions/topic WILL fail regardless of the overall quality of the presentation.

Address the question or topic in the manner specified

Where the assignment question/topic clearly specifies a particular manner of addressing the topic, assignments not addressing the topic in that manner may be failed EVEN IF the overall question/topic is addressed in other ways.

Be characterised by tertiary level thought and/or depth of analysis

Assignments should evidence a level of clarity, logic, and persuasiveness consistent with tertiary studies. Assignments that could have been written by a reasonably intelligent and reasonably well informed high school student have not reached the minimum criterion for this standard.

Support key statements with evidence

“Evidence” includes citations of written academic work (e.g., books, journals, reputable and verifiable internet resources) and direct evidence gathered by students (e.g., through an interview or survey), but DOES NOT include anecdotal evidence or “motherhood” statements such as “everybody knows that...”

Interact with a range of sources

Generally, students are expected to cite a range of resources (books, journal articles, interview sources and so on) appropriate to the task given. It is important to note that it is not sufficient simply to quote/reference such authors. Students are expected to critique the arguments of various authors, and to assess whether the contributions of author are valuable, insightful and applicable. A balanced essay will include views/sources with which the student disagrees.

Important Note: Depending on the nature of the specific question, field assignments do not necessarily require formal citations of the work of other writers. However, as with any assignment, if you do use the ideas or words of another person in a field assignment, you MUST quote and reference these ideas or words appropriately or be guilty of plagiarism (see below).

Be free from plagiarism

Examples of plagiarism will result in automatic failure. Plagiarism is the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own. It includes the unacknowledged word-for-word use or paraphrasing of another person's work, and the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas.

Use Turabian or APA referencing system correctly

See the Referencing Guide on Moodle for further information.

As long as these are used clearly, consistently, appropriately and accurately it is ACCEPTABLE but not mandatory to:

- Use headings and subheadings.
- Use numbering and lettering.
- Use footnotes.

- Include a table of contents or other tables, figures, diagrams, and/or appendices.

9.7.2 Submitting Assignments

1. Unless otherwise instructed, all assessments must be submitted via Moodle.
2. Assessments must not (unless instructed) be submitted directly to a:
 - a. Facilitator, Marker or any other academic staff person;
 - b. Student Engagement Manager, Registrar or any other administrative staff person.
3. All assessments must be submitted with a cover sheet. A cover sheet template is available on Moodle. If the cover sheet is not included on an assignment it will not be accepted.
4. All assignment files must be saved as a Word document in the following format: name, unit code, assessment type. E.g. "Joe Bloggs T7101 Field Assignment" or "Joe Bloggs T7101 Introduction to Theology Field Assignment".
5. Draft assignments may be sent at any stage to Studiosity with a 24-hour targeted turnaround for quite detailed feedback. If you would also like your unit marker to check that your assignment is on the right track, please message them to discuss the submission of a draft, and ensure that you send the draft no later than the Wednesday before the assignment is due. Markers will generally return draft feedback within 48 hours but the earlier you submit a draft the more time you will have to implement any feedback. Note that markers will not give detailed feedback on grammar, spelling etc., but will comment on the general approach and direction. Drafts will not be given grade estimates.

Assignments not submitted in accordance with Points 1 to 4 will be deemed to be **Incorrectly Submitted**. An Incorrectly Submitted Assignment will not attract any marks and will be allocated a fail grade.

If a student, having realised that they have incorrectly submitted an assignment, then resubmits the assessment in the correct form (i.e., in accordance with points 1-4 above), the resubmitted assessment will be processed normally, but will accrue any penalties associated with late submission.

9.7.3 Plagiarism

1. All assessments involving plagiarism will be failed.
2. No assessment involving plagiarism will be eligible for resubmission.
3. If the student involved can provide evidence in writing to the satisfaction of the Academic Dean that the plagiarism was unintentional, then a failing grade will be awarded to the assessment in accordance with the overall quality of the assessment – taking into account the seriousness of the plagiarism.
4. If no such evidence is forthcoming, the plagiarism will be deemed to be intentional and the assessment involved will receive a grade of zero.
5. Cases of repeated plagiarism are treated very seriously and may result in the suspension or removal of the student from their course of study.

9.8 Grading

9.8.1 Grading Criteria

A candidate's grade for a unit is determined upon assessment of performance in required course work and/or examinations. In deciding the grade, due weight is given to the level at which the unit is offered.

The grade of a candidate is recorded as follows:

Pass (P) 50-64%

Work that satisfactorily attains the required outcome(s), with adequate knowledge, understanding, analysis and presentation.

Credit (C) 65-74%

Work that soundly attains the required outcome(s), showing a good level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, presentation and some evidence of critical interpretation.

Distinction (D) 75-84%

Excellent work that substantially attains the required outcome(s), showing a high level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation and some originality.

High Distinction (H) 85-100%

Outstanding work that comprehensively attains the required outcome(s), showing superior knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation and originality.

Fail (N) 0-49%

Work that fails to attain the required outcome(s), lacking in basic knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation.

Satisfactory (S)

The grade will be awarded in a topic that is assessed only on a pass or fail basis, where a satisfactory level of performance and participation has been achieved.

9.8.2 Marking Guide

The following is a list of criteria that each marker takes into account when marking the majority of Higher Education written work submitted to ACOM for assessment. Some units and assessment items will have specific marking rubrics. These will be clearly indicated in the unit introductory booklets where available.

Marking Guide for Assessment

The following is a list of criteria that each marker takes into account when marking ALL Higher Education written work submitted to ACOM for assessment. Students should be aware that markers will fail assignments that do not meet these criteria.

	Fail (<50%)	Pass (50-64%)	Credit (65-74%)	Distinction (75-84%)	High Distinction (85-100%)
General Description	Work that fails to attain the required outcome(s), lacking in basic knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation	Work that satisfactorily attains the required outcome(s) with adequate knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation	Work that soundly attains the required outcome(s) showing a good level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, presentation and some evidence of critical interpretation	Excellent work that substantially attains the required outcome(s) showing a high level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation and some originality	Outstanding work that comprehensively attains the required outcome(s) showing superior knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation and originality
Resources Up to 10% of total mark	Inadequate evidence of having used appropriate resources	Evidence of having used some appropriate resources	Evidence of a sound understanding of appropriate resources	Evidence of relevant use of resources beyond expectations	Evidence of wide, relevant, and independently gained resources.
Knowledge of Topic Up to 30% of total mark	Inadequate factual and conceptual knowledge	Demonstrated satisfactory factual and conceptual knowledge to serve as a basis for further study	Demonstrated extensive factual and conceptual knowledge	Demonstrated substantial factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating highly distinctive insight into deeper and more subtle aspects of the topic	Demonstrated outstanding factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating highly distinctive insight into deeper and more subtle aspects of the topic
Articulation of Argument Up to 20% of total mark	Demonstrated inability to construct coherent argument	Ability to construct sound argument based on evidence	Ability to construct well-reasoned and coherent argument based on discriminating use of evidence	Evidence of imagination, originality, and independent thought	Sustained evidence of imagination, originality, and independent thought
Analytical and Reflective Skills Up to 15% of total mark	Insufficient evidence of analytical and reflective skills	Evidence of analytical and reflective skills	Evidence of developed analytical and reflective skills	Evidence of well-developed analytical and reflective skills	Evidence of highly developed analytical and reflective skills
Application Up to 15% of total mark	Insufficient evidence of appropriate application	Evidence of some application	Ability to apply some of the concepts to specific situations.	Ability to apply concepts to challenging problems	Ability to apply to non-routine or very challenging problems
Expression and Presentation appropriate to the Discipline Up to 10% of total mark	Inadequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation	Adequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation	Good skills in expression, presentation, and documentation	Well-developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to wider audiences	Highly developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to wider audiences

9.8.3 Scaling of Grades

To ensure inter-unit and inter-institutional equity, a student's final grade for any unit may be scaled (upwards or downwards) by ACOM and/or SCD. Thus, a student's final grade is NOT necessarily a simple addition of marks gained for each assessment item.

Scaling of grades is based on the monitoring of results overseen by SCD. A student's final grade will appear on their Academic Transcript. Scaling occurs AFTER a graded assignment has been returned to a student.

9.8.4 Academic Results

Student academic results will be posted online in the secure Paradigm database. See 3.6.6 Accessing Results: Paradigm for instructions for use.

9.9 Failure, Resubmission and Progression

9.9.1 Failed Assignments

9.8.1.1 Resubmissions

A student may resubmit any assessment (other than forum posts and online quizzes) that receive a failing grade prior to the application of any late penalties. Where an assessment fails prior to the application of a late penalty and the mark is further reduced by that penalty, the assessment piece may be resubmitted, but the original late penalty will be applied to the resubmitted piece.

Assessments that fail from the application of late penalties alone may not be resubmitted.

1. Students have one week to complete the resubmission from the date the failed assessment was received back by the student. There are no extensions for resubmissions. Resubmissions that are submitted after the deadline will not be accepted and the mark given to the original submission will stand.
2. The re-submitted assessment must be submitted in Moodle with tracked changes (or a similar method to demonstrate change) that reflect the issues raised by the marker or any other corrections required. The student must email the marker to advise they have resubmitted the assessment.
3. The maximum grade achievable for the resubmitted assignment is 50%.
4. No student may resubmit any assessment that failed due to academic misconduct (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, copying, etc.)
5. In cases where the resubmitted work, or re-sat examination, attracts fewer marks than the original work or examination the original grade will stand: i.e., students cannot lose marks through resubmission or re-sitting. However, assessments or examinations that Fail twice will NOT be eligible for ANY further reassessment of any kind.

9.8.1.2 Unit Fail

Where a student receives a fail grade for the unit overall a second examiner appointed by the Academic Dean will review all assessment items which have contributed to the result. No student will be failed for a unit unless two examiners agree that the work has not reached a pass level.

9.9.2 Appeals

Appeals policy

A student may appeal, without prejudice, against the result given in any item of assessment when that student believes that some error in grading has been made, or when there are concerns about the grade awarded. Any such appeal will be conducted under the terms of the Sydney College of Divinity (SCD) Appeals Policy and will be managed by the Academic Dean (or equivalent officer) in consultation with both student and marker concerned.

Appeals Procedure

In the first instance the student shall raise this matter with the marker concerned.

Note: An appeal will not be considered if the student has not made a genuine attempt to address the issue with the marker.

After this information dialogue, if the student still believes that there are grounds to appeal, the student may formally appeal in writing to the ACOM Academic Dean using the form provided on Moodle. Such an appeal must be lodged within two weeks of receiving the original mark and should detail, with appropriate supporting evidence, the reasons why the mark should be reconsidered. Students should note that an appeal must be based on supplied reasonable evidence of unfair or incorrect marking. Reasons such as not liking a result, disliking a unit, a lecturer, or a topic, or having worked hard in completing the assessment, will NOT be considered adequate grounds for an appeal.

The Academic Dean will consider the student's written reasons and make a determination as to the validity of those reasons, consulting with the assessment marker and/or other ACOM staff as appropriate.

If the Academic Dean upholds the appeal the relevant assessment item will be sent to a second marker for re-marking. In the event of a variation in marks awarded by the two markers, the higher mark will stand.

If the Academic Dean does not uphold the appeal, the student will be informed in writing as to why the appeal was not upheld. In general, the Academic Dean will not grant an appeal where, in the opinion of the Academic Dean, the reasons provided by the student:

- a. are unrelated to the substance of the assessment and its completion by the student;
- b. involve vexatious or otherwise unsubstantiated claims against the integrity of the marker; or
- c. involve claims of ignorance on behalf of the student where documentation regarding the structure and substance of the assessment has been clearly provided.

A student who remains dissatisfied by the outcome may make a further written appeal to the ACOM Academic Board, who will review the process and relate their decision in writing to the student. In non-SCD programs, the decision of the ACOM Academic Board will be final.

Where a student enrolled in an SCD program believes that the review procedures in ACOM have not been followed with regard to an appeal against a failed final grade, the student may appeal to the SCD Academic Board, under the following conditions:

- a. this is the only ground on which an appeal can be made to the SCD Academic Board;
- b. the appeal must be submitted in writing to the SCD Dean within ten working days of receipt of the determinative outcome of the appeal from ACOM;
- c. the student must provide the SCD Dean with documented evidence that the regulations on Review and Appeals have not been complied with by ACOM;
- d. the SCD Academic Board will deal with the appeal at its discretion;
- e. the decision of the SCD Academic Board will be final.

9.9.3 Students At Risk

9.9.3.1 Students at Risk Policy

Australian College of Ministries is committed to the fundamental principle of assisting all students to progress smoothly through their studies in order to realise their academic potential and to achieve their academic goals in a timely manner. This involves monitoring students' progression through their studies to assist them to maintain a minimum rate of progression that is likely to lead to successful course completion. Accordingly, this policy is designed to enhance student retention and academic success through timely intervention and to reduce avoidable failures that result in failure to graduate or exclusion from studies.

To achieve this aim, ACOM faculty will at all times seek to identify students at significant risk of academic failure and students whose academic progress is significantly hampered by impediments that may be effectively managed by early intervention. Faculty and other relevant support staff will make additional academic and personal support available to these students, in order to provide students with the opportunity to work towards a successful outcome.

9.9.3.2 Minimum Progression

ACOM requires that all classifications of students (undergraduate, postgraduate, full-time, part-time, etc.) retain the status of Good Academic Standing at all times across the course of their studies. This status is established initially by passing a minimum of 2 of the first 4 units enrolled (in AQF Level 5 awards) and 4 of the first 8 units enrolled (in higher level awards). Good Academic Standing is then maintained by passing a minimum of 50% of all units enrolled in subsequent trimesters. Students whose progression falls below the level of Good Academic Standing will be deemed to be At Risk.

9.9.3.3 Students at Risk Procedures

- 9.9.3.3.1 There are two stages in the management of students at risk: an initial period of Observation and Monitoring followed by formal registration of At Risk status.
- 9.9.3.3.2 Observation and Monitoring Status. In the initial stages of a student's enrolment, Student Engagement Managers (SEMs) will review all results and establish direct communication with students who fail any units, in order to provide pastoral care and encouragement, with advice on improving study. If failures persist in subsequent enrolments, the student's status will be amended to Monitoring, which will involve more directive advice from the SEM in order to establish ways to overcome any impediments to learning.
- 9.9.3.3.3 At Risk Status. A student whose completion rate falls below Minimum Progression will be advised by the Registrar (or designated agent) that they are to be placed on the Students at Risk Register. In reviewing assessment results, the ACOM faculty will compile for submission to the ACOM Academic Board a report on all students who are at risk using the following six indicators:
- Receipt of a Fail or Incomplete grade in more than fifty percent of the credit points for which the student was enrolled in the trimester just completed;
 - Failure by a student to achieve an average mark of fifty or above in the award course in each trimester;
 - Failure twice by a student to pass the same unit of study;
 - An average attendance record across all units of study in the range 80-85%;
 - Inability of a student to complete their award course within the maximum permitted time while carrying a normal student load;
 - Significant negative variations in a student's academic performance i.e. current performance significantly lower than in previous trimesters
 - Being involved in academic misconduct.

This Report will also be available during the SCD Monitoring of Assessment and Results process.

The Academic Dean (or designated agent) will enter the details of these Students at Risk in the Students at Risk Register and will send all students listed in the Register a letter that addresses the following four issues:

- The student's academic progress is cause for concern;
- The criteria used to identify them as a student whose academic progress is cause for concern;
- The need to discuss their progress with the Academic Dean (or their Student Engagement Manager, as most appropriate);
- The potential impact of this action on subsequent study programs.

In conjunction with the student, the designated staff member will devise, implement and monitor a personal plan to assist the student to manage the identified issues successfully. Such a plan may include such things as additional individual tuition or learning resources, the undertaking of a designated study skills program, enrolment in an external learning development program, or other flexible arrangements as appropriate to the individual student's situation. If the identified issues are more personal than academic, the Student Engagement Manager will assist the student in comparable ways.

Students whose names appear on the Students at Risk Register for a second trimester will be recommended by the Academic Dean to the Academic Board to be placed on Academic Probation for a designated period, with the imposition of probationary conditions aimed at assisting the student to succeed at a realistic pace.

If a student fails to fulfil the conditions of probation or fails in subsequent units following the period of probation, the Academic Board may ask the student to show good cause why they should be permitted to continue in the award course. In this case, the ACOM Academic Board will notify the student in writing of three issues:

- There is substantial doubt about the student's capacity to successfully complete the course of study;
- The student is required to show good cause why they should be allowed to continue their studies;
- The good cause response should:
 - Describe the circumstances that have negatively affected the student's performance in their studies;
 - Discuss the specific effects or impacts of those circumstances;
 - Identify the steps the student has undertaken, or will undertake, to address each of these circumstances with a view to ensuring that the effect of future circumstances will not be negative;
 - Provide documentary evidence (such as medical certification, police reports or statutory declarations), as appropriate to support the Show Good Cause response.

In assessing whether a student has Shown Good Cause, the ACOM Academic Board will consider the following:

- Good Cause means circumstances beyond the reasonable control of a student, which may include serious ill health or misadventure, but does not include demands of employers, pressure of employment or time devoted to activities outside ACOM, unless these are relevant to serious ill health or misadventure. In all cases, the onus is on the student to provide satisfactory evidence to establish good cause.
- The ACOM Academic Board may take into account relevant aspects of a student's record in other courses or units of study within ACOM or other institutions provided that the student presents this information.
- In making the assessment, the ACOM Academic Board must carefully and ethically consider the student's ability to complete a course of study and must not accept a Show Good Cause response that does not provide a reasonable expectation that the issues affecting satisfactory academic performance have been identified and a clear pathway to address those issues has been presented.

The ACOM Academic Board will then notify the student in writing of its decision, which will be:

- To permit a student who has shown good cause to re-enrol; or
- To exclude the student from the relevant course where good cause has not been established; or
- To permit the student to re-enrol in the relevant award course, subject to restrictions on units of study, which may include, but are not restricted to:
 - (i) completion of a unit or units of study within a specified time;
 - (ii) exclusion from a unit or units of study; and
 - (iii) specification of the earliest date upon which a student may re-enrol in a unit or units of study; and
- Provide reasons for its decision and record those reasons for permission to re-enrol or to exclude from the course on the Students at Risk Register.

9.10 Graduation

In order to graduate, students must fulfil ALL unit requirements (including any unassessed work or related documentation) by the end of trimester 3 in the year prior to their intended graduation.

9.11 Academic Misconduct

9.11.1 Definitions

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(a) *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own. It includes the unacknowledged word-for-word use or paraphrasing of another person's work, and the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas.

(b) *Cheating*

Cheating is the provision or receipt of information during tests or examinations; or providing or using unauthorised assistance at the computer terminal, or on fieldwork. Cheating would not usually include consultation with others or discussion amongst students about the preparation of assignments unless that was specifically forbidden. It includes unauthorised collusion.

(c) *Fraud*

Academic fraud is the falsification and fabrication of, or dishonesty in, reporting research results.

(d) *Improper Behaviour*

Improper behaviour is that which interferes with students or staff in pursuit of their academic endeavours. It includes disruptive behaviour in class or institutional facilities such as libraries.

(e) *Misrepresentation*

Misrepresentation is the giving of false or misleading information in academic matters. It includes falsely claiming credit for past study, falsely stating that thesis material has not been used in another thesis.

(f) *Unethical Behaviour*

Unethical behaviour is that which breaches accepted ethical standards. It includes failing to observe the terms of an ethical approach to conduct research, misuse of confidential information obtained in field education.

9.11.2 Reporting and Managing Academic Misconduct

(a) *Reporting an Incident of Academic Misconduct*

A complaint may be made against any person as a student of ACOM whether proceeding to an award or not. Any person who has direct knowledge of academic misconduct may make a complaint in writing to the Academic Dean. Where appropriate, the Academic Dean will refer the complaint to the ACOM Academic Board, who will set up an Academic Misconduct Committee to investigate. If the Academic Dean is the complainant, or otherwise involved with the complaint, the procedures will be carried out by the College Principal.

A complaint must identify the person against whom it is made and the nature of the misconduct. It must provide appropriate evidence of the alleged misconduct, including the names of witnesses where appropriate.

Complaints against persons formerly enrolled with ACOM should be made under the provisions of the SCD Academic Misconduct: Regulations for Students, which can be found in the SCD Handbook Section 3.46, on their website: [SCD Handbook](#).

(b) *Managing an Incident of Academic Misconduct*

The Academic Board shall, as required, appoint an Academic Misconduct Committee of three persons who will determine a complaint referred to it by the Academic Dean. A person who teaches or supervises the person complained of shall not be a member of that Academic Misconduct Committee.

Members of the faculty of other Member Institutions of the SCD may be appointed to the Academic Misconduct Committee.

The Academic Misconduct Committee may inform itself about the alleged misconduct in any way it thinks fit. It must give the person against whom the misconduct is alleged sufficient notice of its deliberations and allow the person to present a defence in writing and in person. The person may be accompanied to any hearing by a friend.

Having considered the evidence before it, the Academic Misconduct Committee shall make its finding on the balance of probabilities, and shall report its findings in writing to the complainant, the person against whom the allegation is laid, and the Academic Dean, who will be responsible for implementing the decision of the Committee. The Academic Dean will report the outcome of any academic misconduct complaint to the ACOM Academic Board and the SCD Academic Board.

Records of the making and resolution of a complaint about academic misconduct shall be kept in a separate file for each complaint. When a complaint is established, a note recording the nature of the complaint and any penalty imposed shall be placed on the person's file. A person's academic transcript shall not contain any reference to academic misconduct as the reason for a course result or other record. In general, information about established complaints shall be kept confidential. The Academic Dean is authorised to inform other educational institutions of an established complaint of academic misconduct if the Academic Dean considers it appropriate to do so.

9.11.3 Penalties for Academic Misconduct

Depending on the severity of the misconduct and the previous record of the student involved, an Academic Misconduct Committee may:

- a. Dismiss a complaint.
- b. Find a complaint established and impose no penalty.
- c. Find a complaint established and admonish the person.
- d. Find a complaint established and order that the person forfeit marks in an assignment, fail a course unit or all the units in which the person is enrolled in a trimester.
- e. Find a complaint established and suspend the person from enrolling for a course unit or units, or an award in ACOM for a period not exceeding four trimesters.
- f. Find a complaint established and recommend to the Academic Board of the SCD that the person be suspended from enrolling in the SCD for a period not exceeding four trimesters.
- g. Find a complaint established and recommend to the Academic Board of the SCD that the person be excluded from enrolment in the SCD for a period not less than two years.
- h. Find a complaint established and impose a combination of the above penalties.

A person who is suspended may not enrol in another Member Institute of the SCD while the suspension is in force without the express permission of the Academic Board of the SCD.

9.11.4 Appeals

A person against whom a complaint of misconduct has been established under these procedures may appeal to the Academic Board of the SCD within 30 days of receiving the decision of the Academic Misconduct Committee. If a person lodges an appeal, the implementation of any penalty will be stopped until the appeal is resolved. The appeal will be heard under the provisions of the SCD Academic Misconduct Procedures which can be found in the SCD Handbook Section 3.51, on their website: [SCD Handbook](#).

9.12 Student Grievances

9.12.1 Student Grievance Policy

ACOM has a responsibility under legislation to ensure that students are not subjected to discrimination, harassment, vilification, victimization, or other forms of unfairness. The ACOM Student Grievance Policy provides a mechanism for addressing grievances, without prejudice, arising out of any kind of situation or process which adversely affects the student.

The College appoints both a Grievance Officer and a Student Advocacy Officer from amongst their staff, with defined and differentiated roles in the management of student grievances. The services of the Grievance Officer and the Student Advocacy Officer are provided free of charge to the student.

9.12.2 Student Grievance Procedures

The *Grievance Officer* is the first contact for a student who seeks advice and information concerning the grievance process and this officer will facilitate and document the process and make referrals as necessary. If a grievance is not resolved through discussion facilitated by the Grievance Officer (in consultation with the Principal if necessary), a student enrolled in a Sydney College of Divinity program may pursue the matter further through the agency of the SCD Grievance Handler.

The *Student Advocacy Officer* will provide personal assistance and support for the student throughout the grievance process. The Student Advocacy officer ensures that the student has full information about the process and appropriate advice as needed throughout the process. The Student Advocacy Officer refrains from discussing details with anyone but the student unless the student requests otherwise, and is tasked solely with supporting the student to achieve a just and proper outcome.

As a Member Institute of SCD, ACOM follows SCD's Grievance Policy and Procedures, full details of which can be found in the SCD Handbook Section 3.52, on their website:

<https://scd.edu.au/handbook/>

9.13 Saving Clause

Notwithstanding the provisions of any policy in his handbook, the Academic Dean may vary or waive the provisions of any policy if, and with the concurrence of the Academic Board, it is the opinion of the Academic Board that the normal exercise of these policies would cause unconscionable difficulties for the student(s) concerned, or damage the reputation and/or operational integrity of ACOM.