



1.1 Purpose

Uniting Education Schools and Colleges (Uniting Education) assists and advises the Synod Standing Committee (SSC) of the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church (the Church) in fulfilling its obligations relating to the oversight of schools and residential colleges in which the Church has an interest by way of ownership, or power of appointment to relevant boards or by way of ecumenical collaboration (the Schools and Colleges).

1.2 Scope

Uniting Education assists the SSC in the oversight of the Church's activities in accordance with the responsibilities of this Charter.

1.3 Responsibilities

In respect of Schools and Colleges, Uniting Education has the responsibility, wherever it is appropriate under the constituting documents or relevant operating arrangements or collaborations for each School and College, to:

- (a) foster a relationship and connection between the Schools and Colleges and the wider church
- (b) engage for the purpose of understanding strategic direction, strategic challenges and growth opportunities
- (c) provide advice to Synod about its strategic directions and opportunities for the growth of the School and Colleges network
- (d) review and assess risks and ensure techniques, procedures and controls are in place to eliminate/mitigate adverse effects on the Uniting Church in Australia or the Schools and Colleges
- (e) provide advice to Synod on these risks including the potential impact on Synod
- (f) ensure effective procedures are in place to achieve compliance with educational, legislative and community requirements
- (g) oversee operational and financial performance of the Schools and Colleges and to advise and collaborate with such Schools and Colleges as may be appropriate
- (h) oversee and report to the SSC on matters which may affect the reputation and culture of the Uniting Church in Australia, or the Schools and Colleges
- (i) strengthen the profile and participation of the Uniting Church in appropriate educational and government forums and networks
- (j) make recommendations to the SSC on amendments to Schools and Colleges' constitutions or other governing arrangements or collaborations
- (k) oversee the provision of governance training to Uniting Church appointees to Schools and College boards or councils
- (l) provide advice to and receive information from the Finance, Investment and Property Board (FIPB) on property matters relating to Uniting Church schools and residential colleges



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- (m) Appoint board or council members to School and College boards or councils, including the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association (PMSA) board, and report such appointments to the SSC on a quarterly basis (in arrears)
- (n) terminate board or council members appointed to School and College boards or councils, including the PMSA board, at the request of the SSC, in accordance with the relevant Schools or College constitution
- (o) recommend candidates to the SSC for appointment to Uniting Education Schools and Colleges to fill vacancies as they arise.

1.4 Accountability

Each member of Uniting Education is entitled to rely on Synod office management on matters within their responsibility, and on external professionals on matters within their areas of expertise and may assume the accuracy of information provided by such persons, so long as they are not aware of any reasonable grounds upon which to question its accuracy.

1.5 Composition and term

Uniting Education is a commission of the SSC and consists of 8 members:

- (a) a chairperson
- (b) the General Secretary, or nominee, as an ex-officio member
- (c) 6 other members.

The SSC appoints all members, other than ex-officio members, to Uniting Education. The SSC will not ordinarily appoint a member of staff serving in a Uniting Church school or college or a Uniting Church related school or college unless recommended by Uniting Education.

Members noted in (a) and (c) above must have gifts, skills or experience in one or more of the following competencies:

- (a) educational leadership in the independent schooling sector or residential colleges
- (b) commitment to education improvement and developing a faith perspective across the Schools and Colleges
- (c) policy discernment and development which can be applied to the Schools and Colleges
- (d) relevant discipline such as education, theology, law, accounting, marketing or business
- (e) commitment to the faith growth of students across the Schools and Colleges in Uniting Education's portfolio.

Appointment to Uniting Education is for a 3 year term or as determined by the SSC. The maximum continuous time a person can serve as a Commission member is 9 years, unless that person has served 1 or more terms as chairperson, in which case the maximum continuous time is 12 years.

A member of the Synod office is the secretary of Uniting Education.



1.6 Meetings

Uniting Education meets a minimum of 6 times per calendar year. The Uniting Education chairperson convenes meetings at other times to carry out the role of Uniting Education. Any member may request the Uniting Education chairperson to convene a meeting.

The notice and agenda of meetings includes supporting papers. The agenda for meetings is determined by Uniting Education chairperson in consultation with Uniting Education secretary and others directed by Uniting Education chairperson.

General governance protocols, including those relating to quorums and electronic decision making, are outlined within the Synod By-laws.

In the absence of Uniting Education chairperson or appointed delegate, the members will elect one of their number as chairperson of that meeting.

Subject to the discretion of Uniting Education, the Executive Officer Schools and Colleges attends all meetings by standing invitation but does not have the right to vote and may be asked to withdraw for all or any part of a meeting. Uniting Education may invite other people including any employee of the Synod to attend all or part of its meeting.

Any person with a material personal interest in a matter being considered at a meeting must not be present for consideration of that matter.

Decisions of Uniting Education are made at a duly called and constituted meeting or otherwise agreed by all members. Where approvals are granted outside a meeting of Uniting Education, a report is provided to the next meeting.

1.7 Minutes

The Uniting Education secretary prepares minutes for each Commission meeting.

The draft minutes of each meeting are reviewed by Uniting Education chairperson and circulated to all Commission members by the Uniting Education secretary as soon as practicable after each Commission meeting.

A copy of Uniting Education minutes, once they have been approved by Uniting Education, are signed by the Uniting Education chairperson.

1.8 Access to information

Uniting Education has the authority to seek any information it lawfully requires from any employee of the Synod and all employees must comply with such requests.

Uniting Education has the right of direct contact with management. Uniting Education holds a separate private meeting at least annually with each of the General Secretary and Executive Officer Schools and Colleges.

Professional advisers may be appointed at Synod's expense to assist Uniting Education in evaluating specific issues or risks and mitigating strategies to meet Uniting Education's purpose and discharge



its responsibilities. In engaging such advisors, Uniting Education must consider the reasonableness of the expense and budget availability.

1.9 Reporting to the Synod Standing Committee

The Uniting Education chairperson reports to the SSC on the activities and considerations of Uniting Education during the period since the last report at a frequency to be determined by the SSC.

1.10 Performance review

Uniting Education participates in an annual self-evaluation of its performance to determine whether it is functioning effectively and meeting the requirements of its Charter and will submit the results of this review to the SSC.

1.11 Review of charter

Uniting Education reviews its Charter annually to provide assurance that it remains consistent with the SSC's objectives and responsibilities.

The SSC approves or further reviews the Charter.