



1.1 Purpose

The Synod Chaplaincy Commission (the Commission) assists and advises the Synod Standing Committee (SSC) in fulfilling its obligations as to oversight and development of chaplaincy within the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church (the church).

1.2 Scope

The Commission assists the SSC in the oversight of the Synod's¹ activities in accordance with the responsibilities of this Charter.

1.3 Responsibilities

The Commission has responsibility to:

- (a) promote and progress the ministry of chaplaincy
- (b) act as a think tank on chaplaincy issues and an advocate to the church on insights for mission
- (c) develop policies and protocols related to chaplaincy training and accreditation in conjunction with chaplaincy employers
- (d) oversee the implementation of the strategy
- (e) develop credentialled pathways for chaplains
- (f) lead the development of and be the point of contact for strategic relationships (e.g. ecumenical)
- (g) be accountable for the development of chaplaincy courses and training programs
- (h) set and maintain standards of accreditation and training
- (i) collate biannual reporting data from all chaplaincy employers including a register of accredited chaplains in Synod and present to SSC
- (j) enable and facilitate whole of synod chaplaincy networking and relationship building
- (k) oversee the development of the theological framework for chaplaincy
- (l) develop and oversee the Chaplaincy competency framework
- (m) provide a portal as a one stop shop of courses and resources for chaplaincy.

The Commission performs an advisory role in carrying out its functions, authorities and powers.

An Officer, Chaplaincy Commission is appointed to manage and deliver Commission responsibilities and coordinate the implementation of the strategy.

1.4 Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy currently operates in the following sectors:

- (a) Health Care (hospitals)
- (b) Human Services (including Corrective Services)
- (c) Aged Care (Blue Care)
- (d) Education (schools and tertiary)
- (e) Defence Force
- (f) Sport, Tourism and Recreation
- (g) Police and Emergency Services.

¹ The definition of Synod incorporates all entities, agencies and institutions of The Uniting Church of Australia Property Trust (Q.) and entities where the Church provides membership of governance bodies.



Positions for paid chaplaincy ministry will be either be “ministry location” positions, or “placements”, depending on the discernment of the Placements Committee. Appointments to positions described as chaplaincy roles will be in accordance with Uniting Church in Australia Regulations and Synod Policies.

The pastoral care of those in chaplaincy roles will be the responsibility of the Presbytery in which the Chaplain’s worshipping community is located. The worshipping community is expected to provide pastoral support to those in chaplaincy roles.

The induction/ commissioning of a person into a specified ministry is the responsibility of the organisation which has oversight of the position, in cooperation with the employing/appointing body, and the Presbytery. The Commission is responsible for appointing representatives on behalf of the Synod to ecumenical bodies having oversight of chaplaincy matters.

1.5 Accountability

Each member of the Commission 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.

1.6 Composition and term

The Commission is a commission of the SSC and consists of 7 members being:

- (a) a chairperson
- (b) the General Secretary, or nominee, as an ex-officio member
- (c) 5 other members chosen for their interest or expertise in the areas of chaplaincy, theology, education, mission strategy and innovation, multi-culturalism, marketing, fundraising and finance.

The SSC appoints all members, other than the ex-officio member, to the Commission.

Appointment to the Commission 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 the Commission.

1.7 Meetings

The Commission meets a minimum of 4 times per calendar year. The Commission chairperson convenes meetings at other times when necessary to carry out the role of the Commission. Any member may request the Commission chairperson to convene a meeting.

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

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

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



The Commission may invite other people including any employee of 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 the Commission may be made at a duly called and constituted meeting or otherwise agreed by all Commission members. Where approvals are granted outside a meeting of the Commission, a report is to be provided to the next meeting of the Commission.

1.8 Minutes

The Commission secretary prepares minutes for each Commission meeting.

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

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

1.9 Access to information

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

The Commission has the right to direct contact with management.

Professional advisers may be appointed at Synod's expense to assist the Commission in evaluating specific issues or risks and mitigating strategies to meet the Commission's purpose and discharge its responsibilities. In engaging such advisors, the Commission must consider the reasonableness of the expense and budget availability.

1.10 Reporting to the Synod Standing Committee

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

1.11 Performance review

The Commission performs an annual self-evaluation of its performance to determine whether it is functioning effectively and meeting the requirements of its Charter and submits the results to the SSC.

1.12 Review of charter

The Commission reviews their charter annually to provide assurance it remains consistent with the SSC's objectives and responsibilities.

The SSC approves or further reviews the charter.