

1.1 Purpose

The Multi-Cross Cultural Reference Group (the Reference Group) assists and advises the Synod Standing Committee (SSC) in fulfilling its commitment to embrace the gift and challenge of fulfilling the stated calling of Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church (the church) to be a truly multicultural church.

1.2 Scope

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

1.3 Responsibilities

The Reference Group performs an advisory role and acts with delegated authority of the SSC as detailed in this Charter in carrying out its functions, authorities and powers.

The Reference Group has the responsibility to:

- (a) celebrate and build awareness of the multi-cross-cultural nature of the Uniting Church, the Assembly, Synod, Presbytery, Congregation and Agencies, as well as non-government organisations and government
- (b) be a support and reference committee for Synod and a focal point for multi-cross cultural ministry and wider networking with the church for multi-cross cultural relationship
- (c) promote and advocate the vision and mission of multi-cross cultural ministry within congregations and presbyteries
- (d) be a voice of culturally and linguistically diverse people at Synod level
- (e) build skills for multi-cross cultural relationships
- (f) resource second and later generations
- (g) assist and facilitate in planting congregations and faith communities in the light of Synod's vision for mission and intentional missional strategy.

1.4 Accountability

Each member of the Reference Group 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

The Reference Group is a reference group of the SSC and consists of up to 13 members being:

- (a) a chairperson
- (b) the General Secretary, or nominee, as an ex-officio member
- (c) up to 11 other members.

The SSC appoints all members, other than ex-officio members, to the Reference Group.

Appointment to the Reference Group is for a 3 year term or as determined by the SSC. The maximum continuous time a person can serve as a Reference Group member is 9 years, unless that person has served one 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 Reference Group.

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.



1.6 Meetings

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

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

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

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

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

1.7 Minutes

The Reference Group secretary prepares minutes for each Reference Group meeting.

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

A copy of the Reference Group minutes, once approved by the Reference Group, are signed by the Reference Group chairperson.

1.8 Access to information

The Reference Group 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 Reference Group has the right of direct contact with management. The Reference Group shall hold a separate private meeting at least annually with each of the Moderator and Associate General Secretary.

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

1.9 Reporting to the Synod Standing Committee

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

1.10 Performance review

The Reference Group 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.



1.11 Review of charter

The Reference Group reviews its charter annually to provide assurance it remains consistent with the SSC objectives and responsibilities.

The SSC approves or further reviews the charter.