

# THE MINISTRY OF PASTOR

## CORE COMPETENCIES

### Assessment Resources for Presbyteries

Version 1.1 – February 2009

The attached documents are designed to assist Presbyteries (or other appointing councils) to assess applicants for the Ministry of Pastor in relation to Core Competencies as defined by the Ministerial Education Commission (MEC).

These documents should be read in conjunction with the Regulations for the Ministry of Pastor and Core Competencies document prepared by the MEC. These documents are available here: <http://assembly.uca.org.au/resources/pastor>

## CONTENTS

**1. Summary of Core Competencies** – a two-page summary suitable for distribution to persons considering the ministry of Pastor.

### **2. Assessment Guidelines**

This document contains an explanation of the 'performance criteria' for the Core Competencies and an explanation about how they may best be used in the assessment process.

### **3. Core Competency Assessment Planning Tool**

This template will assist assessors to plan and record how core competencies are assessed.

### **4. Assessment Tools**

- (i) The first tool relates to Core Competency elements 1, 2, 3 and 4. This tool consists of a series of questions designed for written response. Applicants may be asked to submit their answers with their application, allowing an assessor or selection panel to subsequently discuss the responses if this is deemed helpful in the assessment process.
- (ii) These tools relate to Core Competency elements 5, 6 and 7.
  - a. Code of Ethics Questionnaire – a series of true/false statements that may be completed by an applicant prior to a conversation about the Code of Ethics.
  - b. Code of Ethics Interview Resource – a series of questions and case studies that may be used by assessors or selection panels
  - c. Referee Form – a third party referee form that may be used to help assess an applicant's behaviour and understandings.

These resources contain materials prepared by Mr. Craig Mitchell, Rev Sandy Boyce, Ms Louise Johnson, including material adapted from work by Dr. Marelle Harisun and Rev. Dr. Jenny Byrnes.

## **The Ministry of Pastor – Summary of Core Competencies**

Core Competencies are those areas determined by the UCA Assembly as essential minimum requirements for an appointment for the ministry of Pastor. The Assembly has determined that these Core Competencies address two areas: The Basis of Union and UCA ethos, and the UCA Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice. Competencies include knowledge, skills and other abilities.

In assessing Core Competencies, Presbyteries will be asking applicants for evidence of their understanding and ability in the areas listed. Such evidence may be provided in a range of ways including an interview, written statement, or a record of assessment conducted by and training body. Some assessment tools are provided by the MEC to assist with this task. The Presbytery is responsible for determining whether the evidence is sufficient as entry-level competency.

It is also important to note that these **Core Competencies** are entry-level competencies designed to be applicable to all Pastors, regardless of their role. However some Pastor roles will require higher levels of competency with regard to preaching and teaching. Such responsibilities will be outlined in a Pastor's job description and reflected in the **General Competencies** related to their particular role. A Pastor's suitability for a particular appointment should be assessed in relation to the job responsibilities of the appointment.

### **UNIT OF COMPETENCY**

#### **Work within the doctrine, ethos and polity of the Uniting Church**

##### **Elements of Competency**

1. Articulate the key theological foundations of the Basis of Union:  
  
identify and explain the key theological themes expressed in the BoU (in particular paras 1 to 4) and the Creeds, in particular
  - a. God as Trinity
  - b. the person and saving work of Jesus Christ
  - c. the nature and mission of the church as a pilgrim people
  - d. Christian hope in the coming reconciliation and the renewal of Creation
  
2. Describe key historical elements contributing to the formation of the Uniting Church
  - a. describe key characteristics of the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian churches
  - b. describe the key documents in the formation of the Uniting Church
  - c. describe the key main events in the process of church union
  
3. Articulate the place and role of key aspects of the Church's life and witness, in particular
  - a. Scripture, Christian witness to the Word, including preaching
  - b. Creeds and Confessions
  - c. the Sacraments
  - d. Christian witness to the Word, including preaching
  - e. Christian service
  - f. commitment to scholarly enquiry and an informed faith
  - g. the place of ecumenism within the UCA's history and vision

4. Understand the Councils and Ministries of the UCA
  - a. explain the UCA understandings of church membership, ministry and service
  - b. identify the key documents that describe UCA polity and procedures
  - c. identify the Councils of the church; their functions and interrelationships
  - d. describe the forms of ministry within the UCA and their inter-relationships
  
5. Articulate and practice key elements of the UCA understanding of gifts, ministry and service
  - a. seek to care for all people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics
  - b. encourage and respect the giftedness and ministry of other people and be willing to learn from them
  - c. teach in a manner that seeks to represent faithfully the Scriptures and the teachings and practices of the UCA
  - d. work effectively in a team setting with appropriate accountability and responsibility
  - e. engage others in respectful dialogue and decision-making and respect the decisions of the councils of the church

## **UNIT OF COMPETENCY**

### **Work within the Uniting Church Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice**

6. Identify the behavioural and boundary issues involved in ministry conduct and accountability in both personal discipleship and professional ministry
  - a. identify the parts of key documents which relate to the ordering of ministries within the UCA
  - b. explain the nature and responsibilities of pastoral ministry and pastoral relationships
  - c. the potential for conflict in responsibility and accountability and appropriate means to resolve this
  - d. explain and give examples of
    - (i) the nature and boundaries of power in ministry relationships
    - (ii) the nature and boundaries of confidentiality
    - (iii) appropriate reasons for referral of pastoral issues
  
7. Identify and practice appropriate standards of professional conduct at a level appropriate to the ministry in which the Pastor is engaged
  - a. accurately represent one's competencies and commit to developing one's knowledge, skills, and spiritual disciplines
  - b. explain UCA expectations regarding gifts, fees and financial gain  
exercise responsible self-care
  - c. explain the purpose of supervision and give evidence of willingness to be subject to supervision
  - d. identify current legal requirements relevant to the particular area of ministry  
explain the ethical and organisational responsibilities of ministry in other organisations as appropriate
  - e. explain the responsibilities of persons in ministry regarding breaches of the Code of Ethics

# ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

## The Ministry of Pastor - Core Competencies

### 1. Definition of Core Competencies

Core Competencies are those areas determined by the Assembly as essential minimum requirements for an appointment for the ministry of Pastor. The Assembly has determined that these Core Competencies address two areas: The Basis of Union and UCA ethos, and the UCA Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice. Competencies include knowledge, skills and other abilities.

### 2. Performance Criteria

These performance criteria will assist Presbyteries\* to determine whether an applicant demonstrates sufficient ability in Core Competencies for appointment as a Pastor. The performance criteria are taken from the Basis of Union, Creeds, the Code of Ethics and related UCA documents. This document does not take the place of these primary documents and they should be referred to as necessary in the assessment process.

### 3. Evidence of Competency

In assessing Core Competencies, Presbyteries will be asking applicants for evidence of their understanding and ability in the areas listed. Such evidence may be provided in a range of ways including an interview, written statement, or a record of assessment conducted by and training body. Some assessment tools are provided by the MEC to assist with this task. The Presbytery is responsible for determining whether the evidence is sufficient as entry-level competency.

It is assumed that applicants will be asked to explain their understandings of the Basis of Union, the Code of Ethics, and the polity and ethos of the UCA in their own words. The criteria provide a checklist of many key statements contained in the above documents. The intent is not that applicants must memorise these documents word-for-word, rather that their responses adequately cover the key aspects of the Church's beliefs, policies and practice as outlined here.

### 5. Indicative not Prescriptive

Presbyteries are able to make their own judgements about Core Competencies based on the spirit and intent of this framework, and are encouraged to see the performance criteria as **indicative** rather than **prescriptive**. ie. the performance criteria are not required answers, but the kinds of understanding and ability for which a Presbytery would seek evidence.

### 6. Ability and Willingness

Competency assessment measures ability, not willingness. A selection body will need to satisfy itself that an applicant is not only capable of adhering to the Basis of Union and Codes of Ethics but also willing to do so in practice.

### 7. Evidence of Prior Learning

If an applicant presents an assessment result from a training course or qualification as evidence of Core Competencies, the Presbytery will need to satisfy itself that all of the elements of the Core Competencies have been adequately demonstrated.

### 8. General Competencies

It is also important to note that these **Core Competencies** are entry-level competencies designed to be applicable to all Pastors, regardless of their role. However some Pastor roles will require higher levels of competency with regard to preaching and teaching. Such responsibilities will be outlined in a Pastor's job description and reflected in the **General Competencies** related to their particular role. A Pastor's suitability for a particular appointment should be assessed in relation to the job responsibilities of the appointment.

\* "Presbytery" above refers to the appointing council, which in some instances will be a Synod or the Assembly.

In the following pages, unless the context or subject matter otherwise indicates, Minister means a Minister as defined in clause 3 of the Constitution, and includes Pastors

Ministerial Education Commission

## UNIT OF COMPETENCY – WORK WITHIN THE DOCTRINE, ETHOS & POLITY OF THE UNITING CHURCH

### ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCY

The Pastor demonstrates the ability to

#### 1. **Articulate the key theological foundations of the Basis of Union (BoU)**

identify and explain the key theological themes expressed in the BoU (in particular paras 1 to 4) and the Creeds, in particular

Item	Performance Criteria	Reference
a. God as Trinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God is Three-in-One: Father, Son and Holy Spirit - co-existent and co-eternal</li> <li>• The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father (and the Son)</li> <li>• The Son is eternally begotten, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one being with the Father</li> <li>• Jesus of Nazareth was God incarnate by the power of the Holy Spirit</li> </ul>	Nicene Creed
b. the person and saving work of Jesus Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself</li> <li>• Jesus' life and death was a response of humility, obedience to and trust in God</li> <li>• God raised Jesus to live and reign over all Creation</li> <li>• The Church preaches Christ as the crucified risen One and confesses him as Lord</li> <li>• Through Christ God pardons people from sin and brings a new order of righteousness and love</li> <li>• The work of salvation is effected by God's sovereign grace alone; we are justified by grace through faith</li> <li>• Christ is present through preaching and human witness in word and action to awaken faith, free people from guilt, bring new life and call people into fellowship and discipleship</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Paras 3, 4
c. the nature and mission of the church as a pilgrim people	<p>The Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic</li> <li>• is loyal to Christ as its head</li> <li>• is a community of believers marked by love, joy and reconciliation</li> <li>• is a fellowship of the Spirit through whom it confesses that Jesus is Lord</li> <li>• is an instrument through which Christ may work and bear witness to himself and set forth the word of salvation  for all humankind</li> <li>• is open to constant renewal and reform under Christ's word</li> <li>• seeks wider unity in the power of the Spirit</li> <li>• hears anew the commission to "make disciples of all nations"</li> <li>• lives in the power of the Spirit as a pledge and foretaste of the coming reconciliation and renewal of the whole of Creation</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Paras 1, 3
d. Christian hope in the coming reconciliation and the renewal of Creation	<p>The Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seeks a continuing renewal in order to set forth the word of salvation for all people</li> <li>• awaits with hope the day of Christ and God's reign over this world and all Creation</li> <li>• is a pilgrim people living in between Christ's death and resurrection and what is to come</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Para 1, 3

## 2. Describe key historical elements contributing to the formation of the Uniting Church

Item	Performance Criteria	Reference
a. describe key characteristics of the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian churches	<p>The following are indicative, not exhaustive by any means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodist Church – John Wesley in 18<sup>th</sup> C England, reform movement in Anglican Church, emphasis on evangelical preaching, mission to disadvantaged people, class or group meetings, grace and sanctification, role of lay leaders in congregations, reformed and evangelical theology</li> <li>• Congregational Church – Robert Browne in 16<sup>th</sup> C England, reform movement in Anglican Church, emphasis on primacy of the congregation, authority of Scripture, justification by faith, local lay leadership, personal piety, overseas mission, reformed theology</li> <li>• Presbyterian Church – John Knox in 16<sup>th</sup> C, Church of Scotland, influence of Calvin, role of elders and Presbyteries in church governance, emphasis on sovereignty of God, primacy of grace and God’s covenant, teaching ministry, involvement in social institutions, reformed theology</li> </ul>	
b. describe the key documents in the formation of the Uniting Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confessional and doctrinal statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Scots Confession of Faith (1560) – the confession of the Church of Scotland</li> <li>- - the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) – the concession of Reformed Churches in Europe</li> <li>- - the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647) – the revised confession of the Church of Scotland and used by Presbyterian Churches</li> <li>- - the Savoy Declaration (1658) – the confession of the Congregational Churches in England</li> <li>- - John Wesley’s Forty-Four sermons (1793) – the doctrinal teaching shaping the Methodist Church</li> </ul> </li> <li>• See below for other key documents</li> </ul>	<p>Basis of Union Paras 9.10, <i>Commentary on the Basis of Union</i> by Davis McCaughey, Uniting Church Press, 1980.</p>
c. describe the key main events in the process of church union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1905 – Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational Churches commenced formal discussions regarding church union</li> <li>• 1957 – Joint Commission on Church Union established</li> <li>• 1959 - "The Faith of the Church," First Report of the Joint Commission for Church Union</li> <li>• 1963 – "The Church: Its Nature, Function and Ordering"; Second Report of the Joint Commission for Church Union (including proposed Basis of Union)</li> <li>• 1963 and 1964 – Methodist General Conference, Presbyterian General Assembly and Congregational Assembly discuss Second Report</li> <li>• 1971 – Proposed Basis of Union published</li> <li>• 1977 - Inauguration of the UCA</li> </ul>	<p><i>Manifesto for Renewal</i> by Andrew Dutney, Uniting Church Press, 1986.</p>

### 3. *Articulate the place and role of key aspects of the Church's life and witness, in particular*

Item	Performance Criteria	Reference
a. Scripture, Christian witness to the Word, including preaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Church receives the books of the Old and New Testaments as unique prophetic and apostolic testimony</li> <li>• In Scripture we hear the Word of God and our faith and obedience are nourished and regulated</li> <li>• As Scripture is received in the worship and witness of the church, the Word of God for our salvation is heard and known</li> <li>• The Uniting Church lays upon its members the serious duty of reading the scriptures and commits its Ministers to preach from these</li> <li>• Christ is present when he is preached as Word of God who brings forgiveness and new life</li> <li>• The Church's preaching is controlled by the biblical witness</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Para 4, 5, 6
b. Creeds and Confessions (for Confessions see 2b above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UCA receives the Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creed as authoritative statements of the Catholic Faith</li> <li>• The UCA commits its Ministers and teachers to study these Creeds and interpret them for today</li> <li>• The Creeds are to be used for instruction and confessions in the life of the church</li> <li>• The UCA receives from its forbears the following witnesses and commits its Ministers and teachers to study of them (see 2b above)</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Paras 9, 10
c. the Sacraments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christ has commanded the Church to proclaim the gospel both in word and in the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper</li> <li>• Christ acts in and through the sacraments to feed the Church on its way to the promised goal</li> <li>• Through word and sacrament, the Spirit confers forgiveness, fellowship, new life and freedom</li> <li>• Baptism is a participation in Christ's baptism of death and resurrection</li> <li>• Through baptism Christ incorporates people into his body – a fellowship of love, service, suffering and joy - and initiates people into his life and mission in the world. Baptism, not confirmation, is the sign and basis of church membership.</li> <li>• The UCA will baptise those who confess the Christian faith and children presented for baptism for whose instruction and nourishment in faith the Church takes responsibility</li> <li>• Baptism is God's gift to the Church Catholic and is not repeatable</li> <li>• The UCA recognises that baptised persons may receive Holy Communion, irrespective of their age. (It is common practice in many UCA congregations to have an 'open table'. The UCA Assembly has ongoing work on the nature of church membership.)</li> <li>• In Holy Communion Christ signifies (points to) and seals (effects) his presence with his people</li> <li>• Holy Communion is an act of celebration, thanksgiving, and proclamation in which God's people grow in Christ, are strengthened for mission, and experience a foretaste of the reign of God</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Paras 5, 7, 8

d. Christian witness to the Word, including preaching	See (a) above	
e. Christian service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members are called to confess the faith of Christ crucified and to be his faithful servants</li> <li>• The one Spirit has given the members of the Church a diversity of gifts, and there is no gift without its corresponding service</li> <li>• The Church recognises those in its congregations with the gifts of the Spirit for spiritual oversight and governance</li> <li>• The UCA thanks God for the continuing service of evangelists, scholars, prophets and martyrs.</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Paras 11, 13, 14, 16
f. commitment to scholarly enquiry and an informed faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Uniting Church</li> <li>• values faithful and scholarly interpretation of Scripture</li> <li>• values the contribution of historical, literary and scientific enquiry to an informed faith</li> <li>• is committed to engaging with contemporary thought in order to better understand its own nature and mission</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Para 11
g. the place of ecumenism within the UCA's history and vision	<p>The Uniting Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acknowledges unity as both Christ's gift and will for the church</li> <li>• lives and works within the faith and unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church</li> <li>• sees its common worship, witness and service as a proclamation of salvation</li> <li>• values and maintains membership of Australian and World ecumenical bodies</li> <li>• is committed to partner relationships with churches in Asia and the Pacific</li> <li>• is active in dialogue with other churches in Australia, working together and seeking union</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Para 1, 2

#### 4. *Understand the councils and ministries of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA)*

Item	Performance Criteria	Reference
a. explain the UCA understandings of church membership, ministry and service	<p>The Uniting Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will provide for the exercise by people of the gifts that God gives them and order its life accordingly for the sake of God's mission</li> <li>• seeks the guidance of the Holy Spirit to recognise people called to preach, lead worship, care pastorally, share governance and serve those in need</li> <li>• requires that people in specified ministries adhere to the Basis of Union, namely that they are willing to live and work within the faith and unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church as that was is described in the Basis of Union. Such adherence allows for difference of opinion in matters which do not enter into the substance of the faith.</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Paras 7, 13, 14 Code of Ethics section 1

<p>b. identify the key documents that describe UCA polity and procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basis of Union (1977, revised 1992)</li> <li>• UCA Constitution (1977, last amended 2001)</li> <li>• UCA Regulations (usually amended after each triennial Assembly)</li> <li>• UCA Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice (July 2000, currently under review by the Assembly)</li> <li>• A Manual for Meetings in the Uniting Church (revised 2004)</li> <li>• Sexual Misconduct Complaints Procedures (incorporated in UCA Regulations)</li> <li>• The above documents are available at <a href="http://assembly.uca.org.au/">http://assembly.uca.org.au/</a></li> </ul>	<p>Basis of Union Paras 4, 5</p>
<p>c. identify the Councils of the church; their functions and interrelationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Uniting Church is an interconciliar church, with its episcopal role and functions expressed in both personal and corporate terms</li> <li>• Congregation (Reg 3.1.1 and following) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the embodiment in one place of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church</li> <li>○ worship, witness and serve as a fellowship of the Spirit in Christ</li> <li>○ meets regularly to hear God’s Word, to celebrate the sacraments, to build up one another in love, to share the wider responsibilities of the Church, and to serve the world</li> <li>○ bears witness to the unity that is both Christ’s gift and will</li> <li>○ is recognised as a Congregation by the Presbytery</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Church Council (Reg 3.1.12 and following) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ often meets monthly or bimonthly</li> <li>○ membership consists of Ministers or others in placement or appointment in the congregation, elders and others elected by the congregation (see Reg for details)</li> <li>○ the body established in each congregation to have oversight of its total life and mission</li> <li>○ shares with the Minister(s) in mission, pastoral care and spiritual oversight</li> <li>○ reviews and make decisions regarding membership</li> <li>○ assists the Minister(s) with worship and sacraments</li> <li>○ manages property and financial affairs</li> <li>○ exercises oversight of leaders and congregational organisations and activities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Presbytery (Reg 3.4.1 and following) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ meeting frequency varies, usually meet at least 2 to 3 times per year</li> <li>○ membership consists of Ministers and lay members of congregations within its bounds</li> <li>○ has oversight of the life and mission of the congregations within its bounds</li> <li>○ provides stimulus and encouragement, opportunities for congregations to strengthen and assist one another</li> <li>○ provides congregations with assistance for the wider work of the church</li> <li>○ pastoral and administrative oversight of Ministers, including counselling and discipline</li> <li>○ participates in selection, pastoral care and oversight of candidates for specified ministries, and conducts the ordination of candidates for ministry</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Basis of Union Para 15 UCA Constitution UCA Regulations</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synod (Reg 3.5.1 and following) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ usually meets annually, sometimes less frequently</li> <li>○ membership consists of Ministers and lay members appointed by Presbyteries and additional members appointed by the Synods</li> <li>○ has oversight, direction and administration of the Church’s worship, witness and service within its bounds, including executive, administrative, pastoral and disciplinary functions over the Presbyteries within its bounds</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assembly (Regs 3.6.1 and following) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ meets every three years</li> <li>○ membership consists of Ministers and lay members appointed by Presbyteries and Synods and additional members appointed by the Assembly</li> <li>○ has determining responsibility in matters of doctrine, government and discipline</li> <li>○ oversees the promotion of mission; standards of theological education; rural and remote ministry; national initiatives in social justice, community services, Christian education and multicultural ministry</li> <li>○ makes guiding decisions on the tasks and authority exercised by other councils</li> <li>○ determining authority on matters committed to it by the Constitution</li> <li>○ makes provision for calls appointments and transfers of Ministers</li> <li>○ affiliates with ecumenical and other bodies (usually national and international)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other bodies and agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress – established in 1985 is a fellowship, network and organisation of indigenous members of the UCA and also members in fellowship of other churches. It operates in all states and the Northern Territory and is now the largest non-government indigenous agency in Australia</li> <li>○ <i>(The Presbytery or assessing body may wish to verify the applicant’s understanding of other church bodies directly related to the person’s appointment)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Office-bearers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Role of Presbytery chairperson, Moderator, Synod General Secretary, President, Assembly General Secretary, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p>d. describe the forms of ministry within the UCA and their inter-relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Ordained) Ministry of Word and Sacrament – are called to preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, exercise pastoral care, equip members for their particular ministries, serve in the community and pioneer new expressions of the gospel</li> <li>• (Ordained) Ministry of Deacon – are called to a ministry of service to the world with a primary focus on care and compassion for the disadvantaged and marginalised, seeking justice for all people and encouraging ways of fulfilling the mission of the church</li> <li>• (Lay) Ministry of Elder – elected to share with the Minister in exercising oversight a building up the congregation in faith and love, sustaining its members in hope and leading them in mission</li> </ul>	<p>Basis of Union Para 14 UCA Constitution UCA Regulations</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Lay) Ministry of Lay Preacher – persons equipped and accredited to preach and lead worship in their congregation and in any other congregations to which they are invited</li> <li>• (Lay) Ministry of Pastor – responsibilities may include teaching, leading worship, pastoral care evangelism and mission service</li> <li>• (Lay) Ministries of Lay Pastor, Youth Worker, and Community Minister – new candidates for these ministries are no longer being accepted. Details regarding each ministry are found in the UCA Constitution and Regulations (Sections 2.10 – 2.13).</li> <li>• Persons are ordained and commissioned for ministry by the Presbytery</li> </ul>	
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**5. Articulate and practice key elements of the UCA understanding of gifts, ministry and service**

Item	Performance Criteria	Reference
a. seek to care for all people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• treats people fairly and with respect regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or other characteristics</li> <li>• open to engaging in ministry with all people within the bounds of one's pastoral responsibilities</li> <li>• speaks and acts in ways that are inclusive of people</li> <li>• able to learn ministry practices with people with whom he or she is less familiar or comfortable</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics section 2.2
b. encourage and respect the giftedness and ministry of other people and be willing to learn from them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• affirms and values the ministry of others regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, etc</li> <li>• acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of others in leadership</li> <li>• encourages the gifts in other people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, etc</li> <li>• able to gain new understandings and skills from church members, ministers and teachers</li> <li>• receives and act upon feedback from those people being served in ministry</li> </ul>	Basis of Union Para 13, Code of Ethics sections 2,1, 3.1, 3.3
c. teach in a manner that seeks to represent faithfully the Scriptures and the teachings and practices of the UCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has a level of understanding of the Scriptures, theology and UCA practices appropriate to the level of responsibility in the Pastor's job description</li> <li>• engages in ongoing study of the Scriptures and Christian theology, including UCA doctrine</li> <li>• shows prior preaching and teaching in accord with UCA understandings of Scripture and theology</li> <li>• interprets Scripture faithfully at a level appropriate to the pastor's job description</li> <li>• able to teach the church's position on matters of faith as appropriate to the job description</li> <li>• accurately represents differing views</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics section 3.2
d. work effectively in a team setting with appropriate accountability and responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• works collaboratively with others towards common goals</li> <li>• reports clearly and regularly on his or her work activities and progress</li> <li>• keeps appropriate records</li> <li>• communicates clearly both verbally and in writing as appropriate to the pastor's role</li> <li>• shows respect for other team members' ministry expertise and encourages their ministries</li> <li>• receives and acts upon feedback, guidance and correction from team members</li> <li>• recognises and works within lines of accountability within the congregation or agency</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics sections 2.4, 3.1, 3.2

e. engage others in respectful dialogue and decision-making and respect the decisions of the councils of the church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participates in the councils of the church as required</li> <li>• can explain the ethos and process of decision-making expressed in the Manual for Meetings</li> <li>• speaks and works respectfully with others even where there are differences of opinion</li> <li>• expresses disagreements in appropriate forums without resorting to personal criticisms</li> <li>• respects and communicates clearly the decisions of the councils of the church</li> <li>• understands that preaching is not an avenue for raising conflict with the congregation or between councils of the church</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics sections 2.3, 3.1, 3.3, Manual for Meetings
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## UNIT OF COMPETENCY – WORK WITHIN THE CODE OF ETHICS AND MINISTRY PRACTICE OF THE UNITING CHURCH

### ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCY

6. **Identify the behavioural and boundary issues involved in ministry conduct and accountability** in both personal discipleship and professional ministry

Item	Performance Criteria	Reference
a. identify the parts of key documents which relate to the ordering of ministries within the UCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basis of Union, in particular Paragraphs 13 to 16</li> <li>• UCA Constitution, in particular Division 2</li> <li>• UCA Regulations, in particular Section 2</li> <li>• Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice</li> <li>• Uniting in Worship 2 – Services of Ordination and Commissioning</li> </ul>	
b. explain the nature and responsibilities of pastoral ministry and pastoral relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a pastoral relationship exists where               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the Minister is providing spiritual care for the person; or</li> <li>b. the person has looked to the Minister for guidance, protection or care; or</li> <li>c. the person has made contact with the Minister in their responsibility or function as a Minister</li> </ol> </li> <li>• the scope of pastoral ministry is in part defined by a person’s job description, however (c) above means that pastoral relationships usually include all people in a congregation (or those being served by an agency) and many people in the wider community</li> <li>• pastoral ministry is offered on behalf of Christ and the Church and so is always representative</li> <li>• pastoral ministry is servant ministry, yet always involves influence and power over others</li> <li>• pastoral ministry seeks the well-being of others and does not use others to meet personal needs</li> <li>• pastoral ministry seeks always to act justly and fairly on behalf of others</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics sections 1, 2, 3.5

c. the potential for conflict in responsibility and accountability and appropriate means to resolve this	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a pastoral role has boundaries of responsibility as defined in the job description</li> <li>• Ministers are accountable for their practice of ministry to the Church through their Presbytery (or Synod or Assembly in the case of appointments by these councils)</li> <li>• Ministers are accountable to those with whom they minister, including other Ministers, other lay workers, elders, church councils, etc</li> <li>• Ministers are required to be subject to pastoral supervision by a suitably qualified person</li> <li>• Ministers are aware of their personal needs for relationship, security, recreation and recognition and when these impinge inappropriately upon pastoral responsibilities</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics sections 3.5, 3.6, 7
d. explain and give examples of (i) the nature and boundaries of power in ministry relationships  (ii) the nature and boundaries of confidentiality  (iii) appropriate reasons for referral of pastoral issues	The person understands that boundaries in pastoral relationships include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognising the difference between pastoral relationship and intimacy in friendship</li> <li>• recognising the internal and external signs of movement towards inappropriate friendship</li> <li>• recognising when one's own needs are being met in ways that are inappropriate</li> <li>• recognising how oneself is being perceived by others in pastoral relationships</li> <li>• understanding of the limits of one's competence in areas of pastoral ministry and the importance of referral</li> </ul> The person understands that it is a Minister's professional responsibility to maintain appropriate boundaries The person demonstrates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the ability to establish and maintain appropriate confidentiality in pastoral relationships</li> <li>• understanding of when, how and to whom to make referrals of pastoral matters</li> <li>• understanding the legal and ethical requirements of duty of care and mandatory reporting</li> <li>• recognition of when it is helpful or necessary to end a pastoral relationship</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics sections 1, 2, 3.5, 3.6, 3.8, 4

7. **Identify and practice appropriate standards of professional conduct** at a level appropriate to the ministry in which the Pastor is engaged

Item	Performance Criteria	Reference
a. accurately represent one's competencies and commit to developing one's knowledge, skills, and spiritual disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• honestly and fairly represents one's own competence, qualifications, training and experience</li> <li>• refrains from undertaking work beyond one's professional competence</li> <li>• assesses his or her own learning needs, and plans and undertakes regular continuing education</li> <li>• undertakes regular spiritual disciplines including prayer, Bible reading and 'retreat' times</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics section 3.4
b. explain UCA expectations regarding gifts, fees and financial gain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not seek financial gain from pastoral relationships beyond recognised entitlements</li> <li>• seeks advice from a supervising officer of the Church where the appropriateness of gifts is uncertain</li> <li>• recognises cultural traditions regarding gifts and treats such gifts so as to benefit the church</li> <li>• does not use his or her ministry to recruit clients for private practice or commercial interests</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics section 5

c. exercise responsible self-care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintains his or her physical, spiritual and emotional health</li> <li>• participates in supervision</li> <li>• gives adequate priority to relationships with family and significant others</li> <li>• nurtures personal relationships which promote wholeness and well-being</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics section 3.7
d. explain the purpose of supervision and give evidence of willingness to be subject to supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understands the nature of and need for ongoing professional supervision</li> <li>• manages his or her time so as to participate regularly in supervision</li> <li>• authentically represents his or her self and ministry practices in a supervision setting</li> <li>• hears and acts upon feedback, guidance and correction received in supervision</li> <li>• seeks guidance when called to exercise ministry beyond their normal competence</li> <li>• keeps appropriate records of pastoral contacts and critical events</li> <li>• understands the circumstances in which a personal relationship should be disclosed to an appropriate officer of the church</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics section 3.8, 4.2
e. identify current legal requirements relevant to the particular area of ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aware of legal or professional requirements related to the pastor's particular appointment</li> <li>• aware of the requirement to inform the Synod Secretary of any matter which may lead to legal action</li> <li>• recognises that it is unethical for a pastor to deliberately break the law or encourage others to do so (excepting instances of political resistance or civil disobedience)</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics section 6
f. explain the ethical and organisational responsibilities of ministry in other organisations as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in the case of agency or school appointments, understands the ethical responsibilities and organisational requirements of the institution</li> <li>• understands avenues for resolving conflicts between the Code of Ethics and the particular demands of other organisations</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics section 7
g. explain the responsibilities of persons in ministry regarding breaches of the Code of Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understands the definition of "breach of the Code of Ethics"</li> <li>• understands ways to resolve concerns regarding the ethical behaviour of others in ministry</li> <li>• understands the requirement to inform the appropriate church council or officer of likely sexual misconduct of any Minister, lay employee or lay appointee</li> <li>• understands the processes by which the Church deals with allegations of sexual misconduct</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	Code of Ethics section 8. Regulations section 7

# CORE COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT

## PLANNING AND RESULT FORM

This planning template is designed to assist assessors to identify the means by which they will assess the Core Competencies of applicants for the Ministry of Pastor. The template allows the presbytery to keep an internal record of how a particular applicant was assessed, along with other details such as the name of the assessors and the timing and location of assessment.

A presbytery should ensure that the assessment of Core Competencies meets the ethical principles of competency-based assessment, namely:

- **Validity** – the assessment method measures the intended competency
- **Sufficiency** – the assessment provides enough evidence
- **Fairness** – the assessment takes into account the person's needs & characteristics (including cultural and language considerations, disability, health)
- **Currency** – the assessment determines current competency

Assessment can be undertaken by a range of means including verbal interview, case studies or role plays, written responses, referees or other third party evidence, training qualification, evidence of previous work (eg. portfolio), etc.

If a person gives sufficient evidence of current competency, the result is "Competency achieved". If a person does not give sufficient evidence, the result is "Competency not yet achieved".

It is important to give an applicant direct feedback about areas in which they are not yet competent in order to assist his or her learning. A Presbytery may encourage an applicant to undertake further learning before arranging a further assessment. The Presbytery may choose to assist the applicant in gaining competency in the deficient areas or refer them to a suitable training course or resource.

Ministerial Education Commission

**THE MINISTRY OF PASTOR: CORE COMPETENCIES – ASSESSMENT PLAN AND RESULT**

Applicant's Name: .....

Year: .....

**UNIT OF COMPETENCY: Work within the doctrine, ethos and polity of the Uniting Church**

<b>Elements of Competency</b>	<b>Assessment method/s</b> (eg. interview, questionnaire, reference, portfolio evidence, training qualification,)	<b>Notes</b> (when, where, by whom, etc)	<b>Result: Competency</b> Achieved (CA) Not yet achieved (CNA)
1. Articulate the key theological foundations of the Basis of Union			
2. Describe key historical elements contributing to the formation of the Uniting Church			
3. Articulate the place and role of key aspects of the Church's life and witness			
4. Understand the Councils and Ministries of the UCA			
5. Articulate and practice key elements of the UCA understanding of gifts, ministry and service			

**UNIT OF COMPETENCY: Work within the Uniting Church Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice**

6. Identify the behavioural and boundary issues involved in ministry conduct and accountability in both personal discipleship and professional ministry			
7. Identify and practice appropriate standards of professional conduct at a level appropriate to the ministry in which the Pastor is engaged			

Assessment criteria fulfilled (please tick):  Validity  Sufficiency  Fairness  Currency

Satisfactory assessment completed: (signature) ..... Assessor's name:..... Date: .....

## THE MINISTRY OF PASTOR: CORE COMPETENCIES – ASSESSMENT PLAN AND RESULT

Applicant's Name: .....

Year: .....

### UNIT OF COMPETENCY: Work within the doctrine, ethos and polity of the Uniting Church

Elements of Competency	Assessment method/s (eg. interview, questionnaire, reference, portfolio evidence, training qualification,)	Notes (when, where, by whom, etc)	Result: Competency Achieved (CA) Not yet achieved (CNA)
1. Articulate the key theological foundations of the Basis of Union	Lay Preacher Studies – Coolamon College	Assessor to check syllabus and result	
2. Describe key historical elements contributing to the formation of the Uniting Church	Core Competencies Questionnaire	Assessor to mark Questionnaire	
3. Articulate the place and role of key aspects of the Church's life and witness	Core Competencies Questionnaire	Assessor to mark Questionnaire	
4. Understand the Councils and Ministries of the UCA	Core Competencies Questionnaire Oral conversation	Assessor to mark Questionnaire Selection Panel	
5. Articulate and practice key elements of the UCA understanding of gifts, ministry and service	Referee's Form	Assessor to receive form Selection Panel to review	

### UNIT OF COMPETENCY: Work within the Uniting Church Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice

6. Identify the behavioural and boundary issues involved in ministry conduct and accountability in both personal discipleship and professional ministry	Synod Code of Ethics Training Course – evidence of assessment completed	Assessor to check curriculum and result	
7. Identify and practice appropriate standards of professional conduct at a level appropriate to the ministry in which the Pastor is engaged	Case Studies	Selection Interview	

Assessment criteria fulfilled (please tick):  Validity  Sufficiency  Fairness  Currency

Satisfactory assessment completed: (signature) ..... Assessor's name:..... Date: .....

# *“Understanding of the Basis of Union and ethos of the Uniting Church”*

## **ASSESSMENT TOOL – CORE COMPETENCIES**

This questionnaire is designed to allow applicants for the ministry of Pastor to indicate their understandings of the Uniting Church’s Basis of Union and the polity and ethos of the Uniting Church. The questions match the Core Competencies in this area as defined by the Ministerial Education Commission.

It is intended that this questionnaire may be administered as an ‘open book’ assessment, that is, applicants may have access to the UCA Basis of Union and the UCA Regulations and Constitution. The assessor may decide whether the applicant also has access to other materials.

It is important to note that the assessment is about understanding, not writing ability. Assessor/s may decide to have a conversation with the applicant about their written answers, and a selection interview also gives opportunity to explore these areas face to face. Oral assessment may particularly be important for cultural reasons or in some instances of disability.

In assessing competency, the assessor/s should refer to the Performance Criteria included in the document “Assessment Guidelines” provided by the Ministerial Education Commission.

This assessment tool may be amended by assessors provided that both the original source and the amendment author and date are noted on the document. Note that the word limits may be amended if the assessor so chooses.

A Presbytery should keep a copy of any completed assessment tools for a minimum of twelve months. An applicant is entitled to receive a copy of any assessment work submitted along with the result of the assessment.

The assessment questions relate to the following Core Competencies:

- Question 1 – Competency Element 1
- Question 2 – Competency Element 2
- Question 3 – Competency Element 3
- Question 4 – Competency Elements 4a, 4c, 4d
- Question 5 – Competency Elements 4b, 6a

Ministerial Education Commission

# *“Understanding of the Basis of Union and ethos of the Uniting Church”*

## Questionnaire

These questions are designed to allow applicants for the Ministry of Pastor to indicate their understandings of the beliefs and practices of the Uniting Church. This is an area of Core (or essential) Competency for people entering the Ministry of Pastor.

This is designed as an ‘open book’ assessment. You may have access to the UCA Basis of Union and the UCA Regulations and Constitution while completing the questionnaire. The assessor will determine the time, location and conditions of assessment following negotiation with the applicant.

Your assessment for this task may be CA (competency achieved) or CNA (competency not yet achieved). If the latter is the case, you may be allowed to retake the assessment at a later date.

Applicant’s Name: .....

Assessment date: ..... Location: .....

Assessor: .....

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There is not a fixed word length for your answers to the following questions, however some suggested word lengths are given below. Don’t feel that you are required to write long essays – what you say is more important than how long your answers are. You will have the opportunity to talk about what you have written if that is helpful.

### **1. Explain in your own words your understanding of what the Basis of Union and the Creeds say about the following (800-1200 words):**

- a. God as Trinity
- b. who Jesus Christ is and what he has done, is doing and will do
- c. the nature and mission of the Church
- d. our hope as Christians for what is to come in the future

**2. Describe key elements of the history and formation of the Uniting Church (600-1000 words)**

Include mention of:

- a. the background and contribution of the denominations that formed the UCA
- b. the confessional and doctrinal documents that precede the Basis of Union
- c. the timeline and processes that led to church union

**3. Explain in your own words what the Basis of Union says about the place and role of each of the following in the life of the Uniting Church (700 – 1400 words)**

- a. Scripture
- b. the Creeds and Confessions
- c. the Sacraments
- d. Christian witness to the Word, including preaching
- e. Christian service
- f. commitment to scholarly enquiry and an informed faith
- g. the place of ecumenism within the UCA's history and vision

**4. Explain in your own words what the Basis of Union and the UCA Constitution and Regulations say about the following (1200-1800 words)**

- a. church membership, ministry and service
- b. the Councils of the church and their functions
- c. the forms of ministry within the UCA and how they are related to one another

**5. What books and websites would you go to for 'official' information about the Uniting Church's ministries, councils and organisation?**

# *The Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice*

## **ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE – CORE COMPETENCIES**

This true/false questionnaire is designed to assess the understanding of an applicant for the Ministry of Pastor in relation to aspects of the UCA Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice. You should be familiar with the Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice before completing these questions. Circle True or False for each statement. Your responses to these statements may be used as the basis for a discussion with an assessor or interview panel regarding these matters. In these statements, “Ministers” includes Pastors, except where “Ministers of the Word” is used.

Name of Applicant: .....

Date: .....

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>True or False</b>	
1.	The UCA Code of Ethics is a tool for enabling those in Specified Ministries to be accountable for and professional in their practice in any setting – congregation, institution or general community.	T	F
2.	The Code of Ethics applies to all Pastors appointed by a Presbytery or other council, whatever their focus of ministry.	T	F
3.	The Code of Ethics is not applicable to a Pastor’s involvement in social activities in the community where she or he lives.	T	F
4.	The Pastor is always responsible to set and maintain the boundaries in the pastoral relationship except for when there exists a Team Leader or a senior Pastor to whom they are accountable.	T	F
5.	It is appropriate for a single Pastor to have a romantic relationship with an individual who regards him or her as their Pastor.	T	F
6.	It is important for the Pastor to engage in social activities, hobbies, and other forms of relaxation in order to meet personal needs.	T	F
7.	A Pastor should treat other team members with respect, sensitivity and reverence, and encourage their ministries.	T	F
8.	People with whom a Pastor is in a pastoral relationship are only those who are members of the congregation or faith community.	T	F
9.	The Code of Ethics is primarily a professional development tool for people in ministry, not a punitive, disciplinary guideline.	T	F
10.	Ministers need to accurately represent differing views in relation to the Scriptures and the teachings of the UCA except when they personally believe that the teachings and the practices of the UCA are contrary to Scripture.	T	F
11.	Preaching is a useful way for a Minister to express his or her views about conflict with in a congregation.	T	F

12.	All Ministers of the Word are required to be subject to pastoral supervision. Pastors are not required to have pastoral supervision because they are directly accountable to the Presbytery.	T	F
13.	Awareness of how one's needs are being met is essential to being able to maintain appropriate boundaries.	T	F
14.	A Pastor needs to do all they can to assist someone in need who has sought him or her out.	T	F
15.	Confidentiality means keeping information secret.	T	F
16.	It is never appropriate to receive gifts or money from someone with whom one is in a pastoral relationship.	T	F
17.	The Pastor must inform the Synod Secretary if he or she involved in any matter which may lead to legal action.	T	F
18.	Because they need to seek to care for all people it is not ever appropriate for Pastors to end a pastoral relationship.	T	F
19.	Where there is an actual or potential conflict of interest in matters affecting the Pastor, the Pastor shall absent themselves from the discussion and decision, except in the case of deliberations by Synods on ministerial stipends and entitlements.	T	F
20.	Information given in the context of a pastoral relationship should always remain confidential.	T	F
21.	If a Pastor was to become aware of a breach of the Code of Ethics by a colleague it must always be reported to the Presbytery first. The pastor must not first try to talk with the colleague about the Code violation.	T	F
22.	Fortunately, very few Ministers are ever at risk of breaching the Code of Ethics	T	F
23.	When a Minister abuses their power they run the risk of damaging people's faith in God.	T	F
24.	Pastors have a responsibility to attend Presbytery meetings.	T	F
25.	Once a Pastor has completed all of the training necessary for their job description they do not need to participate in continuing education.	T	F
26.	When a Pastor is working in a school or other institution (eg. hospital or prison) and their Code of Ethics are different from the UCA ones then the other organisation's Code overrides the UCA Code.	T	F

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To be completed by assessor.

Assessor's name: .....

Assessment result: ..... correct ..... incorrect

Signature: ..... Date: .....

## ANSWERS TO CODE OF ETHICS TRUE/FALSE TEST

Answer	Area of Code the question relates to	Element of Competency (refer to Assessment Guidelines document)
1.TRUE	Consider the whole document.	6 & 7
2.TRUE	Page 1 – sub heading	5, 6 & 7
3.FALSE	2.1,1.6, 1.7, 2.3	5a, 6b
4.TRUE	1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.4(e)	6c, 6d
5.FALSE	Section 2, section 4 and 3.5(a) & (c)	6b, 6c, 6d
6. TRUE	Pastors are human beings with the all the same human needs as everyone else. 3.7, particularly (a) and (d)	6d, 7d
7. TRUE	Section3, 2.2, 2.3,.2.4	5a
8.FALSE	2.1 –	6b
9. TRUE	This applies to the whole document. The introduction to the Code makes it clear that the Code is about enhancing the quality of Christian community through the conduct and accountability of its Ministers	7
10. FALSE	3.2	5c
11. FALSE	3.3(c)	5c
12. FALSE	All that is in the Code applies to the Ministry of Pastor (see sub-heading on page 1), 3.7(b), 3.8	6c,7d
13. TRUE	2.4(e), 3.5 (b) (iii), 3.7(d), section 4	7c, 6d
14. FALSE	A Pastor is required to offer the “best quality care” 3.5 (b) that they are capable of but must also recognize their limitations.3.4 (b), (c), (d) (e) and refer people to the most appropriate help.	7a, 5a
15. FALSE	3.6	6d
16. FALSE	Section 5	7b
17. TRUE	6.1	7e
18. FALSE	3.4(e), section 4	6d
19 TRUE	3.5(e)	6c, 5e
20. FALSE	3.6	6 c, 6d
21. FALSE	Section 8	7g
22. FALSE	The content of the Code are all realities in ministry. The Code helps to be able to deal with situations that consistently arise in ministry. See also 3.8 (a)	7d, 5,6 & 7
23. TRUE	3.5 (a), (b) 1.4,	6
24. TRUE	3.3(b)	5e
25. FALSE	3.4(a)	7a
26. FALSE	Section 7	7f

# *The Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice*

## **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – CORE COMPETENCIES**

These interview questions are designed to assist Presbyteries to assess the understandings of applicants for the Ministry of Pastor in relation to aspects of the UCA Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice. They may be used by an appointed assessor or by a selection panel provided that assessment ethics are adhered to (see Core Competencies document prepared by the MEC for explanations of the principles of validity, sufficiency, fairness and currency.)

Assessors are welcome to adapt these questions and case studies, however they should be clearly aware of which competency elements they are assessing.

These questions and case studies assess both knowledge of the Code of Ethics and the ability to apply it to the practice of ministry. Given that observation of an applicant's behaviour in relation to the Code will be difficult in most instances, the use of case studies accompanied by one or more referee's reports (see Referee assessment tool) are a reasonable substitute.

### **Interview questions**

1. In what ways is the Code of Ethics useful in guiding your ministry practices? Give some examples from your recent ministry.
2. In a "normal" week in the role of Pastor, what issues from the Code of Ethics might arise?
3. What strategies and support help you to maintain professional ethics in ministry?
4. Most of us relate better to some members of the community than to others. How does this relate to the Code of Ethics and how do you manage this?
5. To whom is a Pastor responsible for the exercise of his or her ministry? Give some examples of the different kinds of accountability that a Pastor might be expected to fulfil.
6. The Code of Ethics refers to "the pastoral relationship". How is this defined and what are the characteristics of it?
7. What are some ways in which people in ministry exercise power over others? Given that power is unavoidable, what must one do to exercise it responsibly?
8. What are some of the boundaries and responsibilities of a Pastor in a pastoral relationship?

The panel should seek evidence that the applicant	Yes/No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• has an awareness of the scope of the Code of Ethics</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understands what is meant by a 'pastoral relationship' and is able to apply this awareness to practice</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• has an awareness of the power that is inherent in the role of pastor</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understands boundaries and has strategies for setting and maintaining them</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understands the responsibilities of Pastor in all relationships encompassed by their role (ie. pastoral, with colleagues, with church councils, in teaching and in 'particular' relationships)</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understands confidentiality and referral</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is aware of his or her own limits and responsibility to refer</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• expects to receive supervision</li></ul>	

## **CASE STUDY A**

*You counselled someone who has been going through a very difficult time. You listened carefully, showed empathy and instigated a conversation about the person's options, which they felt was particularly helpful to them. A card with a book voucher came to say "thank you". The person continues to come and confide in you and after every session sends a note of thanks. After several sessions you have suspicions that this person is suffering from some sort of delusions. They hear voices and seem to have an irrational fear of all sorts of things. You are aware that they have very little support. Then, one day, to your total surprise, the person declares that they are in love with you, that you are the only one who understands them and in their prayer time God has shown them that the two of you have something special.*

[aspects of the Code of Ethics that could apply - 3.4, 3.8, 3.6, 5, 2]

[Elements of competency being assessed - 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d 7a, 7b,]

### **3.4 COMPETENCE**

(d) Where Ministers are forced by circumstances to provide care beyond their normal competence they shall:

- (i) discuss this with their supervisor;
- (ii) seek guidance from a person with appropriate competence;
- (iii) where warranted, seek opportunities to develop the appropriate skills.

### **3.8 SUPERVISION**

(a) Ministers have a responsibility to recognise that they are also vulnerable, requiring them to maintain their professionalism in difficult circumstances.

### **3.5 PROFESSIONALISM**

(a) Ministers shall recognise the power that is inherent in their role and shall not use this power in a manner which is abusive or unprofessional.

(b) Ministers shall exercise their ministry to the other person in the pastoral relationship in a professional manner.

### **3.6 CONFIDENTIALITY**

(a) Ministers shall not breach confidentiality. Confidentiality is not about secrecy. In the context of a pastoral relationship, it is an assurance that Ministers will not share written or spoken information about an individual with other people [except as indicated in (d) below], or use it for a purpose other than for which it was collected.

(c) In a pastoral relationship Ministers shall take care to discuss the nature and limits of their confidentiality with the other person.

(d) Information received in the context of a pastoral relationship shall remain confidential unless:

- (i) the person gives permission for the particular disclosure; or
- (ii) retaining such information would result in significant physical, emotional or sexual harm to another person or persons; or
- (iii) required by law; or

(e) Confidentiality also requires that Ministers shall not seek to gain sensitive or confidential information to which they are not entitled or which would require another person to breach a confidence.

## **5. GIFTS AND FEES.**

5.2 Where Ministers receive gifts resulting from the pastoral relationship the Minister shall use discretion concerning the acceptance or return of gifts by considering the intent and affordability of the gift and whether there is a risk of the Minister being compromised or losing objectivity. Advice shall be sought from the appropriate Presbytery officer if the Minister is uncertain of the appropriateness of a gift.

## **CASE STUDY B**

*For several months a small committee, appointed by the Church Council, and which you have been part of, has been working on a strategic plan for the congregation. On the night that it is being presented to the Church Council, you feel excited and full of anticipatory hope. But things don't go as you expected. There are strong voices speaking against what is being proposed. You feel like the life of the whole congregation is being squashed by these loud 'nay sayers'. It looks like if a vote is taken the proposal will be defeated. What will you do? How hard will you push?*

[Aspects of the Code of Ethics that could apply - Section 3, 2.4]

[Elements of competency being assessed - 5a, 5b, 5d, 5e ]

2.4 Ministers shall exercise their ministry in a manner that expresses:

- (a) commitment to God;
- (b) inclusiveness of the Gospel;
- (c) accountability ;
- (d) commitment to the call of the church to ministry;
- (e) the professional nature of the relationship, and ensures:
  - (i) that Ministers do not seek to meet their personal needs through the pastoral relationship;
  - (ii) that people are encouraged to identify and use their power;
  - (iii) that clear boundaries are recognised and observed (ie. the relationship and behaviour are appropriate to the pastoral relationship);
  - (iv) respect, sensitivity and reverence for others;
  - (v) confidentiality
  - (vi) non-abusive use of power;
  - (vii) commitment to justice.

## **3. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

### **3.1 RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES**

- (a) Ministers shall work within the polity of the Uniting Church as guided by the Basis of Union and defined in the Constitution and Regulations, respecting the rights and responsibilities of those who share leadership in the Uniting Church, both lay and ordained.
- (b) Ministers shall respect the call and placement of other Ministers. They shall recognise those people who are colleagues, or those with whom they are in team ministry, as equals in standing and responsibility in the fulfilment of their duties as a Minister in that placement as outlined in the Regulations (2.4.2 and 2.4.18 – 19).
- (c) Ministers who have particular authority in relation to other Ministers and lay staff shall exercise their power justly and in a clearly accountable manner.

### **3.3 RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHURCH COUNCILS**

- (a) Ministers shall respect the guidance and decisions of the councils of the church, and maintain accountability within the discipline of the church.
- (b) Ministers have a responsibility to participate fully in their local church councils, Presbytery, and in the wider work of the church.
- (c) Ministers may not use their preaching role to inflame conflict within the Congregation, or between the congregation and other councils of the church. Processes and decisions of church councils should be reported accurately and fairly. Disagreements need to be conducted within the framework of principles provided by A Manual for Meetings, (ie. in a way that expresses Christian community and commitment to rational debate based on evidence and argument, not personal attacks and mere assertion of opinion).

## **CASE C**

*There is another letter from the President with a request that it be read to the congregation this coming Sunday. If only it wasn't so long... It will ruin the flow of worship to take all that time to read it. And you know that there are many in the congregation for whom this letter opens up an old wound. What will you do?*

[Aspects of the Code of ethics that could apply 3.1, 3.2 (f), 3.3 (a)]

[Elements of competency being assessed 5e, 6c]

## **3. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

### **3.1 RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES**

(a) Ministers shall work within the polity of the Uniting Church as guided by the Basis of Union and defined in the Constitution and Regulations, respecting the rights and responsibilities of those who share leadership in the Uniting Church, both lay and ordained.

(c) Ministers who have particular authority in relation to other Ministers and lay staff shall exercise their power justly and in a clearly accountable manner.

### **3.2 TEACHING**

(f) be guided by the decisions of the Assembly;

### **3.3 RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHURCH COUNCILS**

(a) Ministers shall respect the guidance and decisions of the councils of the church, and maintain accountability within the discipline of the church.

## **CASE STUDY D**

*You are in a ministry team of three. You feel that the other two exclude you. Several times now they have met and planned things and then tell you about it later. Since the two of them are in accord you can hardly disagree. You are a different gender to the two of them and when you are together they are always referring to this and making jokes about how you wouldn't understand. It would be easier just to get on and do your thing and leave them to it. That of course means that you will have to go along with what they decide without having been able to participate in the decision making process.*

[Aspects of the Code of ethics that could apply - 3.1]

[Elements of competency being assessed 5b, 5d]

## **3. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

### **3.1 RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES**

(a) Ministers shall work within the polity of the Uniting Church as guided by the Basis of Union and defined in the Constitution and Regulations, respecting the rights and responsibilities of those who share leadership in the Uniting Church, both lay and ordained.

(b) Ministers shall respect the call and placement of other Ministers. They shall recognise those people who are colleagues, or those with whom they are in team ministry, as equals in standing and responsibility in the fulfilment of their duties as a Minister in that placement as outlined in the Regulations (2.4.2 and 2.4.18 – 19).

(c) Ministers who have particular authority in relation to other Ministers and lay staff shall exercise their power justly and in a clearly accountable manner.

(d) Ministers shall:

(i) accept the theological validity of the ordination of both women and men for ministry in Christ's church as a Minister;

(ii) be willing to work with and support women and men as colleagues in the ordained ministries; and

(iii) be willing to encourage, equip and support both women and men in all forms of ministry in the Church and to teach the Church's position in this regard (ASC minute 92.61.5).

(e) Ministers shall respect the professional expertise of members of other disciplines/professions with whom they work in the Church or other institutions.

## CASE STUDY E

As a single person you have always hoped that one day that “special someone” would come into your life. However you did not expect her/him to be someone who would see you as their Pastor. While it is much too soon to know how the future will turn out, you know that you are very attracted to him/her and you get lots of signals from him/her that suggests that he/she is interested in exploring a romantic relationship with you. The two of you need to be able to get to know each other better before the whole world (or at least the congregation) know that you are an ‘item’ – which at present you are not. You don’t even know for sure how the other person feels about you, or if the two of you would get along well together. How does the Code of Ethics suggest that you might be able to ethically and justly allow this relationship to develop?

[Aspects of the Code of ethics that apply - Section 4]

[Elements of competency being assessed - 7(d), 6(d)]

### **4. PARTICULAR RELATIONSHIPS**

*4.1 A particular relationship refers to a close personal relationship between a Minister and another person such as:*

- (a) a very close personal friendship; or*
- (b) a close family relationship; or*
- (c) a marriage; or*
- (d) a relationship which is becoming romanticised.*

*4.2 Some particular relationships may exist within the pastoral community. In such circumstances the Minister should not be the sole provider of pastoral care, but steps should be taken to ensure professional pastoral care is available to the other person (eg. the spouse of the Minister, a close friend).*

*4.3 Ministers shall recognise those situations in which it is inappropriate for them to enter into, or continue in, a pastoral relationship. In such situations Ministers shall ensure that appropriate care is arranged for the other persons involved.*

*4.4 In some circumstances it will be appropriate for a Minister to cease a pastoral relationship in order to enter a particular relationship. In the event that a Minister and a person with whom they have been in a pastoral relationship identify a potential particular relationship, the Minister shall:*

- (a) disengage from the pastoral relationship and arrange alternative pastoral care for the other person;*
- (b) seek advice on the appropriateness of such a particular relationship, preferably through supervision;*
- (c) encourage the other person to talk with someone else about the relationship;*
- (d) disclose the relationship to an appropriate officer of the Church (eg. chairperson of the Church Council, Presbytery Minister or other appropriate person within the appointing body).*

# UCA Ministry of Pastor - Referee's Form

## *Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice*

### **About this form**

The purpose of this form is to assist the Presbytery (or other council) to assess the understanding and ability of an applicant for the ministry of Pastor in relation to the Uniting Church's Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice.

The statements contained in this form relate to various aspects of the Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice, a document that outlines ethical standards and expectations for all Uniting Church Ministers. It will be of great benefit if the Referee is familiar with the Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice.

If you have any questions in relation to this form, please contact the person listed at the end of this form. It will greatly assist us if you can return this by the date stated at the end of this form.

**This document is not to be shown to the applicant and is to be kept confidential.**

### **Applicant's name**

Surname	Given Names
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### **Referee**

Name	Email:	
Address	Suburb	Postcode
Tel: Day( )	Night ( )	Mobile
Have you read the UCA Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice? Yes / No (circle one)		
In what capacity have you known the applicant (congregation, organisation, role, length of time, etc.)?		

### **Section 1: Able to articulate and practice key elements of the UCA understanding of gifts, ministry and service**

<b>1a Seeks to care for all people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
<i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>treats people fairly and with respect regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or other characteristics</li> <li>open to engaging in ministry with all people within the bounds of his or her pastoral responsibilities</li> <li>speaks and acts in ways that are inclusive of people</li> <li>able to learn ministry practices with people with whom he or she is less familiar or comfortable</li> </ul>					
<b>Comments:</b>					

<b>1b Encourage and respect the giftedness and ministry of other people and is willing to learn from them</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>affirms and values the ministry of others regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, etc</li> <li>acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of others in leadership</li> <li>encourages the gifts in other people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, etc</li> <li>able to gain new understandings and skills from church members, ministers and teachers</li> <li>receives and act upon feedback from those people being served in ministry</li> </ul>					
<b>Comments:</b>					

<b>1c Able to teach in a manner that seeks to represent faithfully the Scriptures and the teachings and practices of the Uniting Church</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a level of understanding of the Scriptures, theology and Uniting Church practices appropriate to the level of responsibility in the Pastor's job description</li> <li>engages in ongoing study of the Scriptures and Christian theology, including Uniting Church doctrine</li> <li>shows prior preaching and teaching in accord with Uniting Church understandings of Scripture and theology</li> <li>interprets Scripture faithfully at a level appropriate to the pastor's job description</li> <li>able to teach the church's position on matters of faith as appropriate to the job description</li> <li>accurately represents differing views</li> </ul>					
<b>Comments:</b>					

<b>1d Work effectively in a team setting with appropriate accountability and responsibility</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>works collaboratively with others towards common goals</li> <li>reports clearly and regularly on his or her work activities and progress</li> <li>keeps appropriate records</li> <li>communicates clearly both verbally and in writing as appropriate to the pastor's role</li> <li>shows respect for other team members' ministry expertise and encourages their ministries</li> <li>receives and acts upon feedback, guidance and correction from team members</li> <li>recognises and works within lines of accountability within the congregation or agency</li> </ul>					
<b>Comments:</b>					

<b>1e Engage others in respectful dialogue and decision-making and respect the decisions of the councils of the church</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participates in the councils of the church as required</li> <li>can explain the ethos and process of decision-making expressed in the UCA Manual for Meetings</li> </ul>					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speaks and works respectfully with others even where there are differences of opinion</li> <li>expresses disagreements in appropriate forums without resorting to personal criticisms</li> <li>respects and communicates clearly the decisions of the councils of the church</li> <li>understands that preaching is not an avenue for raising conflict within the congregation or between councils of the church</li> </ul>					
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**Comments:**

**Section 2: Identify the behavioural and boundary issues involved in ministry conduct and accountability in both personal discipleship and professional ministry**

<b>2a Understand the nature and responsibilities of pastoral ministry and pastoral relationships</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
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<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understands the nature of a pastoral relationship, namely that a pastoral relationship exists where <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the minister is providing spiritual care for the person; or</li> <li>b. the person has looked to the minister for guidance, protection or care; or</li> <li>c. the person has made contact with the minister in their responsibility or function as a minister</li> </ul> </li> <li>understands that pastoral relationships usually include <u>all</u> people in a congregation (or those being served by an agency) and many people in the wider community</li> <li>understands that pastoral ministry is offered on behalf of Christ and the Church and so is always representative</li> <li>understands that pastoral ministry is servant ministry, yet always involves influence and power over others</li> <li>understands that pastoral ministry seeks the well-being of others and does not use them to meet the pastor's personal needs</li> <li>understands that pastoral ministry seeks always to act justly and fairly on behalf of others</li> </ul>					
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**Comments:**

<b>2b Recognise the potential for conflict in responsibility and accountability and appropriate means to resolve this</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
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<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understands that a pastoral role has boundaries of responsibility as defined in the job description</li> <li>understands that pastors are accountable for their practice of ministry to the Church through their Presbytery (or Synod or Assembly in the case of appointments by these councils)</li> <li>understands that pastors are accountable to those with whom they minister, including ordained ministers, other lay workers, elders, church councils, etc</li> <li>understands that pastors are required to be subject to pastoral supervision by a suitably qualified person</li> <li>understands that pastors are aware of their personal needs for relationship, security, recreation and recognition and when these things impinge inappropriately upon pastoral responsibilities.</li> </ul>					
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**Comments:**

<b>2c Understand the following as they apply to pastoral ministry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the nature and boundaries of power in ministry relationships</li> <li>• the nature and boundaries of confidentiality</li> <li>• appropriate reasons for referral of pastoral issues</li> </ul>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <p>Applicant understands that boundaries in pastoral relationships include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognising the difference between pastoral relationship and intimacy in friendship</li> <li>• recognising the internal and external signs of movement towards inappropriate friendship</li> <li>• recognising when one's own needs are being met in ways that are inappropriate</li> <li>• recognising how oneself is being perceived by others in pastoral relationships</li> <li>• understanding of the limits of one's competence in areas of pastoral ministry and the importance of referral</li> </ul> <p>The applicant demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the ability to establish and maintain appropriate confidentiality in pastoral relationships</li> <li>• understanding of when, how and to whom to make referrals of pastoral matters</li> <li>• understanding the legal and ethical requirements of duty of care and mandatory reporting</li> <li>• recognition of when it is helpful or necessary to end a pastoral relationship</li> </ul>					
<b>Comments:</b>					

**Section 3: Identify and practice appropriate standards of professional conduct at a level appropriate to the ministry in which the Pastor is engaged**

<b>3a Accurately represent one's competencies and commit to developing one's knowledge, skills, and spiritual disciplines</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• honestly and fairly represents his or her own competence, qualifications, training and experience</li> <li>• refrains from undertaking work beyond his or her professional competence</li> <li>• assesses his or her own learning needs, and plans and undertakes regular continuing education</li> <li>• undertakes regular spiritual disciplines including prayer, Bible reading and 'retreat' times</li> </ul>					
<b>Comments:</b>					

<b>3b Understand UCA expectations regarding gifts, fees and financial gain</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not seek financial gain from pastoral relationships beyond recognised entitlements</li> <li>• seeks advice from a supervising officer of the Church where the appropriateness of gifts is uncertain</li> <li>• recognises cultural traditions regarding gifts and treats such gifts so as to benefit the church</li> <li>• does not use his or her ministry to recruit clients for private practice or commercial interests</li> </ul>					
<b>Comments:</b>					

<b>3c Exercise responsible self-care</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintains his or her physical, spiritual and emotional health</li> <li>• participates in supervision</li> <li>• gives adequate priority to relationships with family and significant others</li> <li>• nurtures personal relationships which promote wholeness and well-being</li> </ul>					
<b>Comments:</b>					

<b>3d Understand the purpose of supervision and give evidence of willingness to be subject to supervision</b>	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unknown
<p><i>(place a tick in the appropriate column)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understands the nature of and need for ongoing professional supervision</li> <li>• manages his or her time so as to participate regularly in supervision</li> <li>• authentically represents his or her self and ministry practices in a supervision setting</li> <li>• hears and acts upon feedback, guidance and correction received in supervision</li> <li>• seeks guidance when called to exercise ministry beyond their normal competence</li> <li>• keeps appropriate records of pastoral contacts and critical events</li> <li>• understands the circumstances in which a personal relationship should be disclosed to an appropriate officer of the church</li> </ul>					
<b>Comments:</b>					

**Any Other Comments:** Attach additional pages if you require more space.

Signature		Date	
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PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM AND DIRECT ANY QUERIES TO:

Name: .....

Address: .....

..... Postcode: .....

Role/office: .....

Presbytery/Council: .....

Tel: .....

Email: .....

Date required: .....

Thank you for your assistance!