

# **GUIDELINES FOR THE THIRD PHASE OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION**

## **MINISTRY INTERN PHASE**

**These Guidelines seek to establish common practice across the Assembly in terms of an overall framework for the Third Phase of Ministerial Education**

**(The Guidelines DO NOT seek to make uniform the implementation specifics across synods and presbyteries.)**

**Each Synod is encouraged to seek implementation of the Phase in a manner appropriate to the resources and practices of its synod and presbyteries. The manner of program development and delivery and the resourcing for the Phase will reflect the diversity of each of the synods.**

### **1 Summary of Ministry Intern Phase**

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Name</b>                           | Ministry Internship  |
| <b>Status of individual</b>           | Full ministerial responsibility and accountability, including where approved authority to preside at the sacraments.   |
| <b>Ordination / commissioning</b>     | At the completion of the Third Phase (which would normally be one year into the Placement, but may be extended to up to 3 years).  |
| <b>Ministry Intern Phase</b>          | Normally 12 months, but may be extended up to three years.   |
| <b>Placement Length</b>               | 3 -10 years  |
| <b>Study</b>                          | The study component is to be flexible, with mixed mode study. Minimum of 240 hours (6 weeks), including supervision time.  |
| <b>Oversight &amp; accountability</b> | Placement Presbytery (in consultation with Education Agency and Supervisor)  |
| <b>Funding</b>                        | Placement to fund normal ministry stipend.<br>The Synod, through an appropriate agency, meets the costs of the study portion (in a manner reflective of the Synod's meeting of costs for Continuing education required in Phase Four).<br>Supervision costs met as determined by Placement Presbytery. |
| <b>Consequences of non-completion</b> | Failure to achieve satisfactory completion by the end of the third year would normally result in terminating placement without ordination/ commissioning taking place.   |

## 2. Background

In 1997 the Assembly agreed to the introduction of 4-phases of ministerial education.

Phase One is a Period of Discernment;

Phase Two is a period of core theological education and formation;

Phase Three is a period of transition into the ministry workplace; and

Phase Four is the continuing education and formation for ongoing effective ministry.

## 3. Key to Terms used in Guidelines

**Ministry Intern Phase:** the third phase of Theological and Ministry education, normally 1 year in length.

**Ministry Intern:** the person participating in Phase Three.

**Synod Placements and Committee:** the synod body which has oversight of the placement processes placement of Ministers with a particular Synod.

**Home Presbytery:** the Presbytery in which the Ministry Intern candidated.

**Placement Presbytery:** the Presbytery in which the Ministry Intern is exercising Ministry.

**Supervision:** the covenantal relationship between the Ministry Intern and a Supervisor where the Supervisor exercises oversight, encouragement and feedback to the Intern, enabling appropriate reflective practice of his/her ministry.

**Educational Agency:** the agency designated by the Synod to co-ordinate the study component of Phase three. Normally, this would be the Theological College within the Synod where the Core Phase for the candidate was completed.

**Code of Ethics:** document outlining code of Ministerial practice within the Uniting Church. Adopted by the 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly 2000.

## 4. Purpose of the Third Phase

The Ministry Intern Phase is a supervised experience of Ministry. The purpose of this phase is to give the Ministry Intern the opportunity to begin to integrate learning from the Core Phase of theological education in a comprehensive ministry context and to continue serious and guided education for Ministry.

This Phase has many aspects of accountability and responsibility at a greater level than that of the Core Program Field Education component.

The Phase is another opportunity for the Intern and the church to reflect on and ascertain the his/her suitability for Ministry.

The Phase's supervised experience of ministry may provide a model with benefits for all the years of Phase Four.

## **5. Responsibility for Phase Three Components**

### **5.1 Placement of Ministry Intern**

The Placements Committee, in consultation with a congregation/agency, its Presbytery and the Educational Agency, will arrange the placement for the Ministry Intern.

### **5.2 Study undertaken by Ministry Intern**

The Educational Agency will determine, in consultation with the Ministry Intern, the appropriate study foci for Phase Three.

### **5.3 Supervision engaged in by Ministry Intern**

The Placement Presbytery, in consultation with the Educational Agency and the Ministry Intern, will determine the appropriate Supervisor to guide the Ministry Intern during this Phase.

## **6. Length of Ministry Intern Phase**

The Ministry Intern Phase will normally extend for a period of twelve months, but may, on the discretion of the Presbytery and in consultation with the Education Agency and Supervisor, be extended up to 3 years.

## **7. Status of Ministry Intern**

The Ministry Intern will exercise all the responsibility and authority of Ministry and leadership in the Placement. It is expected that Presbytery will normally grant authority to preside at the celebration of the sacraments. However, the authority for sacramental ministry is not automatically granted and each Presbytery must exercise its role in determining requests for it.

## **8. Oversight and Accountability during Phase Three**

The Placement Presbytery is primary in exercising oversight and accountability, in consultation with the Education Agency and the designated Supervisor.

## **9. Placement**

The Placement designated for the Ministry Intern may be any approved placement within the Synod. However, certain characteristics will be sought within the Placement.

The congregation or agency needs to be of sufficient stability to enhance the Ministry Intern's opportunity for Ministry practice.

The congregation or agency needs to have sufficient capacity to support and encourage the purposes and goals of the Ministry Intern Phase, including encouragement and acceptance of the anticipated time required for the study component.

### **9.1 Placement Length**

The length of the Placement is for an exit placement within the Uniting Church, that is, normally a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 10 years.

## **10. Study Component**

### **10.1 Curriculum**

The study component is to be flexible and determined by the Educational Agency in consultation with the Ministry Intern.

Some Ministry Interns will be required to complete formal theological study. Others may be encouraged to study contextual ministry education, such as Clinical Pastoral Education, mission and evangelism, leadership and practical ministry courses, management and organisational dynamics.

The component will also include transitional action/reflection opportunities. The range of study opportunities will reflect the resources and current offerings in continuing education within each Synod.

The study component will be in a mixed-mode format and may include intensives, 'one-off' workshops, distance education, supervision, and formal study.

### **10.2 Intensity**

The study component is a minimum of 240 hours (6 weeks) including supervision, and is anticipated should not exceed 320 hours (8 weeks) except in exceptional circumstances.

### **10.3 Funding**

The cost of study in the Ministry Intern Phase is to be met in the same manner as in the Continuing Education requirement of the Fourth Phase, and may be met by educational grants, subsidised study at Theological College and contributions by the individual engaged in the study.

### **10.4 Remote Areas**

It is envisaged that a significant portion of the study component of ministry Interns in remote areas will be fulfilled either by distance education (e.g. on-line learning) or through intensives.

## **11. Supervision**

### **11.1 Purpose of Supervision**

The purpose of the Supervision component is to assist the Ministry Intern to address matters arising from the practice of Ministry within the Placement, including the integration of theological education and Ministry practice, action/reflection on aspects of Ministry; and exploration of an appropriate model for ministry within Phase Four.

### **11.2 Frequency**

The frequency of the Supervision engagement will be determined by the geographical and contextual constraints of the Placement. However, face-to-face engagement is deemed important and at the very least once per month.

### **11.3 Appointed Supervisor**

The Supervisor will be appointed by the Placement Presbytery in consultation with the Ministry Intern and the Educational Agency. The designated supervisor is to be recognised by the Presbytery as one with experience in Ministry and an ability to exercise reflective ministry practice. The Supervisor will meet the church's expectations as outlined in the Guidelines for Pastoral Supervision and will have completed synod-recognised training in the practice of supervision.

### **11.4 Funding**

The funding of this component of the Ministry Intern Phase will be met in the same manner as the Supervision requirements are normally funded within the presbytery.

## **12. Funding of Ministry Intern Phase**

The designated Placement is to fund the Ministry Intern Phase through the normal ministry terms of Placement.

The Ministry Intern continues to receive the normal stipend and allowances while engaged in the study and supervision component of the Phase.

Extra costs involved in the study (such as course fees and supervision costs are met according to the normal practice within each synod and presbytery for Continuing Education and Code of Ethics requirements. Some Synods have resource grants given directly to Ministers, other Synods meet the costs of Continuing Education mainly through subsidising continuing education programs.)

## **13. Satisfactory completion of Ministry Intern Phase**

The Placement Presbytery, in consultation with the Education Agency, and the Supervisor will determine whether the intended outcomes of the Ministry Intern Phase have been appropriately reached.

## **14. Decision to Ordain or Commission**

The Home Presbytery shall, following consideration of an appraisal from and consultation with the Placement Presbytery, determine whether or not to ordain or, in the case of a Youth Worker, commission the Ministry Intern, taking into account the requirements of the Church, including Regulation 2.3.1 or 2.9.2.

## **15. Consequences of Non-Completion**

As noted above, the Ministry Intern Phase will normally be completed with one year. At the discretion of the Placement Presbytery and educational agency (in consultation with the Home Presbytery) it may be necessary to extend the Phase to allow for further discernment. Failure to achieve satisfactory transition into full and effective practice of Ministry by the end of the third year will normally result in termination of the Placement, without ordination or commissioning. In this instance the Home Presbytery and Educational Agency will be involved in a discernment process with the individual regarding future ministry possibilities.

## 16. Appendices

### 16.1 Examples of Ministry Intern Phase

#### Example One

Placement – rural congregation, with close proximity to regional rural centre

Study Component -

| Course/Program   | Sponsoring Body             | Funding   | Time-Commitment   |
|--|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Synod-wide intensive on mission & evangelism - residential | Continuing Education Agency | Subsidised by Continuing education agency<br>\$100 individual payment | 4 days = 40 hours   |
| Reflection on Ministry Program - residential               | Theological College         |   | 3 days x 2<br>= 60 hours  |
| Coolamon College<br>(2 Cert. level subjects)               | Coolamon College            | Individual  | 50 hrs x 2<br>= 100 hours   |
| Supervision  | Presbytery                  | No cost – Minister trained in supervision                             | 2 hrs x 12 (face-to-face) +<br>2 hrs x 12 (preparation)<br>= 48 hours |

#### Example Two:

Placement – community welfare agency – diaconal appointment

Study Component -

| Course/Program   | Sponsoring Body     | Funding   | Time-Commitment  |
|--|---------------------|---|--|
| Deacon intensive – ministry in a hurting world - residential | Theological College | Subsidised by Continuing education agency<br>\$200 individual payment             | 5 days = 50 hours  |
| Reflection on Ministry Program - residential                 | Theological College |   | 3 days x 2<br>= 60 hours   |
| B. Theol level subject – Spirituality in a secular age       | Theological College | Theological College   | 10 hrs. per week (one semester)<br>= 130 hours                       |
| Supervision  | Presbytery          | Supervision paid partially through Ministerial Benefits, and partially by Agency. | 2 hrs x 12 (face-to-face) +<br>1 hr x 12 (preparation)<br>= 36 hours |

### Example Three:

Placement – metropolitan church – team ministry

Study Component –

| Course/Program   | Sponsoring Body            | Funding   | Time-Commitment  |
|--|----------------------------|---|--|
| School of Theology - residential                       | Theological College        | Subsidised by Continuing education agency<br>\$250 individual payment | 4 days = 40 hours  |
| Reflection on Ministry Program - residential           | Theological College        | Continuing education  | 4 days = 40 hours  |
| On-Line Learning – Community Development Course I & II | TAFE / Theological College | Individual  | 5 hrs. per week (two semesters)<br>= 130 hours                       |
| Supervision  | Presbytery                 | Reduced cost – Minister trained in supervision – Intern’s MBA         | 2 hrs x 12 (face-to-face) +<br>1 hr x 12 (preparation)<br>= 36 hours |

### Example Four:

Placement – remote rural ministry

Study Component –

| Course/Program                                | Sponsoring Body     | Funding   | Time-Commitment  |
|---|---------------------|---|--|
| School of Theology - residential              | Theological College | Subsidised by Continuing education agency<br>\$250 individual payment | 3 days = 30 hours  |
| Post-graduate Unit – Rural ministry Practicum | Coolamon College    | Individual  | 250 hours  |
| Supervision                                   | Presbytery          | Reduced cost – Colleague trained in Supervision – Intern’s MBA        | 2 hrs x 9 (face-to-face) +<br>1 hr x 9 (preparation)<br>= 27 hours |

## 16.2 Frequently asked questions

### What are the expectations with regard to Part-time placements?

Each synod (MEB) will need to determine the ‘pro rata’ expectations on those exercising a part-time candidacy into the Ministry Intern. Clearly the purposes of the Ministry Intern Phase will still need to be achieved while ministering part-time.

**What happens, with respect to preside at the Sacraments in a Placement within an ecumenical agency?**

Where, for ecumenical and other reasons, the Ministry Intern placement is one in which the Ministry Intern celebrates the sacraments – the presbytery is encouraged to grant authority to preside at the sacraments.

**What is the Ministry Intern's status with regard to the Beneficiary Fund?** Under the present terms of the trust deed, there is no provision to admit non-ordained persons into the Beneficiary Fund. At present the Lay Fund would provide a suitable transition platform and Ministry Interns could then rollover/buy back years of service in the Beneficiary Fund upon ordination.

**Do the Phase Three Guidelines impose additional tasks on new ministers and will that mean they will be therefore less available for ministry practice?**

Phase Three does impose additional tasks upon the Ministry Intern. However, such tasks are designed to enhance the transition for Ministry Interns from academic life into ministry practice. Secondly, the Phase Three requirements are designed to begin to develop long term practices which will support and enhance ministry throughout all the years of Ministry.

**What happens re transition from Phase 2 into Phase 3?**

Recognition that Phase Two has been completed. This may mean the award of Completion of Core Study, or some similar descriptive recognition.

**Who instigates the transition from Phase 3 to Phase 4?**

The Placement Presbytery, in consultation with the educational agency, the supervisor and the Home Presbytery, determines that a Ministry Intern is ready for ordination.