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Vocational Education Office

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Welcome

Hi, and thank you for your interest in ACOM's Vocational Diploma program.

The Australian church in the 21st century desperately needs quality disciples of Jesus who are growing as leaders and willing to embark upon a great faith adventure. Leaders who dare to make a Kingdom difference for Australia.

ACOM invites you to embark upon a learning adventure, an adventure that will transform your life, challenge your ideas, develop your skills and help you to influence the lives of the people God brings into your life and ministry.



We need leaders who are able to challenge the status quo, lead and manage change, engage our community through mission and love people with compassion. Leaders who are devoted to seeing God transform the lives of others and are able to coach and mentor them along the way as fellow travelers with Jesus.

We also need leaders who have a biblical foundation for their leadership. Leaders with spiritual depth and a commitment to a life long journey of growth and maturity in their Christian faith.

The Diploma in Christian Ministry program at ACOM is a great way of moving forward in your development as a disciple and leader. Our program is biblically based and is designed to help you integrate your learning in genuine practical situations.

Our training program is also designed to prepare you for leadership, where you are. ACOM utilizes key elements of distance and digital learning to provide you with training in your current location and in your current church.

May God bless you in all you do for Him

Jason Potter

Director of Vocational Education
Australian College of Ministries

The ACOM Approach

ACOM's training is designed to be a life transforming experience. That means we want to facilitate your personal growth, spiritual depth, life and leadership skills. Do not expect to come away from ACOM unchanged. We want to help you discover God's agenda for your life and then give you as many opportunities as we can to explore how that works for you.

Our training program is not designed to produce a certain kind of leader, it's designed to help you become the person God created you to be, and give you an opportunity to move into the kind of leadership he has designed you for.

We believe that the essence of training for ministry is spiritual growth or maturing in Christ. Spiritual growth is holistic in nature, involving not just biblical knowledge and skill development, but touching every area of life. The fruit of the Spirit are key qualities for both ministry and for life - for example: a willingness to love and serve people. Our training emphasis seeks to integrate learning with life and ministry. We also believe that the primary context for Christian training is the local church, using God-given gifts for the building up of the body into Christ-likeness (Eph 4: 11-16). Consequently, the mission of any relevant Christian training institution is shared with that of the local church - the development of spiritual maturity through the development and expression of spiritual gifts in Christian community.

Ministry as presented in the New Testament includes any service for God and may be exercised in many contexts. So effective Christian training offers the opportunity to be equipped for a diversity of ministries, from leadership in a church to specialist or volunteer service within a local church or community. The New Testament gives no basis for developing or maintaining a special class of people known as "Ordained Clergy", but there is a strong theme of "setting aside" or "ordaining" a wide range of people for specific ministries, which may or may not be paid roles. In a society where Christian faith and values are progressively being marginalised, many Christians find themselves in mission contexts in their vocations – eg chaplains, Christian professionals such as teachers, community workers and carers. It is our conviction that such people are equally 'in ministry' as are church leaders, and equally need equipping.

Areas of Study

Vocational Education

ACOM's Vocational Education program is offered through an innovative decentralised learning model and through our national training network LocalNet, consisting of over 50 local churches, training colleges and mission groups. More information on LocalNet is available on our website at <http://www.acom.edu.au/page/139/LocalNet>

ACOM is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and is registered in NSW, RTO# 90965. We offer training in all states and territories through National Recognition and also offer a number of our courses overseas.

ACOM offers the following Vocational Education programs:

- Certificate III in Christian Ministry
- Certificate IV in Christian Ministry
- Diploma in Christian Ministry

Who is ACOM?

- Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

The Certificate IV in Training and Assessment is taught in partnership with the Australian Centre for Advanced Studies.

Undergraduate Study

ACOM's undergraduate courses are offered through the Sydney College of Divinity which is fully accredited by the NSW Department of Education and Training.

ACOM offers a number of undergraduate awards in a range of study areas. You can find more information on our website www.acom.edu.au

Post Graduate Study

ACOM's postgraduate courses are offered through the Sydney College of Divinity which is fully accredited by the NSW Department of Education and Training.

ACOM offers a number of post graduate awards in a range of study areas. You can find more information on our website www.acom.edu.au

Student Life

Learning Environment

Each subject will be delivered in an online environment with students able to access course materials and tutorial discussions 24/7. Students will also have a ministry supervisor in their location who will oversee their practical work which is a required part of every subject.

Students will also have a coach who will guide them through their learning experience and assist them with both their subjects and their own personal growth. Coaching will be primarily done over the phone but may also be face to face in some locations.

For fulltime students there will be a compulsory intensive at the beginning of each semester. The intensive will be in a location that is designed to suit the majority of students. Part time students will also attend intensives dependent on the subjects they are studying that semester. The intensive will focus primarily on one subject but will also introduce students to all units for that semester as well as any further information required.

Student Orientation

ACOM is committed to ensuring that all new students attend an orientation program, enabling the student to familiarise themselves with ACOM's training program, policies and procedures. An orientation day must be held at the beginning of any intake of new students. For example the beginning of a new term, or a new year as appropriate.

Your student orientation program will include:

- Information about the operation of ACOM, student services, courses and any local training institute information
- Information about ACOM's Core Values
- An outline of ACOM's Access and Equity Policy, Bullying and Sexual Harassment Policy, Occupational Health and Safety Procedures, Fees and Refunds.
- An introduction to important staff and how to contact them
- Information about Recognised Prior Learning and Mutual Recognition

Student Records

Students can get access to their personal records through the vocational education administration office on request.

Assessment

If a student is assessed as Not Yet Competent, the Assessor/s shall determine what has not been achieved and provide appropriate help towards competency. If after re-assessment, by the Assessor, the participant does not satisfy the required achievement level/s, then the Assessor shall:

- Immediately lodge the assessment tools with the vocational education Staff and,

Course Information

- Provide a written report to the Diploma course coordinator within two work days of the re-assessment.

Any student who is assessed as Not Yet Competent and wishes to dispute their assessment can do so through a written application to the Director of Vocational Education, according to ACOM's grievance procedure.

Diploma Outline

Core Subjects

Identifying and Developing Leaders

Purpose

To facilitate students developing and practicing effective leadership. Leadership will be provided by the student for both individuals and teams, and s/he will learn and implement a range of critical organisational and developmental skills, drawing on insights from business, commerce and leadership sources. The student will become increasingly aware of systemic organisational issues, as well as his/her role in them.

Biblical leadership

Purpose

To provide students with an adequate Biblical basis for understanding, developing, demonstrating and practicing godly, biblically informed leadership in and through the local church. This particular unit enables the student to read and identify Biblical insights from a range of Scriptures, and then to apply them practically to the personal development of the student from within the context of the project. The course explores key Biblical themes and leadership practices

The Holy Spirit

Purpose

This unit is a self-directed reading, research and response course designed to have students immerse themselves in the understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, explore a range of spiritual traditions, and engage in a number of specific spiritual disciplines for the duration of the course. This reading, research and response course first of all has students exploring how wide a concept "spirituality" is, then from diverse readings explore different spiritual practices and assess their own practices in light of the readings. Differing views on aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit are researched, as well as developing a prayer journal and exploring the work of the Spirit in and through prayer. The last section of the course deals with specific aspects of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit – and the course includes a research paper and two oral presentations.

Coaching

Purpose

To equip students with a broad range of coaching skills and insights, to empower the student to implement these coaching skills in leading and managing the missional project, and so to create for the project a supportive context that encourages and provides accountability for all the team. As a part of the missional project, this unit runs over a whole year. Coaching is a specific form of empowerment and motivation, whereby a coach comes alongside of key people in his sphere of influence, members of the team and other participants in the missional project. The coach provides empowerment for others, helps clarify and set direction, provides support and insight, and helps develop accountability, team cohesion and focus.

Course Information

Who is Jesus (Christology)

Purpose

To equip students with the tools to discover, articulate and engage the identity and nature of Jesus from the Gospels. Students will be taught to identify and articulate the questions Christology asks and the answers it provides, have a critical understanding of the foundations of Christology from scripture, value the uniqueness of Christ in worship and mission, and integrate new knowledge into their lives and ministry.

The Mission and purpose of the church (Ecclesiology)

Purpose

To enable students to build on the foundations of Christology and Missiology, and apply that foundation to the mission, purpose and methodology of the church in the 21st Century. A 21st century dominated by digital culture and new ways of viewing the world. People are engaged in issues and spirituality like never before but by and large they do not see the church as having any credible answers to life's challenges. This course will help students engage these issues and encourage them to think creatively about how communities of God's people can respond in mission.

The Missionary God (Missiology)

Purpose

To enable students to develop and articulate a theology of mission based on the personality and nature of God as expressed in the scriptures and in the person of Jesus. The nature of God as defined by love and His mission as the outworking of His love for people.

Developing a disciple making culture

Purpose

To enable students to identify, articulate and engage the key characteristics of a disciple making culture. To enable them to implement a strategy to develop their community's culture and to give their community the tools they need to grow and develop disciples.

Mission Project One

Purpose

To facilitate students developing and implementing effective community programs in and through the mission project. The community is here understood as beginning with the local church, and the wider network of relationships existing beyond the church. Students will develop a plan and strategy for initiating mission focused relationships with people in their sphere of influence and drawing them into an environment where they are exposed to Christian faith and experiences.

Mission Project Two

Purpose

To enable students to develop their skills in team building, organization and vision, support, coaching and strategic development of their mission project.

Student Welfare and Guidance Services

ACOM recognises that students will undergo all kinds of changes when they submit themselves to a training program. There are a number of services ACOM provides which you can access directly. The Vocational Education Administration Staff are available to contact for any inquiries about your course, questions about the processes of ACOM, or for raising issues you may have of a welfare nature which require assistance. The Vocational Education Staff can also give you advice on the shape of your course and keep you informed about competencies you have completed and what areas of the course you still need to complete. The Diploma course coordinator is also available for you to contact, especially in dealing with any areas of the training process in which you believe you have been treated unfairly.

Grievances and Disputes

ACOM is committed to resolving any difficulties students have with ACOM procedures and staff. All parties involved in the grievance/dispute or complaint will be expected to maintain confidentiality with respect for all individuals who may be involved in the dispute in any way. Confrontation will be avoided and every effort will be made to reach a conciliatory and satisfactory agreement for all parties concerned.

Students and staff should make every effort to resolve any dispute initially at the level at which the incident occurs.

Any student who wishes to appeal against a decision relating to his/her studies shall consult, in the first instance, with the lecturer/facilitator concerned.

If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the student may consult the Director of Vocational Education, who shall refer the matter to the ACOM Leadership Group.

If an agreement is not reached between the student and ACOM, the matter will be reviewed by an "Independent Mediator". This person will be from outside ACOM and independent of ACOM staff and training institutes. The mediator will have significant experience in mediating disputes within the education industry and must be acceptable to both parties.

The decision of the Independent Mediator will be communicated to both parties in writing and is final.

Recognition of Qualifications Issued by other RTO's

Students who have completed Certificate IV level study at other training organisations can apply for recognition of their training as a part of their Diploma application. Diploma level courses will also be considered for credit. Some undergraduate training can also count towards ACOM's vocational training.

Access & Equity

ACOM will ensure programs and services are relevant, accessible, fair and inclusive for all who agree with the philosophy and training levels of ACOM by:

Promoting courses to the Christian and wider community in a manner that includes and reflects the diverse nature of Christian denominations by ensuring all prospective participants are well informed on the options available to meet their individual training needs.

ACOM Policies

Ensuring women, people with disabilities, those from differing age groups or, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with differing language and literacy skills are able to gain access to the **training**. The Diploma Course Coordinator is responsible for making decisions on reasonable adjustments to the assessment of individual subjects to cater appropriately for access and equity issues that may arise with individual students.

LocalNet Language, Literacy & Numeracy Policy

ACOM is committed to the encouragement and support of training staff who will develop, access and maintain a range of quality English language, literacy and numeracy skills that will ensure learner pathways, which will be ongoing throughout the training course.

ACOM will assist students whose 'whole access' to training is limited by language, literacy and numeracy skills and adopt a range of approaches and employ processes to treat each student as an individual. Eg the student who cannot comprehend written questions to write an answer she/he may have to be assessed orally

ACOM is aware that language, literacy and numeracy skills are part of specific training requirements and are necessary to perform workplace tasks. They are needed during training and assessment. However, the language, literacy and numeracy demands should not be greater than those required in the workplace.

There are a number of ways ACOM identifies language, literacy and numeracy needs of the individual student. When conducting the initial interview with the student pre-enrolling in the training and if finding the educational background and the information received at the initial interview dictates specific needs are required the student is asked to complete an aptitude test. If the student requires specific needs, training will accommodate these needs through the following procedures.

Procedure for accommodating language, literacy or numeracy needs:

ACOM will use any of the following specific procedures when / if necessary;

- after the trainer has read the information explain what the reading is about
- discussing any reading orally with all students and encourage student interaction and communication – explaining specific areas in depth orally
- breaking the reading into small sections – read and discuss, read and discuss
- draw attention to key words
- include OHT's with the main points – use a pointer
- tutoring
- use videos, CD's and audio tapes for training
- whiteboard documentation for explanation
- workshops with hands on activities
- group work with peer support
- handouts with diagrams
- oral case studies and scenarios
- question and answer times to discuss main points
- feedback to the special needs student
- use pictures /posters

Privacy Policy

ACOM acknowledges and respects the privacy of individuals.

Collection and Use of Information

Collection and use of an individual's private information shall be subject to the following guidelines:

- The individual knows of and consents to the collection.
- The information shall be used for the purposes for which it was collected, e.g.,:
 - Training methodology.
 - Mailing of information relevant to the person, etc.
- No disclosure to a third-party without the individual's consent.
- No disclosure to other institutions and authorities unless required by law.
- Access by the individual to their recorded information within 14 days of receiving a written request, (an administration fee may apply).
- Information protection and usage restricted to those persons responsible for its maintenance and usage, e.g.,
 - Computer password protection.
 - Hard copies in lockable filing cabinets.
 - Access limited to authorised personnel.
- All transfers and collection of electronic data that is not for general display will be via a minimum 64-bit encryption algorithm

RPL

Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) is available for all ACOM Qualifications. RPL is a process through which students can apply to have recognised existing competency within a qualification.

To apply for RPL and to receive more information on procedures and cost please contact the LocalNet Administration Staff.

2009

Full Time

The course fee for full time students for the Diploma in Christian Ministry is \$3500 for a full one year program. This includes all course handbooks, notes and materials as well as the two intensives at the beginning of each semester. It does not include any extra text books which students may decide to purchase as a part of their studies.

Part Time

Part time students will be charged an individual fee for each subject they enrol in according to the following:

- Subjects that do not require an intensive will be \$312.50 each.
- Subjects that do include an intensive are \$500 each. There are two subjects in the Diploma program that include an intensive component.

Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)

Students applying for RPL for subjects from the Cert IV in Christian Ministry or for the Diploma program will be charged a fee of \$150 per Unit of Competency.

Application for Credit

Applications for credit from other accredited study do not attract any fees.

Our History

Churches of Christ Ministry Training Colleges began in 1941 in NSW and 1964 in Queensland. These colleges merged to form ACOM, beginning in 1999. Throughout that 60-year history, both Colleges have changed to meet the challenges of ministry training for their time, while maintaining a deep commitment to biblical theological foundations.

Since those early days, significant changes have occurred in the way churches choose leaders and the kind of people seeking to be trained, together with big shifts in the standards, flexibility, specialisation and scope of training sought. In the 80s, it became obvious that effectiveness in ministry and church leadership needed much more than academic competency and Bible knowledge. In fact, analysis found no statistical relationship between academic performance at College and effectiveness in ministry, so greater emphasis was placed on training key skills and competencies.

In the 90s, character development was added as foundational to training as many well-studied and competent leaders nonetheless buckled under the pressure of neglected personal issues. The financial and family costs of leaving work, church and homes and moving to Sydney or Brisbane to study became prohibitive or undesirable for many, who then found it necessary to seek paid employment during training.

Increasingly, students chose to be in ministry and get some training along the way, rather than seek training full-time. As a result, our training delivery methods became more flexible during the 90s, and the course length was condensed from 4 to 3 years by adopting a 48-week working year. A trend toward distance learning in both secular and ministry training accelerated with the possibilities offered by the internet. Yet, we remained convinced that significant face-to-face contact was essential in ministry training, and began resourcing, training and supervising coaches and mentors for our students in the field.

At the same time, local church-based Colleges were flourishing, offering an enviable resource of ministry opportunities and cutting-edge teachers, and their ready acceptance as genuine training alternatives to traditional theological education.

Linked with this, donations from churches were being increasingly directed away from denominational bodies and into local church projects, leading to a rapid decline in financial support for Colleges like ours. Churches everywhere were emphasising the every-member ministry of the church, and were grappling with ways to train their people and were asking the Colleges for help. We experimented with various ways of resourcing local churches to train their own people.

At the dawn of the 21st century, ACOM took its next bold step, by becoming a Training Network, where churches and Colleges can work together with ACOM's academic leadership, administrative resources and accreditation expertise to provide training for people where they are, at the pace they want, and in the interest areas they seek to develop.

We look forward to developing increasing partnerships with Christian evangelical training organisations and churches, both conservative and charismatic, to work together for the good of the kingdom of God. By so doing, we desire to bless the ministry of local churches, and to provide them with an invaluable equipping resource.

Enrolment Form

Personal Information

MR/MRS/Miss		
Surname		
First Names (all)		
Current Address		
	City:	
	State:	Postcode:
Phone	hm:	wk:
	mob:	
Email		
Date of Birth		
Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency Contact	Name:	
	ph:	mob:
Country of Birth		

Course You Are Applying For

Diploma in Christian Ministry	
Recognised Prior Learning	
Credit Transfer for Previous Study	

Term and Year of Enrollment

<i>Eg. Term One</i>	<i>2004</i>

Enrollment Form

Enrollment Status

<i>Fulltime</i>	
<i>Part Time</i>	

<i>Part-Time Students – Please list the subjects you are applying for.</i>	
<i>Subject No.</i>	<i>Title</i>

Educational Details

<i>Are you attending Secondary School?</i>	<i>Yes</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Highest Secondary School Level Completed</i>		
<i>Tertiary Qualifications Completed</i>		
<i>Any other Qualifications</i>		

ATTACHMENT (A)

Please attach certified copies of qualifications, awards and transcripts of results (Only if you intend to apply for recognition of prior learning or credit for previous study)

Materials Attached

Enrollment Form

Employment History

Please show details of the last five years. Use extra pages in needed.		
Dates	Nature of Employment eg. Part-time, Fulltime, Self Employed	Position

Personal Information

How well do you speak English	Very Well <input type="checkbox"/>	Well <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Well <input type="checkbox"/>
	Not at All <input type="checkbox"/>		
Do you speak a language at home apart from English?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If so please specify the language			
Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Origin?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you consider yourself to have a disability, impairment or long term condition?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If so please indicate the area of disability, impairment or long term condition.			

Christian Faith

Please attach a short statement outlining how and when you became a Christian (Please attach another page if required)			<input type="checkbox"/>
Please list any leadership experience you have had in the local church, roles or Christian Service activities undertaken			
Position/Role	Activities Involved	Duration	

Enrollment Form

Your Vocational Ministry Goals

Please briefly describe your current ministry or leadership goals as they are currently formed.

Reasons For Study

In a few words please describe your reasons for applying for this course

Enrollment Form

Other Information

Please indicate how you heard about ACOM's Vocational Diploma Program

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Enrollment Form

DECLARATION:

I have read the Diploma Prospectus and I declare that the information provided in the application is to the best of my knowledge accurate in all respect.

I hereby authorise ACOM staff to use personal information to process and effect my application.

Signature..... **Date**.....

PRIVACY:

Australian College of Ministries (ACOM) requires the information requested of you in this form in order to provide you with education services and to cater for particular students' needs. If you do not provide all the relevant information, then we may not be able to provide such services or assess your academic progress.

Please also note that ACOM may provide the personal information given on this application form to third parties (such as universities, colleges, accreditation bodies and Australian government bodies eg Centrelink) in order to provide you with education services and to assess your academic progress or suitability.

Please indicate, by signing your name, whether you understand and accept this privacy legislation.

Signature..... **Date**.....

Office Use Only
Date Rec'd ____________
Accpt'd/Decl_____