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1 Welcome

Thank you for beginning your study with ACOM. Our hope and prayer is that through this training you will be equipped for a lifetime of service.

ACOM is a community of life-long learners, with a central belief that if we stop learning we cease to grow. Thank you for your commitment to learning and growing through ACOM.

ACOM exists to equip those who love God and want to see the gospel proclaimed and lived throughout the world. By studying with ACOM, you are enabling us to partner with you in the gospel mission. We hope you find a deep sense of purpose and connectedness in studying with us.

As a national provider, we are in a unique position to resource you for your mission and ministry. Alongside our academic staff we have a range of ministry practitioners, spiritual companions, supervisors and spiritual formation directors who are dedicated to developing your full potential in Christ.

We are always listening to wisdom that feeds our continuous quality improvement processes. In particular, we value student feedback on any aspect of our courses and organisation.

For those studying with ACOM for the first time, we extend a special welcome. ACOM’s model of study requires you to be a self-starter with strong self-discipline and time-management skills. However, we are also committed to supporting you in your studies.

As an ACOM student (whether part-time, full-time, undergraduate or postgraduate) you will find that you will have contact with the National Administration Office in Sydney throughout your studies – especially through enquiries to the National Help Desk (ph. 1800 672 692; email: info@acom.edu.au).

We are here to help you in whatever way we can. We aim to process any enquiry (email or phone) within 24 hours of receiving it either giving you a direct answer, or referring you to the appropriate person for an answer. Please don’t hesitate to contact us at any time.

Finally, we wish you well in your course of studies. Your graduation from ACOM will represent a milestone in you becoming a better equipped disciple of Jesus.

The ACOM Team
2 About Australian College of Ministries

ACOM is a learning community focused on transformation. To transform society we first need to be personally transformed. To be a light in the world we first need to be personally set on fire with God’s Spirit.

Now in its 70th year of service, ACOM tailors your course to help you meet your calling in life. Our focus on transformational learning is holistic: we know that it is necessary to develop the head, heart and hands to be an effective light in the world. While we are conservative in our approach to Scripture we are missiona in heart.

As our model of training focuses on flexible delivery there is no central campus. Your place of ministry is your campus. As a student you can stay in your home and your local church, and count your hours in ministry toward your coursework.

Our college is committed to serving disciples of Jesus who are serious about kingdom living. We are especially equipped to help develop Christian leaders for a rapidly changing world.

Our strengths are:

• **Spiritual formation is integral to all we do.** We don’t merely teach a class on formation, we facilitate face-to-face holistic learning experiences around the country that are deeply forming.

• **Our curriculum is intentionally mission-focused rather than the usual suite of traditional theology subjects.** This approach equips students to be relevant and effective as they represent God’s kingdom in any situation God places them.

• **Our method of delivery is designed to maximize learning-in-action.** While you can study with ACOM from anywhere in the world our approach to distance learning uses cutting edge learning practices that view students as practicing professionals.

• **We help students discover how to study the Bible for themselves.** We equip students to learn how to learn and make application to the complex changing world we live in.

• **Our facilitations are led by “pracademics” not ivory tower academics focusing solely on theory.** Rather they are practitioner/academics who are highly qualified but also active in personal discipleship and mission.

• **We personalize the support we provide students.** Each student is appointed their own learning support manager who is available to assist with their enquiries and student needs.

• **Our academic standards are excellent.** We know that surviving and thriving in any ministry requires the mind of a scholar and the heart of a missionary. Our assessments require students to be stretched in heart, mind and soul.

• **We build a genuine community of learners.** Students and faculty connect in multiple ways, regardless of location, to support and stimulate a mutual learning experience.

• **ACOM graduates are job ready.** This is because they have been learning on-the-job. Their place of ministry and mission has been their campus. With our instruction-action-reflection approach what they learn today they use the next day as theory meets practice.

In a rapidly changing world ACOM continues to pursue its vision to resource Christians to be effective kingdom agents wherever they are serving.
2.1 ACOM’s History

The Australian College of Ministries (ACOM) is an international provider of life-changing, ministry training experiences. Originally birthed over seventy years ago (1941) as the Churches of Christ in NSW Theological College (Woolwich, Sydney) ACOM has produced thousands of graduates serving as ministers, evangelists, lay leaders, welfare workers, teachers, missionaries and church planters. The college merged with Kenmore Christian College (Queensland) in 1999 to form The Australian College of Ministries.

Originally a campus-based residential college, ACOM now specializes in flexible delivery. It is a hybrid of distance learning experience mixed with targeted face-to-face student support through Formation Groups and Subject Facilitations. ACOM has developed a national and international reputation for excellence and innovation. ACOM has 24 staff (ministry support, academic and leadership development), 17 formation leaders, and 23 subject facilitators across Australia.

ACOM has formed partnerships of mutual assistance in ministry development and training with like-minded training organisations such as Youth Vision, ACCESS Ministries, The Vineyard Movement and The Alliance College. Other Vocational Education partners include organisations such as Youth Dimension, Youth for Christ, Australian Lutheran College, Kingsley College and Nazarene Theological College.

The sponsorship of Churches of Christ in NSW is an empowering gift that enables ACOM to pursue its mission and partner with other fresh hope initiatives such as: The Tops Conference Centre, CareWorks NSW, Southpoint, and Living Care. Churches of Christ has a historic commitment to unity amongst all believers which has ensured ACOM is an authentic and integrated cross-denominational gathering of students, staff, church, and ministry partnerships.

2.2 ACOM’s Mission

At the Australian College of Ministries we develop healthy, effective leaders who can positively impact their own corner of the world.

At ACOM we emphasise a missional focus, flexible learning, deep spiritual formation, work-based learning, and academic excellence.

For over 15 years we have pioneered the innovative instruction-action-reflection approach to preparing effective leaders for a rapidly changing world.

Our courses are tailored for God’s people wherever they work, minister and live - in the church, workplace and community. Our desire is to equip you to be changed – so you can change your corner of the world.
2.3 ACOM’s Governance

2.3.1 Sydney College of Divinity

The Australian College of Ministries (ACOM) is member institute of the Sydney College of Divinity (SCD). SCD is a tertiary education institution providing high quality, accredited awards in ministry and theology and related areas through the teaching colleges that are its member institutions.

The Sydney College of Divinity is registered as a Higher Education Provider. Its degrees and awards are accredited by the NSW Department of Education & Communities (NSW DEC), with a number of awards also registered in Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania. The SCD is approved as a Higher Education Provider under the Higher Education Support Act 2003. It is also a CRICOS provider in New South Wales (CRICOS Code: 02948J), Queensland (CRICOS Code: 02904K) and Western Australia (CRICOS Code: 03284C).

ACOM has been a foundational member of the Sydney College of Divinity since 1983. Through SCD we are able to offer a complete suite of higher education awards ranging from the Diploma of Christian Studies, Diploma of Theology, Bachelor of Ministry, Bachelor of Theology and Bachelor of Theology (Honours). At the Postgraduate level awards range from the Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Master of Arts and Master of Arts (Honours), Master of Theology and Master of Theology (Honours), to the Doctor of Philosophy and the Doctor of Ministry.

2.3.2 College Board

ACOM Ltd is a company limited by guarantee. ACOM is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of directors appointed by the Conference of Churches of Christ in New South Wales. The Board sets the policies under which ACOM operates to provide its training throughout Australia and the world.

2.3.3 Academic Board

In keeping with emerging standards of accountability and transparency in the Higher and Vocational Education sectors in Australia, ACOM has an Academic Board to oversee all aspects of its academic functioning, ensuring that ACOM’s benchmarks, standards and procedures equal or exceed those of the Higher and Vocational Education sectors more broadly. The Academic Board is comprised of senior academics from inside and outside ACOM.
3 Studying with ACOM

ACOM has a rich history of leading the way in innovative ministry training. In the early 90’s ACOM shifted its focus from campus based learning to flexible delivery – using an instruction-action-reflection approach.

At ACOM we recognise your place of ministry or work is a living laboratory offering an opportunity for in depth on-the-job learning. We blend theory and practice in a missional learning adventure tailored to develop your intellectual knowledge, practical skills, and spiritual awareness.

Our face-to-face facilitations provide an opportunity for students to make sense of Biblical and theological content in the context of their personal spiritual life and ministry. These engaging learning experiences, facilitated by a leader in the field, is designed to help students become sharper theologically, deeper spiritually and stronger professionally.

Our research projects emphasise your place of ministry situation. We blend action, reflection, and theory to produce deep learning that is academically rigorous and practice oriented.

Personal Spiritual formation is a foundational experience at ACOM. We don’t run classes on formation; we help each student explore their own personal journey of self-awareness, social development, spiritual understanding, and faith surrender. This process is a transformational journey – going deep to be released for personal mission.

At ACOM we don’t just want smart graduates – we want graduates who are:

- **Job ready** (skilled to take on new challenges)
- **Mission oriented** (getting their hands dirty in mission and ministry)
- **Spiritually well-formed** (being deeply faithful and spiritually minded)

3.1 ACOM’s responsibilities in Flexible Learning

ACOM’s responsibility is to provide a learning environment, which is:

1. ACCESSIBLE: Information relating to units, courses, enrolment, progression, graduation and other important aspects of a student’s study is readily accessible and easily understood.
2. CLEAR: Instructions relating to expected unit outcomes, assessment requirements, the submission of essays and other required documentation are clearly stated.
3. COMPREHENSIVE: Lectures, lecture notes and readers provide detailed and extensive coverage of all required areas of study.
4. RELEVANT: ACOM’s learning experiences and material directly address pertinent personal and professional issues.
5. INFORMED: Teaching staff have received specific training and professional development in flexible delivery education, and provide best practice teaching delivery in this mode.
6. RESPONSIVE: Students receive performance feedback on their work within an agreed timeframe.
7. SUPPORTIVE: The process of learning is experienced as student-centred and supportive of the student’s aspirations for learning and positive achievement.
8. PERSONAL: Communication with administrators and facilitators is user-friendly, relevant, personal and transparent; so as to leave the student feeling positively engaged in the process of learning.
9. EQUIVALENT: ACOM’s flexible learning supports standards, benchmarks, assessments, outcomes and awards that are consistent with traditional modes of educational delivery.
10. COMPARABLE: ACOM displays standards of teaching, delivery, assessment and quality control that are comparable to other relevant tertiary institutions.
3.2 Student Responsibilities in Flexible Learning

Students engaged in ACOM’s flexible learning programs must demonstrate a set of attitudes and competencies, which will enable them to be successful in their studies and their ministries. These include:

1. MOTIVATION: Students display a love of learning that extends beyond their formal studies, overflowing into a commitment to lifelong learning.

2. RESPONSIBILITY: Students effectively manage their time and learning processes, ensuring that their assessment tasks are completed and submitted on time, and at a quality sufficient to satisfy their needs and expectations.

3. OPENNESS: A willingness to go beyond the devotional to a deeper level of thought about faith and ministry, including consuming a “diet” of good reading, which stimulates renewed thinking, enhanced personal formation, and creative ministry practice.

4. THOUGHTFULNESS: Students are willing to develop the capacity to think critically, i.e., developing the ability to make informed judgments based on the analysis of information and the exercise of logic.

5. INTEGRATION: Students see themselves as active learners who develop a habit of disciplined learning while they serve in their ministry contexts.

3.3 Contacting ACOM’s Staff

Contact details for all staff and the can be found on the ACOM website:

http://acom.edu.au/our-team

To contact the National office please call 1800 672 692 or email info@acom.edu.au

3.4 Learning Support Managers

ACOM Learning Support Managers (LSM’s) act as an on-the-ground leader and point of contact for ACOM students. They are the face of ACOM and work to provide effective learning opportunities and pastoral care for students. Each student is allocated an LSM, usually based on where a student is living, to support and guide them in their journey through ACOM. Contact your LSM for information and questions regarding your unit selection, course plans, facilitations, spiritual formation retreats, student ministry supervisors and other student support matters.

3.5 Course Structure

ACOM’s courses have three key components: theory, practical ministry and spiritual formation. These components are explained below.

3.5.1 Theory

Self-Paced Study Materials

ACOM’s curriculum is designed to provide students with the knowledge they need to succeed in ministry and mission. Most units will be delivered via Moodle, our online learning site, which will provide the content for each unit as well as interaction with the unit co-ordinator and other students (some units may require an additional textbook to be purchased by the student, which is not covered by FEE-HELP).
Units not yet available on Moodle will be delivered by unit packages in the week before the start of the trimester. Students will use Moodle to access the Introductory Book and submit assessments.

Unit coordinators oversee most aspects of units on an ongoing basis. They are the ideal person to ask questions about sessions, assignment topics and overall issues regarding the unit matter. Their contact information can be found on Moodle.

At times you will have a different Marker from the Unit Coordinator. They will be clearly identified in Moodle and will be the ideal person to talk to about assessment questions or issues.

For further information on Moodle and instructions for use, please refer to Chapter 11: Moodle

**Guided Facilitations**

Students can attend a facilitation (normally a three-day guided study and discussion session) for scheduled units in each state. Facilitations provide excellent opportunities to interact with fellow students, and to investigate how unit materials integrate with daily life, faith and ministry. Students are strongly encouraged to attend as many facilitations as possible, as students often learn more when a shared learning experience supplements their self-paced study. The primary purpose of a facilitation is to integrate the theory and content of a unit with the contexts and practice of ministry and mission.

The facilitation schedules for each state are available on the ACOM website: [http://acom.edu.au/facilitation-schedules](http://acom.edu.au/facilitation-schedules)

Facilitators are chosen for their familiarity with the unit material, their track record in applying that familiarity to real life and ministry contexts, and their ability to relate to, and connect with, students. These characteristics enable facilitators to maximise students’ learning experiences in a relaxed and enjoyable environment. Facilitators do not ‘lecture’ but rather assist students to reflect theologically on their learning, life and ministry.

Students can complete an additional assessment, called an Integration Assignment, if they are unable to attend a facilitation or if a facilitation is not offered.

**3.5.2 Practical Ministry**

**Ministry/Workplace/Community Placements**

Not everything can be learned through academic study. Emerging leaders also need the opportunity to learn from experience and reflection in real-life situations. Students select a ministry, workplace or community placement where they can exercise an intentional ministry or other mission activity, choosing a Student Ministry Supervisor* to assist them. Student’s hours spent in ministry and reflecting with their supervisor contribute to the requirements of most units for which students register.

A placement can be any location where students are engaged in intentional ministry or mission. Typically a local church or other setting allows students to release their gifts, and that will provide extensive opportunities to serve.

*Student Ministry Supervisor*

A Student Ministry Supervisor (SMS) is someone in, or connected with, the student’s placement who will support the student’s learning in the placement experience. One hour per unit is allocated to reflecting with the supervisor. The student’s SMS must be able to regularly observe the student in their placement role.

Ministry/Workplace/Community Placements are required for both Postgraduate and Undergraduate students, however Postgraduate students are not required to have an SMS.
3.5.3 Spiritual Formation

Spiritual Formation (previously named Personal Formation) is a required element of ACOM’s undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

Formation Groups

For Spiritual Formation, students meet for 32 hours each year in a small group of 5 to 8 people. Students negotiate within their group as to how these hours are divided into various formation group meetings. Led by a ‘Formation Director’, formation groups build trust relationships in a confidential environment where students support and encourage each other on their individual faith and life journeys. Formation groups focus on three outcomes as outlined in Table 4.

Table 4 - Outcomes of Formation

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<th>Spiritual Formation</th>
<th>Increased spiritual awareness leading to an enhanced relationship with God.</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Character Formation</td>
<td>Improved self-awareness and emotional health, an increased capacity to connect with others, and a strengthened ability and disposition to be ‘real’ in the presence of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry Formation</td>
<td>Enhanced understanding of God-given gifts and passions, and effective self-care strategies, which together form a foundation for sustainable, safe and effective ministry.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Formation groups form at the Formation Retreat (held at the beginning of each year, details can be found on the ACOM website- http://acom.edu.au/higher-education-retreat-information) and are then closed for the rest of the year. These retreats are usually 3-day experiences where students and faculty meet and interact to form an ongoing learning community. Retreat costs are included in the unit fees for Spiritual Formation, and students are automatically registered for the retreat when they register in the unit.

The time at Retreat will mostly be spent in a formation group, getting to know fellow group members by telling personal stories. Students find this story telling both a challenging and deeply rewarding time. Except in exceptional circumstances, students must attend every formation group meeting to pass their Spiritual Formation unit.

At the end of the year, each student enrolled in Spiritual Formation has an interview with his/her Formation Director to evaluate progress and to provide support. This interview covers the student’s progress during the year, growth in Spiritual Formation, and feedback to ACOM on any relevant matters.

Mentors

While formation groups provide essential support and opportunities for personal growth, there are some aspects of Spiritual formation that are better addressed on a one-to-one basis. As part of their Spiritual formation experience, students choose a ‘spiritual companion’ referred to as a mentor to meet with face-to-face throughout the year, who assists the student to reach a range of specific self-set personal growth goals. The spiritual companion helps provide a holistic growth experience that covers all of life, not just the student’s course or faith-journey. This involves an intentional relationship of trust, covenanted for one year at a time. Students meet with their spiritual companion for a total of 12 hours in 8 face to face meetings throughout the year, which generally last for 1.5 hours. The student’s Formation Director orients and supervises the spiritual companion, assisting the spiritual companion to provide students with the best experience possible.
3.6 Delivery

3.6.1 Trimesters

There are no weekly classes at ACOM. Instead, each ACOM unit is delivered either by our online learning site, Moodle, or in a distance education package that contains all the necessary coursework. Each unit runs over a 12-week period, with assessment tasks to complete at home.

There are 3 trimesters each year, with a two week break between each trimester. Students can choose how many units they wish to complete in each trimester, however permission is required from the ACOM Academic Dean if a student intends to study more than three (3) units in any one trimester. Students may also choose whether they will attend a facilitation, if one is offered, for the unit they are studying.

Key dates and facilitation details can be found on the ACOM website:

http://acom.edu.au/higher-education-key-dates
http://acom.edu.au/facilitation-schedules

3.6.2 Unit Registration

Registrations for each trimester open 10 weeks before the start of the trimester and close 4 weeks before the start of the trimester. ACOM’s Ministry Services Team will send out an email to all students to advise that registrations are open.

Late fees apply to registrations received after the closing date (registration deadline). Please refer to chapter 8: Financial for further information on fees, and the ACOM website for registration deadlines:
http://acom.edu.au/higher-education-key-dates

Students must register for units and facilitations using the Online Unit Registration Form on the ACOM website:
http://acom.edu.au/unit-registration-form

You will receive email confirmation of your registration from ACOM’s Ministry Services team prior to the start of the trimester.

Students registering for units after the start of the trimester must have approval from their Learning Support Manager. Registrations will not be accepted on or after the census date.

Unit descriptions, unit schedules and facilitation schedules can be found on the ACOM website:
Bachelor of Theology Unit Descriptions: http://acom.edu.au/bth-unit-descriptions
Bachelor of Ministry Unit Descriptions: http://acom.edu.au/bmin-unit-descriptions
Master of Arts Unit Descriptions: http://acom.edu.au/ma-unit-descriptions
Master of Theology Unit Descriptions: http://acom.edu.au/mth-unit-descriptions
Unit Schedule: http://acom.edu.au/unit-schedules
Facilitation Schedules: http://acom.edu.au/facilitation-schedules

For advice on unit selection and your course plan, please contact your Learning Support Manager.

Students can pay for units upfront (credit card, direct deposit or cheque) or by deferring the payment with Fee Help (for eligible students). Upfront payments must be made prior to the start of the trimester, unless the student has arranged a payment plan with ACOM’s Ministry Services Manager. Please refer to chapter 8: Financial for further information on fee payment and Fee Help.
3.6.3 Withdrawals and Census Dates

Students who wish to withdraw from a unit or facilitation must use the Online Unit Change Form if they wish to withdraw from a unit: [http://acom.edu.au/unit-change-form](http://acom.edu.au/unit-change-form)

Verbal notification is insufficient to affect a withdrawal.

Fees apply to withdrawals made after the registration deadline for the trimester, including withdrawals from facilitations. If a student changes his/her unit registration from one unit to another (i.e., swaps units in which they are registered) after the unit registration deadline, they will be liable for both the unit withdrawal fee from their “old” unit and the relevant late registration fee for their “new” unit. Please refer to Chapter 8: Financial for further information.

The Census Date is the cut-off date for withdrawals from units and partial refund of fees. The Census Date is the 4th Monday of each trimester. Students who withdraw ON or AFTER the census date will be charged the full cost of the Unit AND will receive a failure grade on their Academic Transcript for the unit. In practice, this means that students will not have ANY unit fees returned to them after the census date and will be liable for any outstanding unit fees not paid at the time of the census date.

Census dates for the current year can be found on the ACOM website: [http://acom.edu.au/higher-education-key-dates](http://acom.edu.au/higher-education-key-dates)

A student may withdraw without academic penalty after the census date if permitted to do so by the Academic Board. Application must be made to the Academic Dean in writing and evidence must be provided. Such application may be made on the following grounds:

- a) Medical grounds
- b) Compassionate grounds
- c) Extreme hardship

3.6.4 Attending Facilitations


All students registered in a facilitation will receive an email from their Learning Support Manager the week before the facilitation with additional details.

Fees apply to withdrawals from facilitations made after the registration deadline. Students who have registered for a facilitation and do not attend will also incur a withdrawal fee. Please refer to chapter 8: Financial for further information on fees. Additional work may be required if a student is unable to attend part of the facilitation.

If a facilitation is cancelled, students will have the option of withdrawing from the unit and registering in a different unit without incurring any fees.

3.6.5 Accessing Coursework: Moodle

When a student registers for their first unit, they receive a web-site address and password to log into Moodle, ACOM’s online learning platform. Here students will be able to access their course material and assessment details, submit assessments, contribute to group forums and contact the unit co-ordinator. Units will be made available on the first day of the trimester.

Coursework for units that are not yet available online will be posted to the student in the week prior to the start of the trimester. Students will still use Moodle to access the Unit Introductory Booklet and to submit assessments.

For further information and instructions for using Moodle, please refer to chapter 11: Moodle.
3.6.6 Accessing Results: eMinerva

Students can access their academic and financial records using eMinerva, SCD’s Student Data Management Database: http://scd.eminervacommunity.com/.

To access the eMinerva database, a student requires the email address that ACOM has on record and their eMinerva student number. This student number is purely numeric and can be found in the ACOM acceptance letter.

3.7 Hardware and Software Requirements

All Students

For all students Microsoft Office 2003 (or newer) is required in order to complete assignments. All assignments must be submitted in Word format, as many of our markers use track changes and review comments boxes to add comments to marked assignments. While there are compatible office programs available (e.g. Open Office), students will have fewer issues if they use Microsoft Office. There are student and/or home versions of Microsoft Office that are reasonably priced. MAC users can use Pages for Word processing, but must save the file in WORD format for submission.

Online Units

For students studying online units, Internet Explorer 6 or newer is required. For Mac and Linux users, Safari (version 3 and later) and Firefox (version 2 and later) also work, however there are some features that work best with Internet Explorer. Also, Adobe Acrobat Viewer 7 or newer (or a similar program) is required to view PDF files for online units.

Internet Access

Our primary means of communicating with students is via email and website, so internet access is advised for all ACOM students. For students studying online units, broadband internet (e.g. ADSL, cable, wireless) is recommended. It is possible to study online units using dial up internet, however there are many large files to download, and interactive items that will not work well with dial up internet access.

3.8 Library Facilities

In addition to the targeted academic resources supplied for each unit, ACOM also provides extensive physical library facilities to its students. These facilities are listed in Table 1.

Students can access the library facilities of any other SCD Member Institute. If students wish to borrow from these libraries they must first complete a library application available from our National Office.

As well as access to physical libraries, ACOM students will be given access to ATLAS, an online database of journals, articles, book reviews and other sources. The database is accessed through a cooperative relationship ACOM has with the Wesley Institute. All current students are allowed access to all online databases that the Wesley Institute is subscribed to.

In order to access ATLAS you will need to contact the National Office for an application form.
### Table 1 - Student Library Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>All ACOM students can gain on-line access to a wide variety of journal articles and other information resources through a partnership arrangement ACOM maintains with Wesley Institute. Students are strongly encouraged to contact ACOM’s help desk for an application to use these resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW/ACT</td>
<td>The ACOM NSW/ACT library is co-located with the Gordon Moyes Library (previously called the Wesley Institute Library) at 5 Mary Street, Drummoyne. ACOM students have full borrowing rights to the total collection of both libraries. ACOM students need to register with the combined library to receive a student number and code that permits borrowing. An application form is available from ACOM’s National Help Desk. The Gordon Moyes Library catalogue is also available on-line. Go to: <a href="http://www.wi.edu.au">www.wi.edu.au</a> and click on the “Gordon Moyes Library Catalogue” link towards the bottom of the page. Once you are into the search screen, click on the “SEARCH” button for best results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>ACOM Qld students have access to the Nazarene College library located at 40 Woodlands Drive, Thornlands, and students are welcome to browse and borrow books.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>ACOM WA students can access library facilities at other colleges in Perth. Most libraries will allow students to use their facilities free of charge, but there are usually annual membership fees for borrowing rights. Check with the Libraries regarding their fees. The libraries include: Baptist Theological College (20 Hayman Road, Bentley – ph. 08 9361 9962) Bible College of WA (40 Hale Road, Wattle Park – ph. 08 9453 9189) Harvest West Bible College (79A Robinson Avenue, Belmont – ph. 08 9479 3443) Perth Bible College (Unit 3/436 Lord Street, Mt Lawley – ph. 08 9328 2500) Trinity Theological College (632-634 Newcastle Street, Leederville – ph. 08 9228 9067) Bethany Christian Fellowship (Cnr Warton Road &amp; Bronzewing Street, Huntingdale – ph. 08 9490 3021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>For ACOM Tas students, there are theological libraries at: Tabor College in Hobart (45 Melville St Hobart - ph. 03 6231 5889) Worldview Centre of Intercultural Studies (41 Station Road, St Leonards, Launceston - ph. 03 6337 0444).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.9 Student Identification Cards

ID cards are provided free of charge at the request of the student. Requests should be sent to info@acom.edu.au with a high-resolution head and shoulders photograph. Please note that as ACOM is a distance education provider, students are not eligible for transport concessions.
4 Undergraduate Study

Undergraduate programs are a dynamic learning experience designed to develop students as disciples, ministers, missionaries and leaders. The program is holistic – developing students intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually. Student learning is based in their place of ministry and consequently graduates are well rounded and job ready.

4.1 Undergraduate Awards

Main undergraduate awards:

- Bachelor of Ministry (BMin)
- Bachelor of Theology (BTh)
- Bachelor of Theology Honours (BTh (Hons))

Shorter awards:

- Diploma of Christian Studies (DipChSt)
- Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice

Students enrolled in the Diploma of Theology should contact their Learning Support Manager or the Registrar for information on the award and steps to complete.

4.1.1 Bachelor of Ministry (BMin)

The Bachelor of Ministry is a practical, grassroots ministry degree aimed at equipping students for real life missional contexts. Students will gain a strong biblical and theological foundation while focusing on the practice of ministry. The course is tailored for God’s people who are seeking to develop ministry skills that work in both church and community.

The Bachelor of Ministry requires the completion of 24 units of study, with majors and sub-majors available in Biblical Studies, Theology, Spirituality and Christian Life and Ministry. One third of the course may be selected from a broad range of elective units. This can be completed in three years full-time or up to nine years part-time.

Students who enroll in the Bachelor of Ministry may exit early with a Diploma of Christian Studies (8 units at Bachelor level) or an Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice (16 units at Bachelor level).

Course unit requirements for these awards can be found on the following pages. Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website: [http://acom.edu.au/bmin-unit-descriptions](http://acom.edu.au/bmin-unit-descriptions)

4.1.2 Bachelor of Theology (BTh)

In the Bachelor of Theology you will develop a strong biblical and theological foundation and be equipped for long-term mission and ministry. The course is tailored for God’s people wherever they work, minister and live – in the church, workplace and community. Our desire is to equip you to be changed – so you can change your corner of the world.

The Bachelor of Theology requires the completion of 24 units of study, with majors and sub-majors available in Biblical Studies, Theology and Christian Life and Ministry. Six units of the course may be selected from a broad range of elective units. Complete in three years full-time or up to nine years part-time.

Students who enroll in the Bachelor of Theology may exit early with a Diploma of Christian Studies (8 units at Bachelor level) or an Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice (16 units at Bachelor level).

Course unit requirements for these awards can be found on the following pages. Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website: [http://acom.edu.au/bth-unit-descriptions](http://acom.edu.au/bth-unit-descriptions)
4.1.3 Bachelor of Theology Honours (BTh (Hons))

The BTh (Hons) is a research award designed to give a beginning researcher a significant learning experience as a pathway to doctoral study. The award requires 72 credit points, which must include:

- An 8500-series Research Methodology Unit (9 cr pts)
- An 8500-series Honours Seminar Unit (9 cr pts)
- A further two units (18 credit points in total) in the area of specialisation from 9600-series units
- A thesis of 20,000 words for 36 credit points in the area of specialization

4.1.4 Diploma of Christian Studies (DipChSt)

The Diploma in Christian Studies requires a student to complete 8 units of study at Bachelor level. Course unit requirements for this award can be found on the following pages. Unit descriptions can be found on the ACOM website: [http://acom.edu.au/bmin-unit-descriptions](http://acom.edu.au/bmin-unit-descriptions)

4.1.5 Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice (AssocDegChThPr)

The Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice requires a student to complete 16 units of study at Bachelor level. Unit descriptions can be found on the ACOM website: [http://acom.edu.au/bmin-unit-descriptions](http://acom.edu.au/bmin-unit-descriptions)

Course unit requirements for this award can be found on the following pages.
What students need to do to complete a **Bachelor of Ministry**

### Units

**BIBLICAL STUDIES**
- **7100 SERIES**
  - B7120 + B7130
- **7200 SERIES**
  - B7203 + B7273
- **7300 SERIES**
  - T7217 + T7231
  - T7333

**THEOLOGY**
- T7101
- T7217 + T7231
- T7333

**HUMANITIES IN THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION**
- H7100

**CHRISTIAN LIFE & MINISTRY**
- P7101 + S7101 + S7102 + M7109
  - S7201
  - S7301

### Electives

**REGULATIONS**

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted.
- Units may be selected from the 7000 range.
- Students must complete 216 credit points (24 units of 9 credit points), including at least 1 Major and 1 Sub-Major in Christian life and Ministry and sub-majors in Biblical Studies and Theology.
- A major in a subdiscipline requires 54 credit points from the subdiscipline, with not more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units and at least 9 credit points from 7300 series units.
- A major in a discipline requires 54 credit points from the discipline, with at least 27 credit points in one subdiscipline, with not more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units and at least 9 credit points from 7300 series units.

- Churches of Christ students must also study H7365 The Restoration Movement as one of the 9 electives.
- Humanities in the Christian Tradition includes Humanities (A) and Church History (H) units. Christian Life and Ministry includes Christian Spirituality (S), Worship & Liturgy (L), Mission (M), Pastoral Counselling (C), Pastoral Theology (P) and Christian Ethics (E) units.
- An optional Biblical Studies Major requires 6 B units PLUS “Biblical Languages” enrolled in either before or concurrent with B7200 or B7300 units.
What students need to do to complete a **Bachelor of Theology**

### Biblical Studies
- **UNIT LEVEL**
  - 7100 SERIES: B7120 + B7130
  - 7200 SERIES: B7203 + B7273 + B7214
  - 7300 SERIES: B7364

### Theology
- **UNIT LEVEL**
  - T7101
  - T7217 + T7231
  - T7320 + T7333 + T7399

### Humanities in the Christian Tradition
- **UNIT LEVEL**
  - H7100 + A7130

### Christian Life & Ministry
- **UNIT LEVEL**
  - S7101 + M7109
  - S7201
  - S7301

### ELECTIVES

### REGULATIONS
- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted.
- Units may be selected from the 7000 range.
- Students must complete 216 credit points (24 units of 9 credit points), including at least 2 Majors and 1 Sub-Major. The units above will provide Discipline Majors in Bible and Theology and a Discipline Sub-Major in Christian Life and Ministry. Other majors may be achieved also.
- A major in a subdiscipline requires 54 credit points from the subdiscipline, with not more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units and at least 9 credit points from 7300 series units.
- A major in a discipline requires 54 credit points from the discipline, with at least 27 credit points in one subdiscipline, with not more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units and at least 9 credit points from 7300 series units.
- A submajor requires 36 credit points from units assigned to the major including no more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units and with at least one 7200 series unit.
- Humanities in the Christian Tradition includes Humanities (A) and Church History (H) units. Christian Life and Ministry includes Christian Spirituality (S), Worship & Liturgy (L), Mission (M), Pastoral Counselling (C), Pastoral Theology (P) and Christian Ethics (E) units.
- Churches of Christ students must also study H7365 The Restoration Movement as one of the 6 electives.
- A Biblical Languages unit must be studied either before or concurrent with B7200 or B7300 units.
What students need to do to complete an **Diploma of Christian Studies**

- **Biblical Studies**
  - Unit Level: 7100 Series
  - Units: B7120 or B7130

- **Theology**
  - Unit Level: 7200 Series
  - Units: T7101

- **Humanities in the Christian Tradition**
  - Unit Level: 7300 Series
  - Units: S7101 + M7109

- **Christian Life & Ministry**
  - Unit Level: 7300 Series
  - Units: S7101 + M7109

**ELECTIVES**

**REGULATIONS**

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted.
- Units may be selected from the 7000 range.
- Students must earn a sub-major in either Christian Thought or Christian Practice. A Christian Thought sub-major will include at least 4 units from the sub-disciplines of Biblical Studies, Theology and Church history (B, T & H units). A Christian Practice sub-major will include at least 4 units from the sub-disciplines of Spirituality, Counselling, Liturgy, Ethics, Mission and Pastoral Theology (S, C, L, E, M & P units).
- Humanities in the Christian Tradition includes Humanities (A) and Church History (H) units. Christian Life and Ministry includes Christian Spirituality (S), Worship & Liturgy (L), Mission (M), Pastoral Counselling (C), Pastoral Theology (P) and Christian Ethics (E) units.
What students need to do to complete an **Associate Degree in Christian Thought and Practice**

**Biblical Studies**

**Theology**

**Christian Life & Ministry**

**UNIT LEVEL**

7100 SERIES

B7120 + B7130

T7101

S7101 + M7109

7200 SERIES

T7231

S7201

7300 SERIES

**ELECTIVES**

**REGULATIONS**

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted.
- Units may be selected from the 7000 range.
- Students must achieve at least one major (54 credit points) in either Christian Thought (Bible, History and Theology) or Christian Practice (Spirituality, Counselling, Liturgy, Ethics, Mission and Pastoral Theology). This will be achieved by completing 2 electives in Christian thought or 3 units in Christian practice, plus the core units above.

- A major is made up of 54 credit points with not more than 18 credit points from 7100 series units.
- Christian Life and Ministry includes Christian Spirituality (S), Worship & Liturgy (L), Mission (M), Pastoral Counselling (C), Pastoral Theology (P) and Christian Ethics (E) units.
4.1.6 Core Unit Names

Below are the names of units listed in the Steps to Complete diagrams for the Bachelor of Ministry, Bachelor of Theology, Diploma of Christian Studies and Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice.

The full list of core and elective unit names and descriptions can be found on the ACOM website:


Please note: Some ACOM unit names differ from the official SCD unit name. Where this is the case, the official SCD unit name will appear on transcripts/ records of study and in eMinerva.

A7130- Introduction to Biblical Languages
B7120- Introduction to the Old Testament
B7130- Introduction to the New Testament
B7203- Hermeneutics
B7214- Studies in the Pentateuch
B7231- Prophetic Literature
B7273- The Four Gospels
B7364- Pauline Literature
H7100- Introduction to Christian History
M7109- Introduction to Discipleship
P7101- Introduction to Pastoral Care
S7101- Spiritual Formation 1
S7102- Introduction to Christian Spirituality
S7201- Spiritual Formation 2
S7301- Spiritual Formation 3
T7101- Introduction to Theology
T7217- The Church
T7231- The Person and Work of Christ
T7320- Theology for Ministry
T7333- The Trinity
T7399- Capstone Unit in Theology
4.2 Sydney College of Divinity Requirements for Undergraduate studies

All ACOM Higher Education students are also students of the Sydney College of Divinity (SCD), the tertiary institution whose awards we teach. As well as complying with ACOM regulations, students must also comply with all SCD rules.

Students need to ensure that the units they choose will enable them to fulfil the requirements of their course as listed in the Steps to Complete diagrams. **ACOM will not be held responsible for students choosing units incorrectly** or otherwise failing to fulfil the requirements of their course.

4.2.1 SCD Unit Coding System

Each unit has a code number consisting of 1 letter, followed by 4 digits, followed by one letter.

**First letter:** indicates the SCD Unit Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Sub-discipline</th>
<th>Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biblical Studies</td>
<td>Biblical Studies</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Life and Ministry</td>
<td>Christian Spirituality</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worship and Liturgy</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pastoral Counselling</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pastoral Theology</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian Ethics</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Church History</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**First digit:** indicates the **course** in which the unit is taught.

Units studied at bachelor level use the number 7, units studied at bachelor honours level use the number 9.

**Second digit:** indicates the **unit level** at which the unit is taught

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Digit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundational</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Third and fourth digits:** identifies the specific unit

**Final letter:** indicates the SCD Member Institution teaching the unit - ACOM has been designated the letter ‘C’. Please note: The letter ‘C’ will only appear on official SCD documents.
4.2.2 Time Limitations

The following are the maximum periods of time to complete any course of study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Time Limitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma of Christian studies</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree of Christian Thought and practice</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Ministry</td>
<td>9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Theology</td>
<td>9 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A leave of absence for up to one year may be applied for by writing to the Academic Dean. Students should maintain continuous enrolment by registering for units in at least 2 trimesters per calendar year. Students who do not register in units for a period of two years or more will need to re-apply for admission if they wish to continue with their course.

4.2.3 Estimated Workloads

The below workload guidelines are based on 9 credit point units:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workload</th>
<th>Units per Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>6-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¾ time</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ time</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ time</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A student wishing to study more than 9 units in any one year must receive the written approval of their Learning Support Manager to do so. Normally, only students with very good academic records will be allowed to study more than nine units in any one year.

To be classified as ‘full time’ by Centrelink, students must be registered in 75% of a full time load each trimester. In practice this means students must be studying 2 units each trimester to be eligible for benefits.

4.2.4 Demand Hours

Each 9 credit point unit requires 143 demand hours of study. The demand hours outlined in the following table represent the notional number of hours needed to meet all the requirements of the unit, including reading, researching and writing assignments and essays, and supervised fieldwork.
Online study sessions, required interactive activities and reading | 40 hours
---|---
Assignments (including major essays and field assignments) | 52 hours | 4000 words (or equivalent)
Integration Assignment | 20 hours | 2000 words*
Supervised Fieldwork | 30 hours
Meeting with Supervisor | 1 hour
Unit Total | 143 hours

*Or credit for 3 days face-to-face facilitation attendance.

### 4.3 Tuition Costs

Please refer to chapter 8: Financial for information on tuition costs. Students should note that these tuition costs do NOT include travel and accommodation costs for facilitations, textbooks or related costs.

### 4.4 Undergraduate Unit Descriptions

Descriptions of all Undergraduate units can be found on the ACOM website:
Bachelor of Theology http://acom.edu.au/bth-unit-descriptions
Bachelor of Ministry http://acom.edu.au/bmin-unit-descriptions

Please note: Some ACOM unit names differ from the official SCD unit names. Where this is the case, the official SCD unit name will appear on transcripts/ records of study and in eMinerva.

Students studying at Undergraduate level are able to use their elective units to register in research units with ACOM. Further information about the research units available to undergraduate students and the registration process can be found in chapter 7: Research Units.
5 Postgraduate Study (PG)

Postgraduate courses are designed for professional development and continuing education beyond the undergraduate theological level. The units are focused on effective leadership, wide practical applications, and contextualised ministry and mission.

5.1 Postgraduate Awards

Main postgraduate awards:
- Master of Arts (MA)
- Master of Theology (MTh)

Shorter awards:
- Graduate Certificate in Arts (GradCert)
- Graduate Diploma of Arts (GradDip)

5.1.1 Master of Arts (MA)

The Master of Arts is a high-quality professional development program for students wanting to update or upgrade their leadership capacities, missional orientation and ability to relate to emerging post-modern cultures.

The Master of Arts requires the completion of 12 units of study. Ten elective units can be selected from a broad curriculum with one unit of Spiritual Formation and a minimum of 1 unit of Research required. This can be completed in 1.5 years full-time or up to 4.5 years part-time.

Course unit requirements for this award can be found on the following pages. Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website: [http://acom.edu.au/ma-unit-descriptions](http://acom.edu.au/ma-unit-descriptions)

Students who enroll in the Master of Arts may exit early with a Graduate Certificate in Arts (4 units) or a Graduate Diploma of Arts (8 units).

5.1.2 Master of Theology (MTh)

The Master of Theology is a graduate program for those who wish to seriously engage in advanced study and be equipped for independent research. At the completion of this degree students will be able to confidently engage with theological issues and potentially be prepared for future doctoral studies.

The Master of Theology requires the completion of twelve units of study. A research methodology unit, four units of research and one spiritual formation unit are required, as well as six elective units chosen from a broad curriculum. This can be completed in 1.5 years full-time or up to 4.5 years part-time.

Course unit requirements for this award can be found on the following pages. Descriptions of Core and Elective units can be found on the ACOM website: [http://acom.edu.au/mth-unit-descriptions](http://acom.edu.au/mth-unit-descriptions)

Students who enroll in the Master of Theology may exit early with a Graduate Certificate in Arts (4 units) or a Graduate Diploma of Arts (8 units).

5.1.3 Graduate Certificate in Arts (Grad Cert)

The Graduate Certificate in Arts requires a student to complete 4 units of study at Masters level. Unit Descriptions can be found on the ACOM website: [http://acom.edu.au/ma-unit-descriptions](http://acom.edu.au/ma-unit-descriptions)

There are no core units for this award.
5.1.4 Graduate Diploma of Arts (GradDip)

The Graduate Diploma of Arts requires a student to complete 8 units of study at Masters level. Unit Descriptions can be found on the ACOM website: http://acom.edu.au/ma-unit-descriptions

There are no core units for this award.
What students need to do to complete a Master of Arts

REGULATIONS

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted.
- Units may be selected from the 8500 and 9600 range.
- Students may earn an optional “specialisation” by studying 54 credit points in any discipline or sub-discipline, including at least 18 credit points at 9600 level.
- A maximum of 36 credit points may be studied in Research and Independent Guided Study units, with no more than 18cp in any one unit type.
What students need to do to complete a Master of Theology

REGULATIONS

- All units are 9 credit points unless otherwise noted.
- Units may be selected from the 8500 and 9600 range.
- Students must complete 108 credit points, including 54 cp in core units and 54 cp (6 units) in electives.
- Students must do either a specialisation of 54 credit points in one discipline or 27 credit points in two sub-disciplines.
- No more than 3 electives may be taken from 8500 units (ie a maximum four 8500 units, not including Research Methodology).
- A maximum of 72 credit points in any one sub-discipline.
- A maximum of 36 credit points may be studied in Research and Independent Guided Study units, with no more than 18cp in any one unit type.
- Selecting units to enrol in:
  - Students must select an area of study for the MTh. These may include: B, T, S, C, L, M, P, H
  - Research Methodology must be done before the Research Project or the Research Essay.
  - Pre-requisites – 36 cp in any area

- The Research Project (pre-req – Research Methodology) or IGS (no pre-req) unit should normally be in the same area.
- Research Essay pre-requisite – 54 cp, including Research Methodology and 36 cp in the area of study
- At least one elective must be in the area of MTh study

Recommended order of units:
1. SF4 should be done in the first full year of study
2. 3 electives – including at least 1 in the area of study
3. Research Methodology
4. Research Project or Independent Guided Study
5. Research Essay
6. 3 electives – in any order
5.1.5 Core Unit Names

Below are the names of units listed in the Steps to Complete diagrams for the Master of Arts and Master of Theology.

The full list of core and elective unit names and descriptions can be found on the ACOM website:

MTh: http://acom.edu.au/mth-unit-descriptions

Please note: Some ACOM unit names differ from the official SCD unit name. Where this is the case, the official SCD unit name will appear on transcripts/records of study and in eMinerva.

S8501- Spiritual Formation 4 (9cp)
X8500- Research Methodology (9cp)
X9691- Research Project (9cp)
X9692- Research Project (18cp)
X9693- Independent Guided Study (9cp)
X9694- Independent Guided Study (18cp)
X9696- Research Essay (18cp)
X9699- Capstone Unit (9cp)
5.2 Sydney College of Divinity Requirements for Postgraduate studies

All ACOM Higher Education students are also students of the Sydney College of Divinity (SCD), the tertiary institution whose awards we teach. As well as complying with ACOM regulations, students must also comply with all SCD rules.

Students need to ensure that the units they choose will enable them to fulfil the requirements of their course as listed in the Steps to Complete diagrams. ACOM will not be held responsible for students choosing units incorrectly or otherwise failing to fulfil the requirements of their course.

5.2.1 SCD Unit Coding System

Each unit has a code number consisting of 1 letter, followed by 4 digits, followed by one letter.

First letter: indicates the SCD Unit Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Sub-discipline</th>
<th>Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biblical Studies</td>
<td>Biblical Studies</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Life and Ministry</td>
<td>Christian Spirituality</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worship and Liturgy</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pastoral Counselling</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pastoral Theology</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian Ethics</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Church History</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First digit: indicates the course in which the unit is taught.

Units studied at Postgraduate level use the numbers 8 and 9.

Second digit: indicates the unit level at which the unit is taught

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introductory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third and fourth digits: identifies the specific unit

The letter (C) indicates the SCD Member Institution teaching the unit- ACOM has been designated the letter ‘C’. Please note: The letter ‘C’ will only appear on official SCD documents.
5.2.2 Time Limitations

The following are the maximum periods of time to complete any course of study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Maximum Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Certificate in Arts</td>
<td>1.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma of Arts</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Arts</td>
<td>4.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Theology</td>
<td>4.5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A leave of absence for up to one year may be applied for by writing to the Academic Dean. Students should maintain continuous enrolment by registering for units in at least 2 trimesters per calendar year. Students who do not register in units for a period of two years or more will need to re-apply for admission if they wish to continue with their course.

5.2.3 Estimated Workloads

The below workload guidelines are based on 9 credit point units:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workload</th>
<th>Units per Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>6-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¾ time</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ time</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ time</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** a student wishing to study more than 9 units in any one year must receive the written approval of their Learning Support Manager to do so. Normally, only students with very good academic records will be allowed to study more than nine units in any one year.

To be classified as ‘full time’ by Centrelink, students must be registered in 75% of a full time load each trimester. In practice this means students must be studying 2 units each trimester to be eligible for benefits.
5.2.4 Demand Hours

Each 9 credit point unit requires 143 demand hours of study. The demand hours outlined in the following table represent the notional number of hours a student will require to meet all the requirements of the unit, including reading, researching and writing assignments and essays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online study sessions, required interactive activities and reading</th>
<th>80 hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments (including major essays and field assignments)</td>
<td>43 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration Assignment</td>
<td>20 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Total</td>
<td>143 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Or credit for 3 days face-to-face facilitation attendance.

5.3 Tuition Costs

Please refer to chapter 8: Financial for information on tuition costs. Students should note that these tuition costs do NOT include travel and accommodation costs for facilitations, textbooks or related costs.

5.4 Postgraduate Unit Descriptions

Descriptions of all Postgraduate units can be found on the ACOM website:

Please note: Some ACOM unit names differ from the official SCD unit names. Where this is the case, the official SCD unit name will appear on transcripts/records of study and in eminerva.

Students studying at postgraduate level are able to use their elective units to register in research units with ACOM. Further information about the research units available to postgraduate students and the registration process can be found in chapter 7: Research Units.
6 Doctoral Study

Doctoral courses are research degrees designed for working senior leaders who wish to take a giant leap in professional and personal development.

For the SCD Conventions for writing a thesis, please refer to the Regulations for MPhil, DMin, PhD and ThD document which can be found on the SCD website.

6.1 Doctoral Awards

- Doctor of Ministry (DMin)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

6.1.1 Doctor of Ministry (DMin)

The Doctor of Ministry (DMin) is conferred by the Sydney College of Divinity. It is a research degree designed for working senior leaders who wish to take a giant leap in professional and personal development.

The DMin is undertaken by coursework and research/thesis. Candidates must achieve at least a high credit average in the coursework units before they can proceed to the research requirements.

Research candidates operate under the supervision of the Sydney College of Divinity research committee.

Admission

The successful candidate must have:

- A four year BTh (Hons) or MTh, or MDiv, or a combination of awards deemed to be equivalent to the above, with a high Credit average; or
- A BTh or BMin, plus an MA that includes 18cpts Research Essay at high Credit level or better; or
- Qualifications from a university or tertiary institution approved by the DMin Committee as equivalent to the requirements set out in above; and
- Demonstrated potential for research; and
- At least four years full-time, or equivalent part-time, certified experience of ministry.

Time Limitations

The DMin program is 3-4 years full-time or 7-8 years as a part-time student.

Completion

Completion of the Doctor of Ministry requires completion of the following:

Coursework elements:

- Advanced Seminar in Pastoral Ministry (RP895)
- Advanced Seminar in Pastoral and Practical Methodology (RP896)

Research elements:

- A thesis of maximum 60,000 words including footnotes but excluding bibliography and appendices
- Compulsory participation in the DMin Orientation Workshop, the Research Degree Workshop, and regular evening research seminars.

More Information

More information is available from the Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching.
6.1.2 Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The Doctor of Philosophy provides men and women with the opportunity to pursue advanced study in a theologically related discipline by research at the highest level. It is designed for those who seek to further their study of a theologically related discipline for academic, vocational, professional and/or personal reasons.

The Doctor of Philosophy is available by thesis alone. It provides the opportunity for candidates to embark on a significant piece of research, which investigates a theological topic in a systematic and comprehensive manner that is not available in course work programs.

Research candidates operate under the supervision of the Sydney College of Divinity research committee.

**Admission**

The successful candidate must have:

- A four-year Bachelor (Hons), or equivalent, with results at First Class Honours or Second Class Honours Division I; or
- An MA (Hons) (SCD)
- Qualifications from another university or tertiary institution deemed by the College to be equivalent to those in (a) or (b) above

**Time Limitations**

The PhD program is 4 years full-time or 12 years as a part-time student.

**Completion**

All PhD candidates proceed to the award by thesis alone.

The thesis is to be 80,000-100,000 words in length, including footnotes and bibliography.

Candidates must also participate in the Research Degree Workshop and regular evening Research Seminars.

**More Information**

More information is available from the Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching.
7 Research Units

ACOM has a long history of providing innovative, transformational learning experiences. Research is one learning vehicle designed to integrate theory and practice, producing well-formed thought leaders who will provide solutions to the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Learning how to do useful research helps students discover how to identify a problem that needs a solution, ask effective questions, challenge assumptions, collect data, and establish clear conclusions. These are essential skills for leaders who must adapt quickly to a complex and changing community context. This process is linked to rigorous scholarship and deep personal spiritual formation.

ACOM students are provided the flexibility to customise their own learning journey through the inclusion of coursework research or practicum units. The focus of research at ACOM is designed to:

- Be useful for life and ministry,
- Provide thought leadership for innovation and deep theological understanding, and
- Point people towards action in kingdom mission.

ACOM students conduct research within the context of their ministry passion: grounded in your local work, ministry or community situation. In doing so you will bring about change in three areas:

- You will make a unique contribution to the body of knowledge,
- Your research process will be a catalyst for change in your local ministry/work context, and
- Your own personal growth and development is a part of the outcomes of effective research.

This is about knowing, doing and being. It is an adventurous journey engaging the heart, mind and soul.

These coursework research or practicum units are useful where a student:

1. Wants to focus on an area of special interest;
2. Seeks additional units within a sub-discipline to qualify for a Specialisation, Major, or Sub-Major;
3. Wants to link recognised academic learning with a practical field project (whether volunteering or employed); and
4. Seeks to meet special criteria for further study in a higher research qualification.
7.1 Units

There is a selection of research or practicum course units available at both Undergraduate and Postgraduate level.

The units offered are:

Undergraduate

X7391C - Research Project (9 cps)
X7392 - Research Project (18 cps)
X7393 - Independent Guided Study (9 cps)
X7394 - Independent Guided Study (18 cps)
X7398 - Action Research Project (18 cps)
X7399 - Capstone Unit (9 cps)

Bachelor of Theology (Honours)

X8598 - Honours Thesis (45 cps) requires X8500 Research Methodology as a prerequisite

Postgraduate (Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Master of Arts and Master of Theology)

X9691 - Research Project (9 cps)
X9692 - Research Project (18 cps)
X9693 - Independent Guided Study (9 cps)
X9694 - Independent Guided Study (18 cps)
X9698 - Action Research Project (18 cps)
X9699 - Capstone Unit (9 cps)
X8500 – Research Methodology (9 cps)
X9696 - Research Essay (18 cps) - requires X8500 Research Methodology as a prerequisite

Please note: All 18 credit point units are taken over two or three trimesters.

While a student may undertake 18 credit points of Independent Guided Study or 18 credit points in Research Projects or an 18 credit point Research Essay, the Sydney College of Divinity permits no more than 36 credit points to be taken from these units combined in any single degree.

The “Research Essay” and “Honours Thesis” are examined externally through the Sydney College of Divinity, by two examiners other than the supervisor, one of who normally is external to ACOM. They are suitable pathways for students seeking admission to the Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Ministry, Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Theology.

7.2 Unit Descriptions

There are different tailored projects that a student can undertake, depending on the degree in which they are enrolled. They are:


7.2.1 Research Project

Students considered capable of doing so may complete up to 18 credit points of Independent Research, taken either as one or two 9 credit point Research Projects units or one 18 credit point Research Project unit.

These course units build on the theological background, capacity and interests of a student enabling the pursuit of broad research, often of a survey nature, into an area or topic within a discipline or across disciplines. This research cannot usually be done within the constraints of individual coursework units or the focused study of a particular topic.

Before a Research Project can be undertaken, a student must have completed at least 36 credit points in the sub-discipline in which the Research Project is to be taken and 108 credit points overall in the BTh and 54 credit points overall in the Masters degree.

Undergraduate research projects are 4000 words and postgraduate research projects are 5000 words.

7.2.2 Independent Guided Study

In these units the student independently pursues a topic of interest that has been approved by ACOM. A maximum of 18 credit points may be obtained in this way.

Independent Guided Study units are advanced level units and can be taken in a range of disciplines. It affords the student an opportunity to develop independent research and study skills. Before an Independent Guided Study can be undertaken, a student must have completed at least 27 credit points in the discipline in which the Independent Guided Study is to be taken.

In the Bachelor of Theology the requirements and nominal demand hours for a 9 credit point Independent Guided Study are:

- 40 hours of ministry, workplace or community placement (which in some instances may require the submission of a placement journal).
- 62 hours of reading and assignment preparation (equivalent to 775 pages of reading).
- A 1500 word reflective paper on the field placement.
- A 2500 word academic assignment.

Independent Guided Study units are available in the Graduate Certificate of Arts, the Graduate Diploma of Arts, the Master of Arts and the Master of Theology. The requirements and nominal demand hours for a 9 credit point Independent Guided Study are:

- 102 hours of reading and assignment preparation (equivalent to 1000 pages of reading).
- 5000 words of assessment.

Reading and assignment topics are negotiated between the student and their Supervisor appointed by ACOM. The amount of reading and assessment may be reduced by documented participation in approved relevant seminars or courses.

Independent Guided Study applications should be approved before trimester registration deadlines. However, in those circumstances where students are able to do so, they can do most of the course unit work prior to formally enrolling, such as readings and assignment topic negotiation, and even starting work on draft assignments.

7.2.3 Action Research Project

Action Research is about using qualitative research methods (interviews, focus groups and/or participant-observation) and working with a group to identify presenting ministry issues and developing appropriate ministry responses. The result is thus not just what the student thinks are good ideas, but solutions developed in conversation with the group, church or mission organisation. 9 credit point Action Research Projects are 4000 words at undergraduate level or 5000 words at postgraduate.
7.2.4 Capstone Unit

Towards the end of a degree, a Capstone unit is an opportunity for students to prepare and write a paper that explores a particular ministry issue or theological theme by drawing on the breadth and depth of all the student has studied in their degree; biblical, theological and missiological subjects. The result will not be an essay or project paper that solely draws on one theological sub-discipline, but seeks to integrate different disciplines together with the student's experience of ministry, personal growth and professional development. 9 credit point Capstone units are 4000 words at undergraduate level or 5000 words at postgraduate level.

7.2.5 Honours Thesis

An Honours Thesis provides students the opportunity to pursue a research project to deepen theological knowledge and investigate a chosen topic, and develop experience in research methods and design and pursue a small-scale research project. It provides students the opportunity to embark on a significant piece of research in a comprehensive and systematic manner that is not possible in course work. This program provides a suitable pathway for students wanting to pursue further research at Masters or Doctoral level (dependent on attaining a suitable grade level, usually at least Distinction for Masters or High Distinction for possible direct entry into some Doctoral programs). An honours thesis topic proposal must be submitted to the SCD Research Committee through your supervisor and the ACOM Head of Department - Research. The thesis is 20,000 words in length, and is graded by two examiners, both usually external to ACOM.

7.2.6 Research Methodology

Research Methodology teaches the student or research candidate skills and frameworks for proposing, designing and undertaking a research project. The assessment includes a research proposal for a future research project or research essay.

7.2.7 Research Essay

This course unit enables students who have generally excelled in their coursework to research and write in an area of specialisation and to demonstrate an ability to pursue further research at the Masters, BTh Honours and Doctoral levels. Applicants for Sydney College of Divinity research degree programs are required to have completed this unit at Distinction level or demonstrate equivalence in achievement.

To be taken over two semesters this 18 credit point unit can be studied at Masters level only and requires submission of a 10,000-word paper.

Students may only enrol in a Research Essay if they have achieved a grade point average of 2.5 or better, except in those Masters programs where the Research Essay is a compulsory component.

The essay proposal requires the approval of the Sydney College of Divinity Research Committee, with a proposal you submit through your supervisor and ACOM’s Head of department – Research.

7.3 Registering for Units/ Getting Started

If you are interested in registering for a research unit, the first step is to speak to your LSM. Your LSM will arrange a supervisor who will guide you in the next steps to get started. Both your Learning Support Manager and your Supervisor will liaise with you to help you through the research process and any administrative requirements along the way.
7.4 Ethical Considerations

When ACOM approves your research or practicum proposal, consideration will be given to the ethical implications of the research method you are using. All research involving living human subjects must be carried out in such a way that protects the welfare and rights of the participants in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans.

This includes:

- Information collected directly from or through a person (e.g. via interviews, questionnaires, observations of an individual, focus groups)
- Accessing secondary sources or non-public materials (e.g. interviews about an individual, personnel records, student records)
- Identifiable private information about a living individual (e.g. private papers).

Approval is required by the Sydney College of Divinity Human Research Ethics Committee (SCD HREC) for the use of the following research tools:

- Questionnaires and surveys (paper or online)
- Qualitative methodologies (tapes or notes from focus groups, interviews etc.)
- Behavioural observation (whether known or unknown to participants)
- Accessing data you, or another individual, have already collected for another purpose (e.g. from a database or archives etc.)
- Psychological experiments
- Psychiatric or clinical psychological studies
- Other qualitative methods.

Your ACOM Supervisor will guide you through any ethics approval process. The forms for research students (and staff who are undertaking research) to submit are on the SCD website at this location:

http://scd.edu.au/research/information-for-research-candidates/research-student-forms/

For coursework applications and smaller projects, the supervisor needs to familiar both with that clearance form for research students and with the SCD Guidelines, and writes to the SCD Ethics Committee chair with a modified submission and certifying they are familiar with the Guidelines and have sufficient research experience to apply them or alternatively, that a senior supervisor with appropriate research experience will have oversight of the assignment.

The application should be accompanied by the unit outline and any relevant additional material that would enable the Committee to understand what students are doing for their research and paper. (Individual students do not need to and should not communicate with the Committee directly.)

7.5 Presentation Requirements

Presentation requirements for assignments can be found in chapter 10: Assignment Writing and Submission
8 Financial

8.1 Austudy

Under Commonwealth Government guidelines, Austudy is available for full-time theological students who are working towards accredited awards. “Full-time” is defined by the Government to mean at least ¾ of a maximum load. Enquiries about eligibility and applications for Austudy should be directed to the closest Centrelink Office. Please note that:

1. Centrelink requires a full-time load (i.e., at least 18 credit points or two full units) for each and every trimester of study. Students should note that units cannot be averaged across the course of a year to constitute a full-time load.

2. It is the student’s responsibility to keep Centrelink informed of any program changes or changes of address during each year. If a student’s study load falls below full-time in ANY trimester, then Centrelink may require repayment of any Austudy received.

3. ACOM administration is required to complete regular reports for Centrelink on student progress and full-time/part-time status.

4. Personal Formation units are divided across the number of trimesters appropriate for each of these units – they do NOT count as one full unit in a trimester for the purposes of Centrelink calculations.

5. Students studying at Master of Arts level are not eligible for Austudy, however Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma students may be eligible.

8.2 FEE-HELP

FEE-HELP is a Government financial loan scheme that assists eligible fee paying students to pay their fees. All ACOM enrolled students who are Australian citizens (or on a Permanent Humanitarian Visa) have access to government FEE-HELP loans for both undergraduate and postgraduate study. The total loan amount available is up to $89,706 and can be utilised over the lifetime of the student at all levels of accredited higher education training. Undergraduate loans (only) incur a loan fee of 25% on the loan amount for each unit. The interest does not count towards the FEE-HELP limit. The debt then increases each financial year in line with the CPI increases, but does not accrue any interest beyond CPI increases no matter how long the loan takes to be repaid. The loan can be used for a single unit or a number of units, or for a complete award or a number of awards – according to student’s choice.


To access FEE-HELP, a student completes a “Request for FEE-HELP Assistance” form (available from the ACOM National Office) and submits this form to ACOM before the trimester begins. ACOM then submits, through the SCD Office, the required information on each student seeking FEE-HELP to enable the Government to issue a Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number (CHESSN) to each student. This number will stay with the student for the rest of his/her life.

Students who have previously applied for FEE-HELP at ACOM (or another institution) may still access FEE-HELP for new courses in which they are enrolled/enrolling at ACOM. Students reapplying for FEE-HELP are required to complete a new FEE-HELP application form, and to advise ACOM of their previous CHESSN.
8.3 Tuition Assurance Scheme (TAS)

The Sydney College of Divinity (ABN: 39 002 653 036) is a body corporate and is registered on the Australian Qualifications Framework in the States of New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania. Before a body corporate or its students can receive grants or other assistance under the Higher Education Support Act 2003, the body corporate must meet the requirements specified in the Higher Education Provider Guidelines. Amongst other things, the SCD must publish to all enrolling students a “statement of course assurance”, explaining the course assurance requirements and the method by which the requirements have been met in the course concerned. The SCD’s Course Assurance arrangements are listed in Appendix 2.

The alternative suitable courses of the Australian College of Theology (ACT) in which students would be placed if necessary are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2 – Alternative Courses (Tuition Assurance Scheme)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sydney College of Divinity</th>
<th>Australian College of Theology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma of Theology</td>
<td>Diploma of Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Theology</td>
<td>Bachelor of Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Certificate in Arts</td>
<td>Graduate Diploma of Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma of Arts</td>
<td>Graduate Diploma of Bible and Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma of Arts</td>
<td>Graduate Diploma of Christian Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma of Arts</td>
<td>Graduate Diploma of Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Arts</td>
<td>Master of Arts in Christian Studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.4 Fees and Charges

8.4.1 Tuition Fees

Undergraduate Fees

Please note that Fee Help is not available for audit units.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Audit</th>
<th>9 credit Point</th>
<th>18 Credit Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Unit</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td>$1590</td>
<td>$3180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Unit (Pensioner)</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td>$1390</td>
<td>$2780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Formation Units</td>
<td>$695</td>
<td>$1990</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Units</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1770</td>
<td>$3540</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Postgraduate Fees

Please note that Fee Help is not available for audit units.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Audit</th>
<th>9 credit Point</th>
<th>18 Credit Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Unit</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td>$1850</td>
<td>$3700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Unit (Pensioner)</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td>$1650</td>
<td>$3300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Formation Units</td>
<td>$695</td>
<td>$2250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Units</td>
<td></td>
<td>$2030</td>
<td>$4060</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.4.2 Table 3 - Non-tuition Fees and Charges

Please note that Fee Help is not available for non-tuition fees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee/Charge</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late Unit Registration Fee (after Registration Deadline i.e., 3 weeks before the start of each Trimester)</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Unit Registration Fee (on or after start of Trimester)</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Withdrawal Fee (after Registration Deadline, before Census Date)</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Withdrawal Fee (After Census Date)</td>
<td>Full cost of unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal from Facilitation (after Registration Deadline, before start of trimester)</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal from Facilitation (on or after start of Trimester)</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer of Unit Registration (after Registration Deadline but before start of Trimester)</td>
<td>$175.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer of Unit Registration (from start of Trimester to Census Date)</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue of Transcript other than at Graduation</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue of Testamur other than at Graduation</td>
<td>$110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.5 Facilitation Expenses
Students should allow for an additional cost for living and travelling expenses when attending facilitations away from their local region.

8.6 Payment of Fees to ACOM

Students can pay for units upfront (credit card, direct deposit or cheque) or through Fee Help (for eligible students). Upfront payments must be made prior to the start of the trimester, unless the student has arranged a payment plan with ACOM’s Ministry Services Manager.

8.6.1 Due Dates

Students must pay the tuition fee for each unit prior to the start of each trimester. For trimester dates for the current year refer to www.acom.edu.au.

8.6.2 Withholding of Unit Material

Students will not be given access to unit material until payment of all relevant fees and charges has been arranged. These fees and charges include any outstanding Late Registration and/or Withdrawal Fees.

In addition to the above, no time extensions will be given to students to complete work if a student receives their course material late due to late payment of fees.
9 Academic Regulations

9.1 Admission Requirements Undergraduate

9.1.1 Compulsory Admission Procedures (Full and Part-time)
All students wishing to study with ACOM must be ‘enrolled students’ and, therefore, need to complete the full application process for admission as a student in the College. An ‘enrolled student’ may be full-time or part-time.

9.1.2 Admission Requirements
The academic admission requirements, below, are the same for all courses (potential students who do not meet the criteria below should contact the Registrar to discuss alternative admission options)

Admission may be granted on one or more of the following bases:

1. Successful prior completion of an accredited Certificate IV, Degree or Diploma recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework (or equivalent).
2. Attainment of a satisfactory standard for the Higher School Certificate (or its equivalent), such as to gain entry to a university. For the Bachelor of Theology, Diploma of Christian Studies or Associate Degree of Christian Thought and Practice, the ATAR must be 72.5 or greater; or in QLD the OP score must be 13 or lower.
3. Mature Age entry: To qualify for mature age entry, the student needs to have reached the age of 21 years by the time the student wishes to commence a course.
4. Special Entry: To qualify under this category, a student must be able to produce evidence that substantiates their ability to complete a tertiary course.

9.1.3 English Proficiency
Students that have completed all their previous study in another language need to pass an IELTS test. Degree students must have an IELTS (or equivalent) of 6.5 or greater, with no score less than 6.0 in each band.

9.1.4 Documentation
For successful admission into an ACOM course, a full admission application must be completed by submitting the following documents:

- SCD application for admission form
- Certified copy of birth certificate or passport,
- Certified Copies of transcripts and certificates of previous study
- 1 page personal testimony
- Church reference form,
- 2x personal reference forms
- Fee-Help form (if applicable)
- ATLAS Library application form

Students are advised to send certified photocopies of all requested documentation with their application as ACOM will NOT take responsibility for any original documents sent in with their application. Please note that to qualify as a certified copy the following statement must be written on the document:

“This is a true and correct copy of the original sighted on DATE by NAME” followed by Signature and title of the individual.

Individuals who are acceptable document witnesses are: Justice of the Peace, Pastor, Police Officer, Lawyer, Post Office Manager, Doctor, Registered Nurse, Pharmacist, Principal, or Bank Manager.
9.1.5 Provisional and Full Admission

Admission is conditional upon the student being accepted by the Sydney College of Divinity (SCD). Applicants must complete and submit a full admission application to ACOM for entry into advertised courses. On the basis of information supplied on the admission form, ACOM may grant provisional acceptance, which will then be changed at a later date to full acceptance once confirmed by SCD.

Students provisionally admitted under Mature Age or Special Entry will be required to complete a ‘Qualifying Period’ before being confirmed as a full admission. The ‘Qualifying Period’ can be undertaken either full or part time and will consist of the successful completion of 1/3 of the units that make up the award within 3 years. After the successful completion of 1/3 of the units that make up the award the provisional status will be lifted, and full admission will be confirmed.

9.2 Admission Requirements Postgraduate

9.2.1 Compulsory Admission Procedures (Full and Part-time)

All students wishing to study with ACOM must be ‘enrolled students’, and therefore need to complete the full application process for admission as a student of the College. An enrolled student may be full-time or part-time.

9.2.2 Admission Requirements

The admission requirement for the Master of Arts is a three-year bachelor award or equivalent in any discipline. The admission requirement for the Master of Theology is a three-year bachelor of Theology or equivalent or a Master of Arts with a specialisation in any discipline. Students that have completed all their previous study in another language need to pass an IELTS test. Postgraduate students must have an IELTS (or equivalent) of 7.0 or greater overall and in all bands of the test.

Students who do not meet the above criteria may apply for Professional Entry based on previous relevant work experience. This entry requires the student to possess a minimum of 5 years relevant work experience in a full time senior ministry leadership role.

9.2.3 English Proficiency

Students that have completed all their previous study in another language need to pass an IELTS test. Postgraduate students must have an IELTS (or equivalent) of 7.0 or greater overall and in all bands of the test.

9.2.4 Documentation

For successful admission into an ACOM course, a full admission application must be completed by submitting the following documents:

- SCD application for admission form
- Certified copy of birth certificate or passport,
- Certified copies of transcripts and certificates of previous study
- 1 page personal testimony
- Fee-Help form (if applicable)
- ATLAS Library application form

If applying for professional entry please note 2x professional reference letters will be required stating the student has had 5 or more years previous work experience in a full time senior ministry leadership role.

Students are advised to send certified photocopies of all requested documentation with their application as ACOM will NOT take responsibility for any original documents sent in with their application. Please note that to qualify as a certified copy the following statement must be written on the document:
“This is a true and correct copy of the original sighted on DATE by NAME” followed by Signature and title of the individual.

Individuals who are acceptable document witnesses are: Justice of the Peace, Pastor, Police Officer, Lawyer, Post Office Manager, Doctor, Registered Nurse, Pharmacist, Principal, or Bank Manager.

9.2.5 Provisional and Full Admission

Admission is conditional upon the student being accepted by the Sydney College of Divinity (SCD). Applicants must complete and submit a full admission application to ACOM for entry into advertised courses. On the basis of information supplied on the admission form, ACOM may grant provisional acceptance, which will then be changed at a later date to full acceptance once confirmed by SCD.

Students provisionally admitted under Professional Entry will be required to complete one 400 (entry) level post graduate unit and if this unit is completed successfully at a credit grade or above you may be granted normal entry upon the approval of the Academic Dean or College Registrar.

9.3 Credit from Previous or Concurrent Study

9.3.1 Cross-Credit

Cross-credit for studies undertaken at another accredited tertiary institution may be granted for the following:

Undergraduate courses: Cross-credit may be granted for up to 2/3 of an award for completed units at or above vocational diploma level previously studied at other accredited institutions.

Postgraduate courses: Cross-credit may be granted for up to 1/2 an award for completed units at Graduate Certificate level and above previously studied at other accredited institutions. Units must be equivalent to current postgraduate units to be considered for cross-credit.

Students applying for credit must submit full documentation. This will include:

1. Certified copies of original transcripts (see 8.1.4 for further details)
2. Evidence of the course structure, i.e., number of credit points (or units) allotted to each unit studied, and the total number of points required for the award.

Students are advised to apply to the Registrar for credit as soon as possible after being admitted into ACOM. Cross-credit applications will be processed by the Registrar and approved by SCD through the Student Administration Committee, which meets monthly between February and November.

Students may also apply for credit under the principle of Recognition of Prior Learning (Fees may be applicable). To apply for Recognition of Prior Learning please contact the Registrar.

9.3.2 Advanced Standing

Advanced standing enables a student to begin courses at an advanced level without having to undertake the first level units in those courses. Advanced standing does not reduce the total number of units required for an award. To apply for advanced standing please contact the Registrar.

9.4 Re-enrolment

9.4.1 Re-enrolment Because of Incompletion

A student will only be allowed to re-register in a unit that they have failed due to incompletion once only. Students must complete all requirements of the unit, but will be allowed to resubmit previously completed work for reassessment as appropriate. Normal unit fees apply.
9.4.2 Re-enrolment Because of Poor Standard

When a student fails a unit because of poor standard, or failure to meet minimum standards, the unit must be re-taken in its entirety if the student chooses to attempt the unit a second time. Normal unit fees apply.

9.4.3 Failing a Unit Twice

A student who has failed a unit twice for any reason, is not eligible to enrol in that unit a third time.

9.5 Extensions and Late Submission

It is a requirement of a student’s course that all assignments be completed by the due dates set by ACOM and published on Moodle and in the Unit Introduction Book. All applications for extension must be made using the ‘Request for Extension’ form on the ACOM website with attendant evidence emailed to info@acom.edu.au before the due date. Requests for extension will not be accepted on or after the due date.

An extension of up to three weeks from an assignment’s due date (longer may be considered in extraordinary circumstances) may be granted on the following grounds:

a) Medical illness (certified by a Medical Certificate).

b) Extreme hardship (refers to major adverse life events that could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against by the student, and caused substantial disruption to the student’s capacity for effective study and/or the completion of required work).

c) Compassionate grounds (will be based on a significant pastoral concern that is not considered part of a pattern of behaviour on the part of the student).

Circumstances that will NOT normally be considered as acceptable grounds for an extension are:

a) Demands of employment.

b) Minor family problems such as domestic tension with or between parents, spouses, and other people closely involved with the student.

c) The demands of academic work.

d) Financial difficulties.

e) The demands of travel, sport, social commitments or other activities.

Students should allow three working days from submission of an extension request for a response from ACOM.

Assignments without an approved extension may be submitted up to 10 days beyond the due date of the assignment but will attract and automatic penalty deduction of 5% of the marks available for the item of assessment for every day past the ORIGINAL due date. Assignments submitted without an extension beyond 10 days after the due date with NOT be accepted and will NOT be marked.

Where an extension is granted, assignments submitted up to 10 days beyond the due date of the extension may still be marked but will attract an automatic penalty deduction of 5% of the marks available for the item of assessment for every day past the EXTENSION due date. Where items of assessment granted an extension are submitted by the due date the paper is accepted and graded without penalty.

9.6 Assessment

9.6.1 Completion of All Assessment Requirements

1. ACOM Students are required to attempt and submit ALL assigned work in every unit in which they are enrolled. Assigned work includes both assessed work (including, but not limited to, essays, examinations, and field assignments) and unassessed work (including, but not limited to, reading logs, reflective journals, and logs of field, formation, and ministry work).
2. Students not submitting ALL assigned work for a unit will receive a fail grade for the unit, regardless of whether or not their cumulative marks on other (submitted) pieces of assigned work for the unit are numerically sufficient to obtain a pass grade or above.

3. It is not necessary to pass all assigned tasks unless specified – however the cumulative mark of all pieces of work must be numerically sufficient to obtain a pass grade or above.

9.6.2 Incomplete or Inadequate Work

Under certain circumstances, a student submitting all pieces of assigned work, and achieving a total unit mark of greater than 50%, may still be awarded a fail grade under the provisions of this policy if, in the opinion of the Academic Dean, one or more pieces of submitted work are demonstrably inadequate or incomplete. Such inadequate or incomplete work may include, but is not limited to:

1. Essays or other written work containing 60% or less of the assigned word limit, e.g., a 550 (or less) word assignment submitted in response to an essay topic with a 1,000 word limit.

2. Essays or other written work that clearly does not address the set topic in any substantive, comprehensive, coherent or systematic fashion.

3. Essays or other written work with major sections, sub-topics, or other required material missing.

4. Essays or other written work without a bibliography, or with only a minimal bibliography, where a bibliography was a required part of the assignment.

5. Compilations or portfolios of field, formation or ministry work with one or more major elements missing.

6. Absence of any administrative material or documentation (e.g., assignment title pages, reading logs, facilitation attendance sheets) that would allow the Unit Coordinator, Facilitator, Marker or other official to determine that the student has met the set requirements of the unit.

7. Failing to meet the minimum standards and criteria for assessment for higher education essays and other written assignments.

Usually inadequate or incomplete pieces of work will be assigned a mark of less than 35% of the available marks.

In practice, this policy specifies that not only must students submit all work, but also that all submitted work must also be of a certain minimum standard. Students may not pass a unit without reasonable attempts at all pieces of assessment AND any other required work being demonstrated by designated minimum standards being met.

9.7 Grading

9.7.1 Grading Criteria

The same marking guide is used for all ACOM subjects. This can be found in Chapter 10: Assignment Writing and Submission.

9.7.2 Plagiarism

1. All assessments involving plagiarism will be failed.

2. No assessment involving plagiarism will be eligible for resubmission.

3. If the student involved can provide evidence in writing to the satisfaction of the Academic Dean that the plagiarism was unintentional, then a failing grade will be awarded to the assessment in accordance with the overall quality of the assessment – taking into account the seriousness of the plagiarism.
4. If no such evidence is forthcoming, the plagiarism will be deemed to be intentional and the assessment involved will receive a grade of zero.

5. Cases of repeated plagiarism are treated very seriously and may result in the suspension or removal of the student from their course of study.

9.7.3 Scaling of Grades

To ensure inter-unit and inter-institutional equity, a student’s final grade for any unit may be scaled (upwards or downwards) by ACOM and/or SCD. Thus, a student’s final grade is NOT necessarily a simple addition of marks gained for each assessment item.

Scaling of grades is based on the moderation of results overseen by SCD. A student’s final grade will appear on their Academic Transcript. Scaling occurs AFTER a graded assignment has been returned to a student.

9.7.4 Academic Results

Student academic results will be posted online in the secure eMinerva database. See 3.5.6 eMinerva for instructions for use.

9.8 Failure, Resubmission and Progression

9.8.1 Failed Assignments

Limitations

1. No student may resubmit ANY assessment that involves academic misconduct (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, copying, etc.).

2. Students may only resubmit assessments that have been granted a fail grade at the invitation of the marker and only then with the concurrence of the Academic Dean.

Procedures

1. Students failing a piece of assigned work will be notified through Moodle of their failure.

2. Failing students may be assigned a resubmission date that will normally be no later than 1 week from the initial notification of failure.

3. Except in exceptional or extreme circumstances:
   a. Resubmitted work received after the resubmission date will NOT be reassessed.
   b. Students missing a re-set examination will NOT be eligible for any further re-set examination in the given unit.

In both cases (i) and (ii) the original grade will be allocated to the student.

4. An assignment or examination that was initially awarded a fail grade will NOT receive more than 64% (i.e., the highest mark in the pass range) upon resubmission.

5. In cases where the resubmitted work, or re-sat examination, attracts fewer marks than the original work or examination the original grade will stand: i.e., students cannot lose marks through resubmission or re-sitting. However, assessments or examinations that Fail twice will NOT be eligible for ANY further reassessment of any kind.
9.8.2 Appeals
In cases where a student feels the mark on a given assessment does not adequately reflect the quality of the work on that assessment, the student has two weeks in which to appeal the mark by detailing in writing to the ACOM Academic Dean, with appropriate supporting evidence, the reasons why the mark should be reconsidered. Students should note that simply disliking a unit, a lecturer/facilitator, or an assessment topic will NOT be considered adequate grounds for an appeal.

The Academic Dean will consider the student’s written reasons and make a determination as to the validity of those reasons, consulting with the assessment marker and/or other ACOM staff as appropriate.

If the Academic Dean does not uphold the appeal, the student will be informed in writing as to why the appeal was not upheld. In general, the Academic Dean will not grant an appeal where, in the opinion of the Academic Dean, the reasons provided by the student:

a) Are unrelated to the substance of the assessment and its completion by the student;
b) Involve vexatious or otherwise unsubstantiated claims against the integrity of the marker; or
c) Involve claims of ignorance on behalf of the student where documentation regarding the structure and substance of the assessment has been clearly provided.

If the appeal is upheld, the relevant assessment will then be sent to a second marker for re-marking. The mark received by this second marker will stand (i.e. an appeal can result in a lower mark being granted).

The Academic Dean’s decision in any matter regarding appeals is final.

9.8.3 Minimum Progression
ACOM requires that all classifications of students (undergraduate, postgraduate, full-time, part-time, etc.) maintain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 1.0 at all times. In practice, this means that students will have to maintain at least a “Pass” average across their course of their studies. Thus, any failing grades will normally need to be matched by a credit grade (or higher) in order to maintain the overall “Pass” average (or higher).

Students with a GPA of 1.0 or greater are considered to be of Good Academic Standing. Students with a GPA of less than 1.0 may also be considered to be of good academic standing in cases where a SINGLE failing grade has resulted in a GPA of less than one.

Calculating Students’ GPAs
A GPA is based on all tertiary level (i.e., undergraduate level or above) units attempted whilst studying at ACOM, but does NOT apply to units studied at other institutions for which previous credit is granted.

1. For purposes of calculating a student’s GPA, grades of high distinction (HD), distinction (D), credit (C), pass (P), or fail (F) are assigned a specific number of “grade points” i.e., HD = 4, D = 3, C = 2, P = 1 and N = 0.

2. Grade points are allocated on the basis of 9 Credit Point (CP) units with pro rata adjustments made for units of greater or less weighing e.g., a “Credit” earned in an 18 CP unit would attract 4 grade points (i.e., 2 x 2 grade points).

3. The total number of grade points earned is then divided by the total number of units attempted by the student, giving the GPA. The “total number of units attempted” includes ALL units in which a student has been effectively enrolled whether or not the student completes the required work for a given unit and regardless of the reason for any fail grade recorded on a student’s academic transcript.
4. Notwithstanding clause 3 of this policy, units from which a student withdraws before the appropriate census date, or units assigned a temporary “Incomplete” grade will not be counted for the purposes of calculating a student’s GPA.

Probation, Suspension and Exclusion

Students with a GPA of less than 1.0 (normally, but not necessarily, excluding cases of single failure) will be:

a) Notified that they are not currently of good academic standing; and

b) Placed on Academic Probation for a period of 12 months, within which time they are required to lift their GPA to 1.0 or above;

c) Required to undertake (if not previously undertaken), and successfully complete, AL120C/AL420CCritical Thinking and Writing in their Probation year.

If, at the end of the academic probation period, a student’s GPA is 1.0 or greater, the student will be declared to be of good academic standing and may resume their studies as normal.

If, at the end of the academic probation period, a student’s GPA is still less than 1.0 the student will be asked to show cause in writing why they should not be placed on Academic Suspension. Academic suspension will normally last for a minimum period of 12 months. Students on academic suspension remain enrolled in their respective course, but are not allowed to register for any units, facilitations, or other academic activities.

At the end of an academic suspension period, the student will be allowed to resume registering for units under a Second Academic Probationary Period of 12 months, during which time they will again be required to lift their GPA to at least 1.0.

Students not lifting their GPA to at least 1.0 at the end of a second academic probationary period will be asked to show cause in writing why they should not be excluded from further studies. Students excluded from further studies will:

a) Be withdrawn from the course in which they are currently enrolled, and

b) Not be allowed to enrol in any ACOM unit or course for a period of five (5) years.

Notwithstanding other provisions of this policy, students may only be placed on academic probation twice during any undergraduate or postgraduate degree or diploma course. Students qualifying for probation on a third occasion will be asked to show cause in writing why they should not be excluded from further studies under the same terms as expressed in clause 13 of this above.

Notwithstanding other provisions of this Policy, students may only serve one academic suspension during any undergraduate or postgraduate degree or diploma course. Students qualifying for a second academic suspension will be asked to show cause why they should not be excluded from further studies under the same terms and conditions as stated in clause 13 of this policy.

The provisions of ACOM’s Minimum Progression Policy are summarized in Table 6.
Table 6 – Summary of Provisions of ACOM’s Minimum Progression Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GPA &gt; 1.0</td>
<td>Good Academic Standing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA &lt; 1.0</td>
<td>Academic Probation (12 Months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Successfully Complete Tertiary Bridging Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA &lt; 1.0 at end of Academic Probation</td>
<td>Academic Suspension followed by a second Academic Probation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA &lt; 1.0 at end of a Second Probation (whether the Second Probation immediately follows Academic Suspension or is incurred on a separate occasion)</td>
<td>Student is required to show cause why they should not be Excluded from Further Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students incurs a third Academic Probation</td>
<td>Student is required to show cause why they should not be Excluded from Further Studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.9 Graduation

In order to graduate, students must fulfil ALL unit requirements (including any unassessed work or related documentation) by the end of trimester 3 in the year prior to their intended graduation.

An Intent to Graduate form must be submitted to ACOM by the end of Trimester 2 in the year prior. This form can be found on the ACOM website: [http://acom.edu.au/intent-to-graduate-form](http://acom.edu.au/intent-to-graduate-form)

9.10 Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

a) Plagiarism
   Plagiarism is the representation of another’s works or ideas as one’s own. It includes the unacknowledged word-for-word use or paraphrasing of another person’s work, and the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person’s ideas.

b) Cheating
   Cheating is the provision or receipt of information during tests or examinations; or providing or using unauthorised assistance at the computer terminal, or on fieldwork. Cheating would not usually include consultation with others or discussion amongst students about the preparation of assignments unless that was specifically forbidden. It includes unauthorised collusion.

c) Fraud
   Academic fraud is the falsification and fabrication of, or dishonesty in, reporting research results.

d) Improper Behaviour
   Improper behaviour is that which interferes with students or staff in the pursuit of their academic endeavours. It includes disruptive behaviour in class or institutional facilities such as libraries.
e) Misrepresentation

Misrepresentation is the giving of false or misleading information in academic matters. It includes falsely claiming credit for past study, falsely stating that thesis material has not been used in another thesis.

f) Unethical Behaviour

Unethical behaviour is that which breaches accepted ethical standards. It includes failing to observe the terms of an ethical approval to conduct research, misuse of confidential information obtained in field education.

9.10.1 Reporting Academic Misconduct

Any person who has direct knowledge of academic misconduct may make a complaint in writing to the Academic Dean. Where appropriate, The Academic Dean will refer the complaint to the Academic Board, who will set up an Academic Misconduct Committee to investigate. A complaint may be made against any person enrolled as a student of ACOM whether proceeding to an award or not.

A complaint must identify the person against whom it is made and the nature of the misconduct. It must provide appropriate evidence of the alleged misconduct, including the names of witnesses where appropriate.

Complaints against persons formerly enrolled with ACOM should be made under the provisions of the SCD Misconduct Procedures, which can be found on their website: http://scd.edu.au/about/policy-procedures/7-0-student-matters/

9.10.2 Penalties for Academic Misconduct

Depending on the severity of the misconduct and the previous record of the student involved, an Academic Misconduct Committee may:

a) Dismiss a complaint.
b) Find a complaint established and impose no penalty.
c) Find a complaint established and admonish the person.
d) Find a complaint established and order that the person forfeit marks in an assignment, fail a course unit or all the units in which the person is enrolled in a semester.
e) Find a complaint established and suspend the person from enrolling for a course unit or units, or an award in ACOM for a period not exceeding four trimesters.
f) Find a complaint established and recommend to the Academic Board of the SCD that the person be suspended from enrolling in the SCD for a period not exceeding four semesters.
g) Find a complaint established and recommend to the Academic Board of the SCD that the person be excluded from enrolment in the SCD for a period not less than two years.
h) Find a complaint established and impose a combination of the above penalties.

A person who is suspended may not enrol in another Member Institute of the SCD while the suspension is in force without the express permission of the Academic Board of the SCD.

9.10.3 How can a person appeal?

A person against whom a complaint of misconduct has been established under these procedures may appeal to the Academic Board of the SCD within 30 days of receiving the decision of an Academic Misconduct Committee. If a person lodges an appeal, the implementation of any penalty will be stopped until the appeal is resolved. The appeal will be heard under the provisions of the SCD Academic Misconduct Procedures.

If you wish to view ACOM’s Academic Misconduct Policy in full, please contact the National Office.
9.11 Student Grievances

As a Member Institute of SCD, ACOM follows SCD’s Grievance Policy and Procedures, which can be found on the SCD website: [http://scd.edu.au/about/policy-procedures/7-0-student-matters/](http://scd.edu.au/about/policy-procedures/7-0-student-matters/)

9.12 Saving Clause

Notwithstanding the provisions of any policy in this handbook, the Academic Dean may vary or waive the provisions of any policy if, and with the concurrence of the Academic Board, it is the opinion of the Academic Board that the normal exercise of these policies would cause unconscionable difficulties for the student(s) concerned, or damage the reputation and/or operational integrity of ACOM.
10 Assignment Writing and Submission

All assignments submitted to ACOM must conform to the guidelines in this style manual, unless the assignment instructions specifically allow a variation.

For the SCD Conventions for writing a thesis, please refer to the Regulations for MPhil, DMin, PhD and ThD document which can be found on the SCD website.

10.1 Assignment Writing

10.1.1 What is the Purpose of an Assignment?

An assignment is an opportunity to research a topic or issue and gain a much broader and deeper understanding of it. This understanding is then communicated to a teacher or lecturer in written form. Essentially, your goal in writing an assignment should be to demonstrate to your teacher or lecturer your understanding of a particular topic or issue.

An assignment is an opportunity for a teacher or lecturer to give undivided attention to your work, and to give you specific and individualised feedback. This helps you gain a sense of your progress, and helps you set benchmarks on your performance. It also helps you gain feedback on your skill in communicating information in written form – an important life skill!

An assignment is a formal and structured piece of communication. While some people may see these as an imposition, or as unnecessary, they are in fact keys to helping your assignment work become much more effective. If an assignment is written well, you virtually take the reader by the hand and lead them through the document. Whether your task be to prepare an essay, a report, a review, or some other document, each of these require the inclusion of specific elements which are designed to help your reader 'access' your ideas more easily. For example, every good essay contains an introduction, body and a conclusion. A full report will include a title page, table of contents, summary, introduction, body, conclusions and recommendations.

Because an assignment is formal, this trains you to take care in your communication. Formal language helps you set professional standards in your writing, and present work which is more objective. Formal language also increases your opportunities of being understood. This is important because, unlike spoken conversations with others, we do not have the opportunity to explain our meaning in person, or to rephrase ideas so that our meaning becomes clearer.

Preparing an assignment is an opportunity to learn – and to share with another person what you have discovered. This is almost like 'teaching' another person- and in this process of teaching you come to a greater understanding of the topic or issue yourself. This can be an extremely fulfilling and exciting opportunity. So, as you learn to master writing assignments, you will discover the process of learning becomes much more enjoyable.

10.1.2 Assignment Writing Steps

Planning and writing an assignment becomes much easier if you follow a number of logical steps. There are eleven steps to writing an effective assignment. Let's look at what these steps are:

Step 1 Analyse the task

Before you begin, you need to be very sure what it is you are being asked to do in the assignment task. For example, are you being asked to prepare an essay, or a report? When is the assignment due? What is the word length on the assignment?
Other elements that help you understand the task include: How have you already met with this content area in the subject you are studying? How does this content area fit in with the whole subject you are studying?

Step 2 Search for the Task

Once you are sure of the 'big picture', you can more comfortably start focussing on the specific task at hand.

Read the assignment question. Look for the task word, the verb that tells you what you have to do. This word will tell you how you should approach your assignment. Look also for limit words - words that tell you to keep your work within certain boundaries.

Task Words

In their book *Thesis and Assignment Writing*, Anderson and Poole (1994, pp.9-10) give some common task words and their meaning. You might find this list helpful:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyse</td>
<td>Consider the various components of the whole and try to describe the inter-relationships between them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare</td>
<td>Examine the characteristics of the objects in question to demonstrate their similarities and their differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define</td>
<td>Give a definition or state terms of reference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe</td>
<td>Give an account of.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss</td>
<td>Present the different aspects of a question or problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>Examine the various sides of a question and try to reach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine critically</td>
<td>Act as judge or critic-appraise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrate</td>
<td>Give an example, explain, draw a figure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prove</td>
<td>Demonstrate or show by logical argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarise</td>
<td>State the main points in briefly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Limit words

Limit words are important because they help to make your task smaller and more achievable.

Let's imagine your assignment question is:

'Analyse the effectiveness of pastoral care in Australian Churches of Christ during the 1990’s'

1. Firstly, look for words that indicate a specific time.
   In this case, the question asks you to limit your analysis to a specific decade - the 1990's.

2. Then, look for words that indicate a specific place (or a specific context).
In this case, the question includes another limit word ‘Australian’. So, this tells you that you can limit your focus to a specific country only.

Limit words help you to get the right focus in your work and will also help you avoid wasting much precious time and energy researching information that is outside the scope of your question.

**Step 3 Search for the Content Words**

The next step is to go back to the question, and identify the specific words that indicate what topic(s) you need to address. Read the question several times so that you understand which dimensions of the topic you need to consider in your assignment.

Be careful here – make sure you identify the words that are actually in the question, not the words that you hope would be in the question!

Look for words or phrases that help you understand the context of your investigation.

**Step 4 Investigate**

Now that you have a very firm idea of what specific aspects of the topic you need to investigate, you need to do some in-depth research.

Go to the literature on your topic - for example, books, articles, and newspaper stories. Identify relevant portions from Scripture. At this stage, though, don’t read each book or article deeply. What you need to do is to skim read for main ideas and themes. To do this, read the first and last sentences of each paragraph - this should give you a good starting point.

**Step 5 Generate Ideas**

The next stage is to generate ideas on your topic. Your skim reading of the literature should have helped you to develop an understanding of what some of the main ideas in your assignment may be.

One of the best methods to help you generate ideas is to brainstorm. Simply take a blank sheet of paper and write down any ideas that come to your mind – no matter how good or bad you may think they are. The aim here is to generate as many ideas as you can. You may even be able to discuss your topic with others, and use them to help you generate ideas.

An easy technique that you might find helpful is the ‘PMI’ approach to brainstorming:

**Pluses**

**Minuses**

**Interesting things**

Given your particular topic, what are the pluses (advantages)? What are the minuses (disadvantages)? What interesting ideas did you meet with as you were considering these aspects?

**Step 6 Nominate Main Ideas**

Now decide which ideas are most appropriate to your assignment question.

Organising your ideas at this stage can be quite difficult. You may find that your work is messy and difficult to put into some logical order.

Here is a method you might find helpful. This is an adaptation of Mallett’s (1978) note taking system called the ORL (Organising Reading for Learning). It is a particularly good method because it replicates how the human brain tends to process information - *visually* and spatially.
On a blank sheet of paper, write the assignment question in the middle. Then, add your main ideas around the question. This is how your page would look:

Try to write these main ideas in your own words. Also, try to write these ideas in a sentence.

Lastly, consider what would be a logical way to work through your main ideas to sequence them. Remember, in an assignment you are building a case. Number each of your main ideas in the order you think is best.

**Step 7 Add Explanation & Evidence**

In an assignment, you are trying to develop a logical case. To do this you must explain your meaning, and ultimately persuade your reader. Just as a lawyer in a court of law presents a range of evidence to persuade the jury, you must also present a range of evidence to persuade your teacher or lecturer.

Remember, your case will be stronger if you can demonstrate that there is some agreement between experts in the field that the ideas that you have put forward are logical, appropriate and correct. Add this explanation and evidence to your ORL. By now it should look something like this:
**Remember** Check to make sure you are answering the question that has been asked.

**Step 8 Writing Phase**

**Enter the writing phase - write the body paragraphs first**
You may not believe it, but actually writing the assignment is now the easiest part. You simply convert each main idea from your ORL into paragraphs. The Main Idea becomes the topic sentence of the paragraph (the opening sentence). The explanation, evidence and examples become the sentences that follow.

Ensure each paragraph:

Addresses one main point only:

- Is at least 3 sentences long;
- States the main point in a topic sentence;
- Develops the main point by explaining it, and by giving examples and references.

Work through each of the Main Ideas from your ORL in the order you have decided is a logical sequence. Remember to acknowledge any sources used (refer to 10.2 for more information)

**Step 9 Introduction and Conclusion**

After reading your introduction, the reader should be quite clear about what it is you are going to do, and how. Here is how an effective introduction is normally structured:
• Begin with an opening statement or two to introduce the general topic area of the assignment;
• Provide a statement of the specific task (or question) to be addressed in the essay, and what will be argued in relation to this task (or question).
• Give a brief description of how the content in the essay will be presented - what are you going to discuss/analyse, and what will your discussion/argument reveal?

Now, add the conclusion. Essentially, the conclusion should contain two pieces:
• A summary of the main points made in the body of your assignment; and
• What these demonstrate in relation to the specific task (or question) addressed in the essay.

A typical way of writing a conclusion is something like:

In this paper, an examination of {insert text} was presented. It was shown that {insert text}. Therefore, {insert text}.

**Step 10 Finalise**

Add the final professional polish to your work. Edit and proof read carefully to remove errors in grammar and expression. It is best if you can allow a few days between when you complete writing the assignment and when you edit and proof read it. This allows you to look at the paper afresh, and helps you see errors that you have overlooked in the writing process. If possible, ask someone else to check your assignment - as they may find errors you have missed.

**Step 11 Submit your Assignment**
10.1.3 Some Important Writing Tips

1. Check and triple-check your spelling, grammar and references! Use a spell check and a grammar check, and re-read your work as well!

2. Don’t use the second-person when you can use the third-person e.g.,
   - Don’t write: You will find this subject very stimulating.
   - Instead write: Students will find this subject very stimulating.

3. Don’t use more than one “and” in a sentence. Also, don’t use “and” if you can use a full stop e.g.,
   - Don’t write: Some dogs are lazy and this laziness means that some dogs get fat.
   - Instead write: Some dogs are lazy. This laziness means that some dogs get fat.

4. Always specify the reference when using “this” e.g.,
   - Don’t write: Some dogs are lazy. This means that some dogs get fat.
   - Instead write: Some dogs are lazy. This laziness means that some dogs get fat.

5. Ensure that your sentences and paragraphs follow each other logically and syntactically e.g.,
   - Don’t write: Some dogs are lazy. This laziness means that some dogs get fat. Fat in humans is also a problem. Dogs should be given enough exercise to ensure they don’t get fat.
   - Instead write: Some dogs are lazy. This laziness means that some dogs get fat. Dogs should be given enough exercise to ensure they don’t get fat. Fat in humans is also a problem.

6. Be consistent with your use of terms. E.g.,
   - Don’t write: Some dogs are lazy. Lack of motivation means that some dogs get fat. Dogs should be given enough exercise to ensure they don’t acquire obesity.
   - Instead write: Some dogs are lazy. Laziness means that some dogs get fat. Dogs should be given enough exercise to ensure they don’t get fat.

7. If you do wish to introduce new terms you must do so explicitly e.g.,
   - Don’t write: Some dogs are lazy. Lack of motivation means that some dogs get fat. Dogs should be given enough exercise to ensure they don’t become obese.
   - Instead write: Some dogs are lazy. Lack of motivation (or laziness) means that some dogs get fat. Dogs should be given enough exercise to ensure they don’t become obese (i.e., so that they don’t get fat).

8. Once you’ve established an order of ideas or concepts stick with that order throughout e.g.,
   - Don’t write: Obesity in dogs can be caused by over-eating, lack of exercise or genetic factors. Genetic factors, over-eating and lack of exercise are…”
   - Instead write: Obesity in dogs can be caused by over-eating, lack of exercise or genetic factors. Over-eating, lack of exercise and genetic factors are…”

Also, if you introduce sections in your work (which you should – see Point 10 below) then these sections should be dealt with in the order that you introduce them. So, the Section Headings that might follow from the sentence above are: “Over-Eating”, “Lack of Exercise” and “Genetic Factors” IN THAT ORDER.

9. Use LOTS of linking sentences to alert the reader to your train-of-thought: e.g.,
“The preceding section of this chapter dealt with obesity in animals. This section deals with obesity in humans.”

“In the last paragraph some key causes of obesity in animals were specified. These reasons, however, are not definitive. Other reasons important for animal obesity include…”

“In the last part of this chapter we will deal with obesity in animals more generally. However, in this section we deal specifically with obesity in cats because cats are the most common household pet in the United States.”

10. Use headings and sub-headings freely to break-up your text. As a rough guideline, don’t go more than one-page-and-a-half without a heading or sub-heading of some kind.

11. Don’t qualify absolutes.
   - Don’t write: “She was very pregnant.” [She’s either pregnant or she’s not.]
   - Instead write: “She was eight months [or whatever] into her pregnancy”.

12. Be specific.
   - Don’t write: “The government said…” [What government? When?] 
   - Instead write: “The Australian Commonwealth government said in June, 1987…”

13. Don’t make unsubstantiated generalisations.
   - Don’t write: “Everyone knows that….” [How do you know that “everyone knows”?]
   - Instead write: “Surveys (e.g., Bloggs, 1995) indicate that most people recognise….”
10.2 Referencing

All ACOM assignments require acknowledgement of source material.

10.2.1 Why Should I Acknowledge my Sources?¹

In your assignments at ACOM you will find that a large percentage your written work is based on the ideas of other writers. Therefore, it is important to let the assessor know where you found your ideas. Whenever you have taken something from another author (that is, you have taken an author’s theory, opinion, idea, example, conclusion, or findings) you must say where the original can be found. In other words, you must acknowledge and cite your sources. This is important whether or not you use the author’s own words, and importantly, avoids plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when you use other people’s ideas, words or data as if they were your own.

It is important to understand that academic assignments require wide reading to show your knowledge of the topic in question. The ideas and approaches of others reinforce the arguments you present in your assignment.

Acknowledging your sources:

- Identifies the range of ideas and approaches you have found helpful in your work
- Acknowledges where these ideas and approaches came from
- Shows where your reader can locate the sources you have used
- Avoids plagiarism

10.2.2 When Should I Acknowledge my Sources?

You should acknowledge your sources whenever you use information:

- As your inspiration
- As the source of a theory, argument or point of view
- For specific information such as statistics, examples or case studies
- For direct quotations (i.e. using author’s exact words)
- To paraphrase or summarise an author’s work
- When you copy a diagram, table or any other graphic

10.2.3 How Do I Integrate my Sources into my Writing?

When you are taking something from another source, you are taking it out of its original context and putting it into a new context – your own assignment. You must make sure it fits properly into this new context.

This means:

- It must be relevant to your argument
- It must join neatly with what comes before and after
- It must make logical and grammatical sense

When your sources make a point that is relevant to your discussion but would interrupt the flow of your argument and/or is tangential to it, you may discuss the issue further in your footnotes. This should be done instead of using brackets in your essay. Note also the prohibition below of using more than 25% of your essay words in footnotes.

¹ In the formulation of this document we have made use of aspects of this referencing guide from the University of Canberra http://www.canberra.edu.au/library/attachments/pdf/referencing-guide.pdf
10.2.4 How Do I Acknowledge my Sources?

There are a number of methods for referencing however ACOM’s preferred method is a Numeric-footnote system called Turabian (as opposed to the in-text referencing of the Harvard author/date system). This link provides an excellent guide to how to use the Turabian numeric-footnote system.

http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html

Other methods such as the Harvard Style are acceptable as long as the chosen method is used correctly and consistently. Multiple methods cannot be used in the same assignment.

What else do I need to know?

- Not more than 10% of any assignment should be comprised of direct quotations.
- Footnotes can be used as a place to reference sources. Footnotes can also be used to expand an argument or provide more insight into a point without sidetracking the main discussion of the assignment. An additional 25% of the wordcount can be included as footnotes. I.e. if the assignment length is 1000 words, you can have up to an additional 250 words in footnotes.
- Use quotation marks
- For “Block” quotes longer than 3 lines or 40 words indent by at least 5 spaces and use single spacing. Make sure your Block quotes do not exceed 6 lines.
- If you are using a quote within a quote use single quotation marks to indicate what you are quoting.
- If you omit words from a quotation, the omissions are indicated by 3 spaced periods (i.e., . . .). If the omission includes a punctuation mark, this must be included. (e.g., words left off the end of a sentence should have 4 spaced periods, i.e., three periods plus a full stop).
- If you add a word or more of explanation to a quote use […] to enclose your addition
- When supporting a point with a bible verse place the quoted section in inverted commas and provide the reference in brackets after the verse. Eg “Happy are the pure in heart” (Matt 5:8). If the Bible text is longer than one verse it should be put in the footnotes instead of the body of the assignment. Please do note include the Bible as one of the books in your Bibliography or cite it in your references.

10.2.5 Turabian Footnote Referencing Examples

(For exhaustive list use link on previous page)

**Book**
- **One Author**
- **Two Authors**

**Article in a print journal**

**Article in an online journal**
Chapter or other part of a book

Kindle Books (where no page number is provided)
Use of Kindle books for footnotes, if there is no page number just put the number format then (Kindle edition), i.e. 

Book published online

10.2.6 ACOM Specific Referencing

ACOM Hard Copy (Paper) Unit Material:
ACOM, Session #: Title of Session [if available], Title of Unit, (Sydney: Australian College of Ministries, date [year you are completing the unit], page [if provided].

ACOM On-line (Digital) Unit Material:
ACOM, Session #: Title of Session [if available], Title of Unit, (Sydney: Australian College of Ministries, date [year you are completing the unit), retrieved via online learning access, date taken from online learning site.

ACOM Facilitation quote or discussion:
Facilitator/Lecturer, Lecture delivered on [date], City, State: Unit Name.
10.3 Submitting Assignments

This Section covers ACOM Policy regarding all assessments submitted in all ACOM units.

1. Unless otherwise instructed, all assessments MUST be submitted via Moodle (refer to the Moodle Student Handbook for further instructions).

2. All assessments must be saved in the following format: name first, then unit code for the assessment that you are submitting, then assessment type e.g., “Joe Bloggs S7101 Field.doc” or even “Joe Bloggs S7101 Intro to Theology Field ass.doc” (if you prefer)

3. Assessments must not (unless instructed) be submitted directly to a:
   a) Unit Coordinator, Facilitator, Marker or any other academic staff person;
   b) Learning Support Manager, Registrar or any other administrative staff person.

4. All assessments MUST be submitted with a cover sheet. A cover sheet template is available on Moodle. If the cover sheet is not included on an assessment it will NOT BE ACCEPTED.

5. Assessments not submitted in accordance with Points 1 to 4 of this Policy will be deemed to be Incorrectly Submitted. An Incorrectly Submitted Assignment will:
   (a) Will NOT attract ANY marks, and so
   (b) Will be allocated a fail grade when the marks for the unit in question are recorded.

6. Notwithstanding points 1 to 4 above, if a student, having realised that they have incorrectly submitted an assessment, then resubmits the assessment in the correct form (i.e., in accordance with points 1-4 above), the resubmitted assessment will be processed normally, but will accrue any penalties associated with late submission (see ACOM’s Late Assignment Policy Section 9.5) if these penalties apply. NB: ACOM will also not be responsible for any emails sent to any email address that are not seen by the student due to the emails being automatically placed in a student’s email account’s “Junk” or “Spam” email folder.

10.3.1 Assignment Presentation

File type
All assignments must be submitted electronically in Word “.doc or .docx” format.

Line Spacing
Assignments must be either 1.5 or double spaced.

Margins
Assignments must have at least a 2.5 cm margin on all edges.

Font
Assignments must be written in Times New Roman with 12 point font.

Word limits
Aim carefully to write the required number of words. We encourage you to you write no more than 10% more or 10% less than the required number of words. As using concise language is important, it is generally considered worse to write an excessively long essay than one too short. Please also note that footnotes and Bibliographies are not to be included in word counts.
Bibliography/Reference List
You must include a Bibliography or Reference List in every assignment in which you use source material. Your Bibliography/Reference List must be:

- On a separate page
- Have a heading – Bibliography or References
- Organised alphabetically by author or editor
- **Please note the differences between footnotes and bibliography.** For example:
- See link to Turabian - Numeric-footnote system for detail on setting out your Bibliography or Reference List

Capitalisation
All proper nouns should be capitalised. The following examples should also be followed:

- **God** - “God” should be used to refer to an individual monotheistic God, while “god” should be used for the generic concept of a “god” or for multiple “gods.”
- **Bible/Scripture** - Both should be capitalised, but “biblical” and “scriptural” should not
- **Church** - “Church” is used for the Church universal and specific local Churches, while “church” is used for the local church in general.
- **Pastor** - Pastor is only capitalised when referring to a specific person, not pastors in general (e.g. the Pastor of XYZ Church meets with other pastors.)

10.3.2 Return of Assessments
Wherever possible, assessments will be returned to students **within 2 weeks** of the due date for the assessment. Students should note that assessment marks will often be adjusted AFTER the student has received notification of their mark (see Section 9.7.3).

10.3.3 Feedback on Draft Assessments
Students are welcome to submit drafts of assessments to the Marker of the unit. Markers will generally take two weeks to respond to draft submissions. Students should take this response time into account when submitting their draft responses.

Markers are only expected to provide basic comment on content related issues i.e., how well an assessment answers the essay question. Markers are not expected to provide comment on stylistic issues such as punctuation, grammar and individual referencing issues.

10.3.4 Assessment Due Dates
All assessment due dates can be found on Moodle for the relevant unit.
The following is a list of criteria that each marker takes into account when marking ALL higher education written work submitted to ACOM for assessment. Students should be aware that markers will fail assignments that do not meet these criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fail (&lt;50%)</th>
<th>Pass (50-64%)</th>
<th>Credit (65-74%)</th>
<th>Distinction (75-84%)</th>
<th>High Distinction (85-100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Description</td>
<td>Work that fails to attain the required outcome(s), lacking in basic knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation</td>
<td>Work that satisfactorily attains the required outcome(s), with adequate knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation</td>
<td>Work that soundly attains the required outcome(s) showing a good level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, presentation and some evidence of critical interpretation</td>
<td>Excellent work that substantially attains the required outcome(s) showing a high level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation and some originality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Inadequate evidence of having used any resources</td>
<td>Evidence of having used some resources</td>
<td>Evidence of a sound understanding of appropriate resources</td>
<td>Evidence of relevant use of resources beyond expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Topic</td>
<td>Inadequate factual and conceptual knowledge</td>
<td>Demonstrated satisfactory factual and conceptual knowledge to serve as a basis for further study</td>
<td>Demonstrated extensive factual and conceptual knowledge</td>
<td>Demonstrated substantial factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating highly distinctive insight into deeper and more subtle aspects of the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulation of Argument</td>
<td>Demonstrated inability to construct coherent argument</td>
<td>Ability to construct sound argument based on evidence</td>
<td>Ability to construct well-reasoned and coherent argument based on discriminating use of evidence</td>
<td>Evidence of imagination, originality, and independent thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical and Reflective Skills</td>
<td>Insufficient evidence of analytical and reflective skills</td>
<td>Evidence of analytical and reflective skills</td>
<td>Evidence of developed analytical and reflective skills</td>
<td>Evidence of well-developed analytical and reflective skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Insufficient evidence of any application</td>
<td>Evidence of some application</td>
<td>Ability to apply some of the concepts to specific situations.</td>
<td>Ability to apply concepts to challenging problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression and Presentation appropriate to the Discipline</td>
<td>Inadequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation</td>
<td>Adequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation</td>
<td>Good skills in expression, presentation, and documentation</td>
<td>Well-developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to wider audiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.4.2 Minimum Standards for Written Assignments

The following is a guide to the minimum standards expected of ALL higher education written work submitted to ACOM for assessment. Students should be aware that markers will fail assignments that do not meet these requirements.

In order to gain a PASS grade or above, written assignments submitted to ACOM for assessment must AT LEAST:

Be presented as formal assignments

Rough notes, draft copies and unfinished work are always unacceptable and will result in automatic failure. A cover page is mandatory.

Be written in formal English

Essays MUST use grammatically and syntactically correct sentences, and all conventions of the English language (e.g., correct spelling, correct and consistent use capitals, full stops, commas, inverted commas, question marks, quotation marks, etc.) must be followed consistently. Isolated errors will not usually result in failure. Consistent errors will result in failure.

Be arranged in coherent paragraphs

Essays must not, for example, be arranged in one block or in single sentences. Bullet points are unacceptable in any assignment, including field assignments. However, proper (i.e., consistent and careful) use of numbering or lettering within, or between paragraphs, is acceptable.

Begin with an introduction and finish with a conclusion

Introductions should describe how the student plans to answer the question. Conclusions should ONLY include issues dealt with in the main body of the essay.

Be free from slang, colloquialisms and conversational language

Isolated examples of slang, colloquialisms or conversational language will not usually result in failure. Consistent use of slang and colloquialisms will result in failure.

A very short list of some slang words (and some suggested formal alternatives in brackets) include:

“Cool” (“popular”), “crappy” (“poor quality”), “I reckon” (“It is my opinion that...”), “hang around” (“wait”), “boss” (“employer”), etc.

“Well, the best way to...”
Using “well” to begin a sentence is colloquial (and redundant). Simply start the sentence with “The...”. Instead of using “best” use, for example, “most appropriate”, or “most widely accepted”.

“The methodology used to reach this conclusion is really bad.”
Neither “really” nor “bad” are properly defined. Instead of “really bad” use, for example, “highly inappropriate”, or “obviously unjustified”.

“You will agree that...”
Never address the reader directly in an essay, and never speculate about the reader’s beliefs or opinion(s). Instead say, for example, “There is strong evidence that...” or “This conclusion seems inevitable”.

Avoid use of the first person (e.g., ‘I’, ‘we’)

Academic essays should generally be written in the third-person. Use of the first-person MAY be justified in some circumstance e.g., where the question/topic asks for personal responses to, or reflections on, certain issues or material. If in doubt, the third-person should always be used.

Use gender inclusive language
Students are required to use gender inclusive language in all academic papers and verbal presentations. This is recognised practice across tertiary education. It also reflects the inclusive nature of the gospel (Galatians 3:28) and is good practice and preparation for ministry and worship leading.

**Address the question or topic**

Assignments not addressing the questions/topic WILL be failed regardless of the overall quality of the essay.

**Address the question or topic in the manner specified**

Where the assignment question/topic clearly specifies a particular manner of addressing the topic, assignments not addressing the topic in that manner may be failed EVEN IF the overall question/topic is addressed in other ways.

**Be characterised by tertiary level thought and/or depth of analysis**

Assignments should evidence a level of clarity, logicality, and persuasiveness consistent with tertiary studies. Assignments that could have been written by a reasonably intelligent and reasonably well informed high-school student have not reached the minimum criterion for this standard.

**Support key statements with evidence**

‘Evidence’ includes citations of written academic work (e.g., books, journals, reputable and verifiable internet resources) and direct evidence gathered by students (e.g., through an interview or survey), but DOES NOT include anecdotal evidence or ‘motherhood’ statements such as “everybody knows that...”

**Interact with a range of sources**

Generally, students are expected to cite at least 8-12 appropriate books or journal articles for a major essay. However, it is not sufficient to simply quote/reference such authors. Students are expected to critique the arguments of various authors, and to assess whether the contributions of other authors are valuable, insightful, applicable, etc. A balanced essay will include views/sources with which the student disagrees.

Important Note: Depending on the nature of the specific question, field assignments do not necessarily require formal citations of the work of other writers. However, as with any assignment, if you do use the ideas or words of another person in a field assignment, you MUST quote and reference these ideas or words appropriately or be guilty of plagiarism (see below).

**Be free from plagiarism**

Examples of plagiarism will result in automatic failure. Plagiarism is the representation of another’s works or ideas as one’s own. It includes the unacknowledged word-for-word use or paraphrasing of another person’s work, and the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person’s ideas. See 9.7.2 for further information.

**Use Turabian or other acceptable referencing system correctly**

Refer to 10.2.5 for further information on the Turabian referencing system.

**As long as these are used clearly, consistently, appropriately and accurately it is ACCEPTABLE but not mandatory to:**

- Use headings and subheadings.
- Use numbering and lettering.
- Use footnotes.
- Include a table of contents or other tables, figures, diagrams, and/or appendices.
11 Moodle

ACOM is moving to online delivery of ministry training through Moodle because we believe that it greatly enhances the quality and students’ experience of the training course. These benefits include:

1. Students are easily able to interact with other students in the same course through integrated and easy to navigate group chats, discussion boards and direct student contact.
2. Students are able more easily to interact with the course materials, with each unit being written to encourage students to interact online with the content.
3. Study materials are distributed to students much more reliably and quickly to anywhere in the world.
4. Students with poor eyesight are easily able to increase the size of the text needing to be read.
5. Online processes allow students to track their progress through a unit, get feedback on unit area knowledge and access all course forms needed online.
6. Key lines from the course material can be copied and pasted elsewhere for students’ own resources or for assignment preparation.

Moodle is an open-sourced virtual learning environment shaped and purposed around interactive and collaborative learning. The name ‘Moodle’ is an acronym for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. Moodle is more than an online space for sharing files. It is a ‘digital space’ where interaction and collaborative construction of content is made possible.

ACOM’s move to Moodle has been an important step towards our commitment to promoting ‘Life Long Learning’. Our vision for Moodle is that it will provide a platform to help us increase our ability and capacity to empower and train the next generation of leaders for mission and ministry.

11.1 History

It’s beginnings, existence, and values ...

Martin Dougiamas founded Moodle in its earliest stages in 1999. Developed around Dougiamas’ PHD thesis, he sought to examine "The use of Open Source software to support a social constructionist epistemology of teaching and learning within Internet-based communities of reflective inquiry".

From its early beginnings, a number of upgrades have been implemented with regards to accessibility and display flexibility. The new version of Moodle 2.2, which ACOM uses, has seen existing features enhanced and new ones added to further allow for compelling learning experiences.

11.2 Why do we use Moodle?

The mandate of ACOM has always been one of providing a pathway for leaders and learners to practically participate in ministry in their local contexts while training for ministry & mission. ACOM with the help of Moodle allows for learners to remain in their place of ministry practice yet still connect with others in an innovative and collaborative learning environment.

The creative and interactive dynamics that Moodle offers to both students and teachers are of great importance to the pedagogy of ACOM. Regardless of where you as a student are situated; Moodle allows us to be in your world and provides an avenue for us to journey together like never before.
11.3 Introduction and Familiarisation

The advantages and opportunities that exist with Moodle are outstanding. Following this simple step-by-step process will help familiarize you with how Moodle works.

11.3.1 Setting up your Profile

Step one:
Once users have received their usernames and passwords via email, they are able to access the ACOM Moodle site (acm.mrooms.net) and log in.

Your student number will be provided as your username, followed by the standard log in password given to all users for first time log in: Acom1234 (Case sensitive). See example below:

Username: c123456
Password: Acom1234

Step two:
Upon successful login, you will be greeted by the Moodle Welcome page. If it is your first time logging in, the system will immediately ask you to set your new password. The Moodle Welcome page will provide Trimester dates and useful resources for your studies. On your left hand side you will see various blocks, a Calendar block, a Navigation block and a Settings Block. This can be seen in the below screen shot. To begin your familiarity and introduction to Moodle first click on ‘My Profile Settings’ (See screen shot - SS1 - below).

Screen shot 1
Step three:
From here, a drop down menu will appear, click on ‘Edit Profile’. This will then take you to a page in which you will be able to modify your personal details. Including: Name (SS 2), various privacy settings, location and a brief description of yourself. There is also an option to upload a profile picture and any other additional contact information and interests you might like to share (SS 3).

Once you have filled out this information to your satisfaction, press the ‘Update profile’ Button at the bottom of the page. If the page has been satisfactorily filled out (some information is mandatory in the completion of your profile) you will be redirected to a page that enables you to view your profile from the perspective of other users.

Note. The sharing of personal information, e.g. mobile numbers, Skype Id’s etc. is up to your discretion and ACOM will not take any responsibility for inappropriate use of this information. In saying this, we do recommend for the sake of interaction you provide enough contact information to allow for genuine connections on Moodle as an online environment.

11.3.2 Uploading a Profile Picture
As mentioned previously there is opportunity for you to upload a Profile Picture. This is a great way for you to begin to connect and gain a sense of online community. There is nothing like being able to put faces to names.

Step 1
To do this, you must return to the ‘edit details’ page (See steps 1 - 3 in the above section on ‘Setting up your profile’). On this page, you would have seen a section of the page entitled ‘User Picture’ (See SS 5 below).
To upload a Profile Picture press the ‘Add’ button. From here, the ‘File Picker’ box will pop up.

Press the ‘Upload a file’ option on the left hand side of the box (SS6).

**Step Three**
Once clicked you need to find your photo by clicking on ‘Browse’.

Once you have found and selected your file you click on ‘Upload this File’. (See below SS7).

**Step Four**
Once this has uploaded you should then be able to go to the bottom of the ‘Edit Profile’ page, and click on the ‘Update Profile’ button and again be re-directed to what other users would see.

**11.3.3 Navigating the Welcome page**

On the Welcome page there are a variety of things that will catch one’s eye and as part of Moodle there are plenty of features and plugins that are useful.

As part of getting to know Moodle we encourage you to spend some time getting to know the Moodle space. Some of the things that may grab your attention on the Welcome page include:

**The Moodle Calendar:** The Moodle calendar is an up to date display of all that is going on with ACOM, i.e. events/units/assignments/facilitations etc. that might be of relevance to you. (See SS 8 below.)
11.3.3.1 Screen Shot 8

**Navigation (Top Left Hand Corner):** The Navigation tool is perhaps the most used. Within it are options that help you ‘navigate’ your way around the Moodle site. As seen in the Screen Shot below (SS10), e.g. courses, course profiles, private files and links to forums, messages and blogs.

11.3.3.2 Screen Shot 10

**Course Overview:** If you click on “My Home” underneath the Navigation block you will be directed to your course overview. This is a list of the courses available to you on Moodle.

### 11.3.4 Navigating around Moodle

Much of navigating around Moodle is about embracing all that Moodle has to offer. So we encourage you to spend time getting to know the system that will help enhance your study experience. We encourage you to:
• **Communicate with Teachers and other Students:** Increasingly more unit tasks will be centred on interacting with others online. This will include tasks such as forum contributions and responses, as well as opportunities for you to engage with others around unit content. Your Unit Co-coordinators, facilitators and markers are all contactable through Moodle.

• **Your Units:** As will be detailed below, interacting with your course content is one of the best ways to understand all Moodle has to offer. This will include interactive activities around your learning, as well as a diverse selection of materials to engage with.

### 11.4 Your Courses

The purpose and function of Moodle is for students to engage with course material. Therefore, the course material for all your registered units is available for you through Moodle. This means unit study sessions, a vast array of professional reading and the ability to submit assignments and utilize course related activities. This section will explore these options.

#### 11.4.1 Progressing through required sessions

Your selection of registered courses can be found in the Navigation block that is seen in all screens on the left hand side column.

Click on ‘My Courses’ within this Navigation block and all units you are registered in will drop down and be available for you to engage with.

From here, you will be re-directed to the relevant course.

Alternatively, if you click on “My Home” from the Navigation block, as indicated before, you will be directed to your Course Overview.

#### 11.4.1.1 Screen Shot 12

**Course overview**

M7109/M8509 Introduction to Discipleship (2014, T1)

- There are new forum posts

Demonstration Unit

- You have assignments that need attention

#### 11.4.2 Unit Introduction

When you click on the title of a unit, you will be redirected to that unit. From here you will see a number of things, some standard, others specific to the particular unit you are registered in. These include:

- **Navigation Tab:** The Navigation tab is always available and has a variety of links to best assist you.

- **Key Contacts:** Within the Key Contacts Box you will be able to see whom you can contact when you have questions around unit content. For most units this will include:
  - **Unit Coordinator:** This person is responsible for regular contact with students via Moodle. If you have any questions with regards to the content or assignments your questions are best directed to this person.
Facilitator: This is the person who will be facilitating the 3-day intensive if scheduled. Please note: This person may not be the Unit Coordinator for this unit.

Marker: This is the person who will be marking your submitted assignments. The Marker can be contacted regarding assignment questions.

For your convenience, the names of appropriate contacts are hyperlinked for ease of contact. (See Screen Shot 13) Note: Contacts not available are not hyperlinked.

**Key contacts**

- **Unit Coordinator** - Sue Whiteley
- **Facilitator** - Formation Directors
- **Marker** - Stephen Said (UG), Robyn Wrigley-Carr (PG)

**Activities**

In the ‘Activities Box’ which is situated below the ‘Key Contacts Box’ you are able to view the different facets of a particular unit, e.g. The assignments, available resources & forums etc. (See Screen Shot 14)

**Upcoming Events**

This box provides a reminder of the various events coming up in ACOM’s schedule. Click on ‘Go to Calendar’ to view further events into the future. (See Screen Shot 15 below for an example.)

In addition to seeing the above features to assist your progression, one can also see the unit introduction at the top of the unit overview. In this section students are able to see a brief overview of the unit, as well as a variety of course documents relevant to the completion of the selected unit. This will include a ‘Unit Introduction Booklet’, as well as the relevant assignments necessary in the completion of this unit and any other helpful documents.
11.4.3 Sessions for Units

In the unit overview you will find a series of collapsed sessions that can either be expanded by clicking on the folder next to the session title, or if you click on the title you will be redirected to a fresh page for that session alone. To redirect back to the unit overview click on the three horizontal lines at the top right hand corner of the screen.

You can then progress through all sessions and complete activities where indicated (see below for more information). Please Note: In some instances it will be impossible to progress to the next session or compulsory activity until certain tasks are completed. This may include submitting assignments.

11.5 Assignments

Moodle is the means by which all assessments are submitted to ACOM.

For information regarding due dates and specifics concerning assignments you should refer to the Unit Introduction Booklet that can be found on the unit overview page.

For information on draft assignments see section 10.3.3 of this handbook.

11.5.1 Finding your Assignments

Completing assignments is an integral part of any academic experience. Here are the steps of how to locate your assignments.

Step one:
Go the unit overview for the assignment you are looking for.

Step two:
In the right hand column, in the Activities Box (See Screen Shot 14), click on ‘Assignments’.

Step three:
From here you will be redirected to a new page listing all required assignments for the particular unit. This includes details such as the type of assignment/submission type, due date, and submission attempts. (See screen shot 16 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Submission</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Forums (10%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No submission</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 1 - A Retreat Reflective Paper (10%)</td>
<td>Sunday, 23 March 2014, 11:55 PM</td>
<td>No submission</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 2 - Major Assignment (30%)</td>
<td>Sunday, 6 July 2014, 11:55 PM</td>
<td>No submission</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 3 - Personal Growth Paper (30%)</td>
<td>Sunday, 26 October 2014, 11:55 PM</td>
<td>No submission</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formation Group Participation (20%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No submission</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.5.1.1.1 Screen Shot 16

Step four:
You are then able to click on a particular assignment, view questions/details of the assignment and view the due date of the assignments. (See Screen shot 17 below.)
Note: Assignments can also be located within the ‘Unit Introduction’. (See Section 11.4.2)

Assessment 1 - A Retreat Reflective Paper (10%)

Word Count: 600 Words

Reflect on your third experience of story telling in ACOM’s retreat setting. How is God’s story revealed in your story?

Academic Requirements for this Assignment

This assignment has the following exceptions to the usual academic requirements for assignments:

- You may write this assignment in the first-person (i.e., using “I” and “my”)
- Bibliography and footnotes are not required for this assignment, unless you choose to quote or reference the ideas from others. Remember if you use someone else’s work or ideas you MUST reference them—failure to do so is plagiarism

Please make sure you review the Marking Matrix (found in the Resources section of the Welcome page here) for this assessment activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submission status</th>
<th>No attempt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grading status</td>
<td>Not graded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due date</td>
<td>Sunday, 23 March 2014, 11:55 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time remaining</td>
<td>12 days 10 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add submission

Make changes to your submission

11.5.1.1.2 Screen Shot 17

11.5.2 Submitting your Assignments

Assignments in Moodle are able to be directly uploaded/submitted. This can be done through the same window as detailed in Screen Shot 17.

Step One:
To submit an assignment for marking click ‘Add submission’ with which will take you to a new screen to upload your completed assignment/s.

Step Two:
Assignments should be titled, as follows:

Student Name /Unit Code/Assignment Type

For example: Joe Bloggs S7101 Major Essay

Step Three:
Follow the steps outlined in section 11.3.2. for uploading a file and upload the document to Moodle. This process allows Markers to directly receive assignment submissions.
11.5.3 Retrieving your Assignments

Markers are then able to return marked assignments directly to you via Moodle. This is a process by one of two options below. Note: It is an ACOM policy that marked assignments should be returned 2 weeks after submission. Please contact the help desk if you have any questions about this.

Option one:
To view your marked assignment return to Screen shot 16. Once your assignment has been marked and re uploaded your grades will appear in the appropriate column. You can then click on the relevant assignment and download the marked document which will include marker’s feedback on your assignment.

Option two:
Go to your unit and to the ‘Settings’ block. From here, click on ‘Course Administration’ and you will see the ‘Grades’ link. Click on ‘Grades’. (See Screen Shot 19 below).

This will then re-direct you to a new page that will display all results for all attempted assignments. (See Screen Shot 20.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Item</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S7361 Spiritual Formation 3 (2014, T1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0–30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 2 - Major Assignment (30%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0–30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 3 - Personal Growth Paper (30%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0–30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 1 - A Retreat Reflective Paper (10%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10–20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Forums (10%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0–10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formation Group Participation (20%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0–20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>∑ Course total</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0–110</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.5.3.1.1 Screen Shot 19

11.5.3.1.2 Screen Shot 20

Feel free to contact Markers and Unit Coordinators via Moodle or if you have any urgent concerns or complaints or please contact the ACOM National HELP desk. Note: you will also receive an email notification upon the marking of your assignments. You will be able to access your assignments by the direct hyperlink found within this email notification.

11.6 Relevant Activities

Aside from the submission of assignments, most units/courses will require you to interact with course content on some level. This can be in the form of a quiz or a forum contribution. These are the most common activities. (See below for some brief pointers in utilizing these activities).
11.6.1 Quizzes

Quizzes are an efficient way for Unit Coordinators to verify and check in on your progress. In some instances these Quizzes may directly attribute to your final grade.

An example of how a Quiz may appear in a particular unit can be seen below.

![Screen Shot 21](image1)

To access a particular Quiz, click on the hyperlink.

From here you will be redirected to a new page where you will be able to complete the quiz, whether short answer or multiple choice. (See below for an example).

![Screen Shot 22](image2)

11.6.2 Forums

Forums are another method by which Course Specialists are able to hone in on particular points of learning. Although not exclusive, online forums are gradually moving to become assessable, and it is vital that due diligence and effort are given to such Forums.

An example of how a Forum may appear within a session can be seen below.
11.6.2.1.1 Screen Shot 23
To access a particular forum click on the hyperlink itself.

From here, you will be redirected to a new page. This will provide you with details concerning the required task.

11.6.2.1.2 Screen Shot 24
You then have two options:

**Option 1.** You can either reply directly to the session question (as seen in the above Screen Shot 24) by clicking the “Reply” link on the bottom right.

OR

**Option 2.** You can choose to reply to a previous post from a fellow student or faculty member. To directly reply to someone’s post simply click the “Reply” link on the bottom right of their contribution.

11.7 Feedback

In our efforts to always be improving both with regards to our content as well as our facilitations and Moodle interactions, we have provided an opportunity for you as the student to give us any feedback, advice, or directions, which might be of help.

The final session of your unit will be “Evaluation”. This session includes two compulsory feedback forms for the unit and for the facilitation for the unit. If you did not attend the facilitation you are not required to fill out the facilitation form. These feedback forms will greatly assist us in making positive changes and will be logged as a compulsory task. NOTE: You will not be able to successfully complete the relevant course until this has been completed. A different feedback form will be available for each unit, and must individually be filled out accordingly.

11.8 Helpdesk

If you experience any problems with Moodle, please contact moodle@acom.edu.au or phone the National Office.