

**REGULATION CHANGES APPROVED BY THE ASSEMBLY  
STANDING COMMITTEE MARCH 2018**

1. ~~2.5 PROCESS FOR THE ADMISSION OF MINISTERS~~ **MINISTERS FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS AND FORMER MINISTERS**
2. **APPLICATION BY A MINISTER OF ANOTHER DENOMINATION TO SERVE IN A PLACEMENT**
3. 2.5.1 (a) This Regulation shall apply to any minister of another denomination
4. (i) whose ordination to ministry of that denomination is recognised by the Assembly and
5. (ii) who desires to apply to serve in a **Pplacement** in the Church.
6. (b) The application shall be made to the Synod.
7. (c) A placement or placements shall be for no more than three years in total unless the Synod or the Assembly (in the case of an Assembly placement) determines otherwise after considering:
  8. (i) any mutual understanding, written or unwritten, between the Church and a partner church concerning the placement of Ministers from the partner church into a ministry of the Church;
  9. (ii) in a case where the applicant has also applied for admission as a Minister of the Church and has engaged in the process relating to that admission in good faith, whether that process is likely to be completed within the three year period; and
  10. (iii) any other matters that it considers relevant.
11. (d) The Synod shall assess the suitability of an applicant to serve in a ministry of the Church having regard to:
  12. (i) whether the applicant is of good standing in the denomination in which he/she has been ordained and in each denomination in which the applicant has subsequently been in ministry;
  13. (ii) the commitment of the applicant to the Church;
  14. (iii) the educational attainments of the applicant;
  15. (iv) if the applicant is not an Australian citizen, the applicant's immigration status;
  16. (v) the language proficiency of the applicant relevant to the context;
  17. (vi) any guidelines or requirements laid down by the Assembly; and
  18. (vii) advice in relation to the previous ministry experience of the applicant.
19. (e) The Synod shall seek confirmation from the Assembly that the ordination of the denomination from which the applicant comes has been previously recognised and, if not, request the Assembly to consider such approval.
20. (f) The Synod shall determine whether the applicant is required to complete any ongoing education or formation.
21. (g) In conjunction with the Presbytery, the Synod shall appoint a mentor who will work with the applicant to ensure any education or formation requirements under 2.5.1(f) are met.
22. (h) A placement shall not be extended where an application made under Regulation 2.5.2 has been completed and the result of that application was that it was rejected or deferred.
23. **ADMISSION OF A MINISTER FROM ANOTHER DENOMINATION**
24. 2.5.2 (a) Any minister of another denomination whose ordination to ministry of that denomination is recognised by the Assembly may apply to a Synod for admission as a Minister of the Word or Deacon.

25. (b) The Synod will not process an application by an applicant who has had no, or limited, prior experience in the Church until the applicant has served in a placement in the Church for at least 12 months unless the Synod decides to shorten the period of prior service by reason of exceptional circumstances.
26. (c) In considering an application, the Synod shall
27. (i) take account of the matters referred to in Regulation 2.5.1(d), the standards for ministerial education and formation prescribed by the Assembly, the experience of the applicant and the Church in a placement; and
28. (ii) determine whether the applicant is required to undertake formation for ministry in the Church.
29. (d) The Synod shall then proceed to determine the application in any one of the following ways:
30. (i) acceptance subject to issue of a certificate of completion by the Assembly (see Reg. 2.5.3(e));
31. (ii) provisional acceptance, subject to satisfactory completion of all requirements of the Assembly and the Synod within such period as the Synod shall determine;
32. (iii) deferment for further consideration; or
33. (iv) rejection
34. The Synod shall give written notice of its determination to the applicant within 14 days of the determination being made.
35. (e) A minister of another denomination whose admission as a Minister of the Church is approved shall be recognised as a Minister of the Word or a Deacon in a service arranged by the Presbytery in accordance with provisions laid down by the Assembly.
36. (f) Any person whose application for admission has been rejected by the Synod under Regulation 2.5.2(d) may appeal on the grounds that the process followed did not comply with these Regulations. The appeal shall be dealt with under Part 6 of these Regulations.
- 37.
38. ROLE OF THE ASSEMBLY IN THE ADMISSION OF MINISTERS FROM ANOTHER DENOMINATION
39. 2.5.3 (a) The Assembly shall establish guidelines for assessing the suitability of, and requirements for the education and formation of, ordained ministers of other denominations who apply to serve in a placement for a Minister in the Church or for admission as a Minister of the Word or Deacon and shall provide such guidelines to the Synods.
40. (b) The guidelines referred to in Regulation 2.5.3(a) shall include a requirement that, unless there are special circumstances, the applicant shall have received an education (academic study and ministerial formation) comparable to that of certified candidates for the corresponding ministry in the Church or attained competency comparable to that required of a Minister.
41. (c) The Assembly shall provide oversight of the process of the application, assessment and admission, and will establish and maintain a list of ordained ministries of denominations of the church catholic that are recognised for the purposes of this Regulation.
42. (d) In determining if a person's ordination to a ministry in a denomination of the church catholic shall be recognised by the Church for the purposes of this Regulation the Assembly or the body which it designates to make the decision shall consider
43. (i) if the person seeking admission as a Minister of the Word, or to serve in a placement in the Church to fulfil substantially the responsibilities of a Minister of the Word, has been ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments in a denomination of the church catholic;
44. (ii) if an applicant seeking admission to the ministry of Deacon or to serve in a placement in the Church to fulfil substantially the responsibilities of a Deacon, has been ordained to a ministry in a denomination of the church catholic that is comparable to the ministry of Deacon in the Church.

45. (e) On the advice of the Synod in which the application is made, the Assembly shall issue a certificate of completion of requirements for admission of an ordained minister of another denomination as a Minister of the Word or Deacon.
46. (f) If the Assembly refuses to recognise the ordination of a person to ministry in another denomination in a case where the person is applying to serve in a placement in the Church or to become a Minister of the Church, the applicant may appeal against the decision of the Assembly and the appeal shall be dealt with under Part 6 of these Regulations. The Assembly shall give written notice of a decision to refuse to recognise the ordination of a person to ministry of another denomination within 14 days of the decision being made.

47.

#### **48. ADMISSION OF A FORMER MINISTER**

~~49. 2.5.3.1~~

50. ~~2.5.4~~ (a) Any former Minister of the Church may apply for readmission as a Minister.

51. (b) Any person who was a minister or deaconess in one of the uniting churches at any time prior to the date of union may apply for admission as a Minister of the Word or Deacon and the application shall be dealt with in the same manner as an application from a former minister of the Church seeking readmission as a Minister. If there is no Minister of the Congregation in which the applicant holds membership, the application may be made directly to the Presbytery.

#### ~~52. PROCESS FOR ADMISSION OF A FORMER MINISTER~~

~~53. 2.5.3.2~~

54. ~~2.5.4.2~~ (a)(c) Any former Minister seeking readmission shall make written application to the Presbytery through the Minister of the Congregation (or through the appropriate member of the ministerial team in the Congregation) in which the applicant holds membership and shall make available to the Presbytery such additional information and material as is prescribed under these Regulations or as may be required by the Presbytery or by the Synod.

55. ~~(b)~~(d) As soon as possible following receipt of an application the Presbytery shall request a confidential report from the appropriate Minister and shall seek comment from the Church Council where the applicant's membership is held and other referees, and shall then consider the application in accordance with the Regulations.

56. ~~(e)~~(e) The Presbytery or a designated committee of the Presbytery shall:

57. (i) receive the application together with the confidential report of the Minister and the comments of the Church Council;

58. (ii) consider the references submitted by the nominated referees and by other persons as it sees fit;

59. (iii) appoint a support person for the applicant who shall assist the applicant in understanding and complying the requirements of the process.

60. (iv) The support person may attend any Presbytery or Synod meetings where the applicant is in attendance but may not speak in those meetings;

61. (v) interview the applicant;

62. (vi) conduct such other tests or call for such other information as it may require; and

63. (vii) prepare a report and recommendation to the Synod panel.

64. ~~(d)~~(f) An applicant shall satisfy the Presbytery or the designated committee of the Presbytery that

65. (i) the applicant is, and for the period of twelve months prior to making an application, has been a confirmed member of the Church, unless the Presbytery waives this requirement;

66. (ii) the reasons for the applicant having recognition as a Minister of the Church or as a Minister or Deaconess of one of the uniting churches withdrawn; and the reasons offered by the applicant for why those reasons no longer apply; and

67. (iii) the applicant is suitable in character, personality and spiritual maturity and has the capacity to exercise the responsibilities of the specific ministry for which application is made.

68. ~~(e)~~(g) A two-thirds majority of members present at the meeting of the Presbytery or the designated committee of the Presbytery shall be required to commend the applicant to the Synod panel as suitable for readmission. Alternatively, the Presbytery may defer such commendation or may reject the application.
69. ~~(f)~~(h) Where the Presbytery or the designated committee of the Presbytery resolves to commend the applicant to the Synod panel, the Presbytery shall forward to the Synod panel its report and any resolutions together with other reports, references and information conveyed to it in accordance with Regulation 2.5.4 (c), (d) and (e). The Presbytery must give written notice of the decision to commend or reject the application to the applicant within 14 days of the decision being made.
70. SYNOD PANEL
- ~~71. 2.5.3.3~~
72. 2.5.5 (a) Each application for readmission shall be considered by a panel comprising members appointed by the Synod Standing Committee and a representative appointed by the applicant's Presbytery.
73. (b) The Synod panel shall have before it all relevant documents and:
74. (i) arrange for medical, psychological and other assessments that it considers to be necessary;
75. (ii) seek further information as it considers necessary;
76. (iii) meet with the applicant; and
77. (iv) determine the outcome of application forwarded by the Presbytery.
78. (c) In considering the application before it, the Synod panel shall have regard, among other things, to the issues considered by the Presbytery in Regulation 2.5.4.(f).
79. (d) The Synod panel shall determine the application by:
80. (i) acceptance of the application for readmission, with or without any conditions attached to that acceptance, or
81. (ii) deferral of the application, with or without any conditions which must be satisfied before further consideration of the application; or
82. (iii) rejection of the application for readmission and shall inform the applicant and the Presbytery of its decision and shall give written notice to the applicant and the Presbytery of its decision within 14 days of the decision being made.
83. RIGHT OF APPEAL AGAINST A DECISION OF THE PRESBYTERY OR THE SYNOD PANEL
- ~~84. 2.5.3.4~~
85. 2.5.6 (a) An applicant may appeal against a decision made pursuant to Regulation 2.5.4.(g) or 2.5.5(d). The appeal shall be dealt with in accordance with Part 6 of these Regulations.
86. (b) The appeal is to be made within 14 days of receipt of the communication of the decision. The appeal shall be lodged with the Synod Secretary in writing.
87. (c) The Synod Standing Committee shall appoint an appeal committee of three persons to determine the matter. The appeal committee shall consult with the applicant and the Presbytery and, when appropriate, the Synod panel. The appeal committee shall then either dismiss the appeal or require the Presbytery or the Synod panel to reconsider the application. A decision of the appeal committee shall be final.