The Ministry of Pastor – Summary of Core Competencies

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

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

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

UNIT OF COMPETENCY

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

Elements of Competency

1. Articulate the key theological foundations of the Basis of Union:

   identify and explain the key theological themes expressed in the BoU (in particular paras 1 to 4) and the Creeds, in particular
   a. God as Trinity
   b. the person and saving work of Jesus Christ
   c. the nature and mission of the church as a pilgrim people
   d. Christian hope in the coming reconciliation and the renewal of Creation

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

   a. describe key characteristics of the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian churches
   b. describe the key documents in the formation of the Uniting Church
   c. describe the key main events in the process of church union

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

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

4. Understand the Councils and Ministries of the UCA

    a. explain the UCA understandings of church membership, ministry and service
    b. identify the key documents that describe UCA polity and procedures
    c. identify the Councils of the church; their functions and interrelationships
    d. describe the forms of ministry within the UCA and their inter-relationships

UNIT OF COMPETENCY

Work within the Uniting Church Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice

Elements of Competency

5. Articulate and practice key elements of the UCA understanding of gifts, ministry and service

    a. seek to care for all people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics
    b. encourage and respect the giftedness and ministry of other people and be willing to learn from them
    c. teach in a manner that seeks to represent faithfully the Scriptures and the teachings and practices of the UCA
    d. work effectively in a team setting with appropriate accountability and responsibility
    e. engage others in respectful dialogue and decision-making and respect the decisions of the councils of the church

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

    a. identify the parts of key documents which relate to the ordering of ministries within the UCA
    b. explain the nature and responsibilities of pastoral ministry and pastoral relationships
    c. the potential for conflict in responsibility and accountability and appropriate means to resolve this
    d. explain and give examples of
      (i) the nature and boundaries of power in ministry relationships
      (ii) the nature and boundaries of confidentiality
      (iii) appropriate reasons for referral of pastoral issues

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

    a. accurately represent one's competencies and commit to developing one's knowledge, skills, and spiritual disciplines
    b. explain UCA expectations regarding gifts, fees and financial gain
      exercise responsible self-care
    c. explain the purpose of supervision and give evidence of willingness to be subject to supervision
    d. identify current legal requirements relevant to the particular area of ministry
      explain the ethical and organisational responsibilities of ministry in other organisations as appropriate
    e. explain the responsibilities of persons in ministry regarding breaches of the Code of Ethics