

# **GUIDELINES FOR THOSE SEEKING ACCREDITATION WITH THE BAPTIST CHURCHES OF NSW & ACT**

NSW & ACT Baptists seek to be guided by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to recognise those whom God has called to serve the Churches as ministers. The evidence of such calling is seen especially in:

- the testimony of those who know them well and who can say their lives conform to the New Testament principles for Ministry.
- in their own sense of call to ministry and
- in their preparedness to equip themselves for the ministry needed.

It has been agreed that formal recognition of people who wish to be Accredited with the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT is subject to candidates fulfilling certain requirements appropriate to the ministry for which they are to be recognised and that the fulfilment of these requirements shall be examined and monitored by the Union's Committee for the Ministry. Persons to be accredited need the approval of The Committee for the Ministry, *The Department of Theological Training and Ministry Support and Development Council* (Previously known as Department of Home Ministries) who in turn will recommend to Assembly who shall finally approve.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Accreditation involves the certification of people as suitable for ministry within the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT. It recognises they have met certain requirements and they have the appropriate qualifications and credentials for such ministry.

## **LIST OF ACCREDITED MINISTERS**

The By-Laws of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT provide for a List of Accredited Persons to be maintained. Persons so listed are those who:

- 1) are members of a Church affiliated with the Baptist Union of NSW and,
- 2) subscribe to the doctrinal basis of the Baptist Union of NSW, and
- 3) have been accepted for Accreditation as Ministers of the Word and
- 4) are set apart for ministry by a Church affiliated with the Baptist Union of NSW or some other body approved by Assembly (This is expanded in By-Law 17.C.1)

## **LIST OF ACCREDITED PERSONS**

The By-Laws of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT provide for a list of Accredited Persons who:

- 1) are members of a church affiliated with the Baptist Union of NSW and
- 2) subscribe to the doctrinal basis of the Baptist Union of NSW and,
- 3) have been duly accredited as Ministers of the Word by the Baptist Union of NSW

but who are not currently in ministry. (This is expanded in By-Law 17.C.2)

If anyone applies outside any of the guidelines within this document the Committee for the Ministry will decide case by case.

This document contains:

**Section 1 - GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND TRAINING OF CANDIDATES FOR ACCREDITED MINISTRY.**

- Including
- Second Interview
  - Application Subsequent to Graduation

**Section 2 - GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF CANDIDATES FOR ACCREDITATION.**

- Including - Change of Accreditation Classification

**Section 3 - OTHER LISTS OF RECOGNISED PERSONS**

- Including
- Recognised Ministers
  - Marriage Celebrants
  - Women In Specialised Ministry

**Section 4 - OTHER MATTERS**

- Including
- Confidentiality
  - Persons Transferring From Another State or Country
  - Persons Transferring From Another Denomination
  - Ministers Under Discipline
  - Grounds For De-accreditation
  - Divorced Persons
  - Human Sexuality, Marriage and Church Leadership

NOTE: "Ministry Support and Development Council" has replaced "Department of Home Ministries" in this document.

**SECTION 1**

**RELATING TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND TRAINING OF CANDIDATES FOR ACCREDITED MINISTRY**

(as adopted by the 1987 Assembly and amended by General Council in accordance with rule 23 thereof, November 1990, Operative from 1st January, 1991.)

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. Every Applicant for training for the ministry shall be a member of a Baptist Church and shall make application through the General Superintendent of the Union or their nominee. Under exceptional circumstances the Committee for the Ministry may waive the requirement for current membership in a Baptist Church at the time of application.

Each potential Applicant shall be interviewed by the General Superintendent or their appointee, be given the necessary application forms and a copy of the rules and have the procedure explained.

### **By-Law 17 A.2**

"In exceptional circumstances a person who has served for a minimum period of ten (10) years in approved Christian service whether continuous or not and has satisfied the Committee for the Ministry as to their character, qualifications, call to ministry and sphere of service may be accepted for Accreditation by Assembly by a three fourths majority of those present and voting. "Approved Christian Service" for the purpose of this sub-paragraph means Christian service whether full time or not, which is approved by Assembly in relation to such person."

## **EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

2. To be considered by the Committee for the Ministry, the Applicant:

- A. Should have spent at least one year at Morling College (the Baptist Theological College of NSW).

If an Applicant has satisfactorily completed at least 3 years at another Theological Institution they may apply to the Committee for the Ministry in their first year at Morling College. A report will be requested from the previous Theological Institution to include details of ministry formation.

In exceptional circumstances the Committee for the Ministry may, at its discretion, waive these requirements.

- B. i) Should have matriculation status for entry to any one faculty of an Australian University,

OR

- ii) Should have such other educational qualifications which, in the opinion of the Council of the Department of Theological Training and the Committee for the Ministry are equivalent,

OR

- iii) Should have, in the opinion of the Committee for the Ministry, a satisfactory record of training and achievement.

If an Applicant does not hold the qualifications required in sub-clauses B. i), ii) or

iii) above they may upon the recommendation of the Applicant's District Association and/or the Applicant's Church apply to be specially heard by the Committee for the Ministry, and the General Superintendent of the Union shall place the Applicant's name on the Register of Applicants hereinafter mentioned. Such Applicant shall comply in all other respects with the provisions of these rules.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

3. Applications should be made on the appropriate Application Form to the General Superintendent by the 30th June in the year of application.

Upon receipt of an application, the General Superintendent shall

- A. Place the name of the Applicant in a Register of Applicants.

If an Applicant has been divorced or married to a divorced person an interview shall be carried out by the Divorce Sub-Committee in accordance with the guidelines set down for that sub-committee before proceeding with the interview by the Committee for the Ministry. If the Sub-committee recommends and the Committee for the Ministry accepts this recommendation that the Applicant can continue the process the fact that an Applicant or their spouse is divorced will NOT be considered again.

- B. Obtain a medical report, if possible from the Applicant's doctor, and submit it for report thereon to one of the Baptist Union Honorary Medical Officers.
- C. Obtain a statement from the Applicant's Church setting out the Church's recommendation regarding the application, activities and period of membership in their Church. The Church shall be asked to form a sub-committee to hear the Applicant preach, discuss their potential for ministry, strengths and weaknesses and any other matter that close contact with the Church family could reveal that would be relevant for the Committee for the Ministry.
- D. Arrange for Applicants to submit themselves to a professional examination for personality and aptitude assessment. A panel to be set up for this process - the report would be available to the candidate.
- E. Forward a copy of a full manuscript sermon to the Principal of the Theological College, a copy to the Chairman of the Committee for the Ministry and a copy to one other member of the Committee for the Ministry for a report thereon, retaining one copy for filing.
- F. Forward a copy of two statements as prescribed having to do with Baptist principles and practice with a) particular reference to the inspiration of the Bible and the way of salvation and b) re the practice of ministry and the significance of ordination - to the Chairman of the Committee for the Ministry and a copy to an appointed member of the Committee for the Ministry for report thereon, retaining

one copy for filing.

G. Contact Referees nominated by the Applicant.

Referees shall be:

- 4 persons who know them well
- The Pastor of the Applicant's current church.
- The Pastor of their previous church - provided that the association there is not more than five years before.
- Their previous employer (or 5th person)
- The Secretary of their church (for reference per 3 C.)
- If there is no Pastor a 6<sup>th</sup> person.

These references will be concerning the Applicant's suitability for training for the ministry.

A report will also be given by Morling College.

4. Applicants shall be heard to preach at a time and place either before the interview process, or at the time of the interview, by such persons as the Committee for the Ministry shall determine or part of the interview process.

5. The Applicant shall be given at least fourteen days notice of:

A. The time and place at which the Applicant is to preach from the text given to the Applicant by the General Superintendent.

B. The date of the Applicant's interview with the Committee for the Ministry.

C. The Applicant will meet with a series of small groups to examine the following areas and prepare reports for the Committee for the Ministry. The reports will be considered by the whole Committee prior to the interview of the Applicant.

- i) Call and Commitment.
- ii) Personality and Pastoral Competence.
- iii) Doctrine and Denominationalism.
- iv) Gifts for Ministry.
- v) Area of specialisation (if application is for specialised ministry). There will be a need to have two or three appropriate people (with power to co-opt) to interview the Applicant beforehand about the area of specialty.

Where the Applicant is married or engaged, the spouse/fiance/fiancee will be asked to attend the interview.

6. After interviewing the Applicant and considering all other matters herein mentioned and making such other enquiries as may be relevant, the Committee shall determine whether it can accept the Applicant to proceed towards Accreditation.

At the initial interview of current students of Morling College a decision will be made only if a report has been received from Morling College. A candidate whose report is negative will be accepted only after a thorough discussion of that report with representatives of the College Council.

7. As part of the Application the Applicant is to sign a "Form Of Undertaking" as annexed in these Rules, in respect of training and supervision which would take effect on acceptance of the application.

As part of the Application the Applicant will be asked their stance on the 1979 Statement of Beliefs. The Applicant should declare any differences in their belief.

The Applicant will be given a copy of the Statement of Principle which they will be asked to affirm at their final interview. See paragraph 16.

### **THEOLOGICAL TRAINING**

8. Subject to the provisions of clause 9 hereof, the Theological College Course shall be normally of four years duration, including any studies completed in a recognised Baptist Theological College prior to acceptance and shall, until otherwise determined by the Assembly, include the following subjects (hereafter called the 'basic subjects'), namely:

- Theology
- Old Testament
- New Testament
- One of the Original Biblical Languages
- Church History
- Baptist History and Principles
- Pastoral and Practical Ministry Studies.

9. A. Credit may be granted for units of study done in other tertiary institutions approved by the Committee for the Ministry on the recommendation of the Council of the Department of Theological Training provided that:
  - i) an official transcript of credits and details of units studied is forwarded to the Principal of the Theological College.
  - ii) the units are in the opinion of the Faculty of the Theological College no less in content and standard than units offered by the College for such subjects.
  - iii) no candidate will be granted credits covering more than the equivalent of two full years of the Theological College course.
- B. A candidate who at the time of their acceptance is or has been a student at Morling College (the Baptist Theological College of NSW) shall be credited with the subjects already completed. The Committee for the Ministry shall determine the year in which the student shall commence as a candidate in training for the Ministry and their responsibilities to Ministry Support and Development

Council.

- C. A student accepted under the proviso to rule 2, may, at the discretion of the Faculty of the Theological College, be granted a modified course, provided that they undertake some work in the basic subjects as set out in rule 8.
10. Before completion of their course, all students will be required to have undertaken studies including the basic subjects. Where any units of these subjects are taken other than at the Baptist Theological College of NSW, it will be the responsibility of the Faculty of the Theological College to satisfy itself that such units are equivalent in content and standard to units offered in the College.

Students who have been accepted for specialised ministries will be required to complete the basic subjects and further requirements specific to their intended ministries.

### **PASTORAL MINISTRY**

11. All students who are accepted candidates shall be associated in a pastoral ministry role with such Church or Churches as arranged through Ministry Support and Development Council (Pastoral Advisory Taskforce) in co-operation with Morling College.
12. All students who are accepted candidates shall normally engage in pastoral ministry work under the direction of the General Superintendent (or nominee) and the Principal of Morling College (or nominee) upon such terms and conditions as to stipend, charges and residence as the Ministry Support & Development Council may from time to time prescribe, until the 1st February after graduation from Morling College. "Pastoral Ministry" includes pastoral charge, associate pastoral responsibility or other specialised ministry.

### **PROBATION AND SUPERVISION**

13. All candidates are to be on probation for twelve months from the 1 February after acceptance. The Committee may waive this requirement depending on experience and study.

At the interview of accepted candidates for removal from probation a decision will be made only if reports have been received from the College Council and Ministry Support and Development Council. If either report is negative, removal from probation will take place only after thorough discussion of the negative report, or reports, with the relevant Council or Councils.

14. All accepted candidates shall serve under the direction of the Ministry Support and Development Council, the Australian Baptist Missionary Society or such other body approved by the Committee for the Ministry for a period of one year after the 1st February following Accreditation unless released therefrom in whole or in part by the Assembly.

15. A. A student, during the whole of their course, shall be under the review of the Committee for the Ministry, which may at any time decide upon dismissal, resignation or retirement of any student in the case of misconduct, lack of diligence, inability to profit by training or any other reason which may to it seem proper.

B. The Principal of the Theological College shall have power to suspend a student in the case of misconduct pending decision by the Committee for the Ministry.

In every case where a student is charged with misconduct, lack of diligence, inability to profit by training or any other ground of complaint, they shall be given the opportunity of being present and being heard at a meeting of the Committee for the Ministry at which such dismissal is to be considered.

16. During the year following graduation an accepted candidate shall appear before the Committee for the Ministry which will determine whether to recommend to the Assembly that the Candidate proceed to Accreditation as per By-Law 17 having complied with the requirements of these Rules. Reports will be received from the General Superintendent (or nominee) and the Principal of Morling College (or nominee) as to the satisfactory completion of ministry experience and study.

At this final Accreditation interview a decision will be made only if reports have been received from the College Council and the Ministry Support and Development Council. If either report is negative a recommendation to Assembly for Accreditation will be made only after thorough discussion of the negative report, or reports, with the relevant Council or Councils.

Candidates shall normally attend the "Readiness for Ministry" course before proceeding to Accreditation

Candidates will be required to affirm the Statement of Principle.

### **POST GRADUATE WORK**

17. A candidate wishing to undertake postgraduate work outside Australia prior to the completion of their required term of service under Clause 15 shall:

- if Accredited apply to Assembly for permission to do so.
- if not Accredited - apply to the General Superintendent and Principal of Morling College who in turn will advise the Committee for the Ministry.

Such decision shall take into consideration:

A. A report of the Council of the Department of Theological Training as to:

- i) The course to be undertaken and the Institution at which study will be pursued.
- ii) The College Course of the student.

- B. A report from the Principal of the Theological College concerning the Applicant's ability to benefit from the proposed studies, and from the General Superintendent (or nominee) regarding the candidate's service in the Churches.

### **RULE CHANGES**

18. A copy of the Guidelines shall be given to all Applicants, and shall be published in the Handbook of the Union.
19. No alteration or addition to these Rules or to the Form of Undertaking shall be made except by the Assembly, after receiving a report thereon from the Committee for the Ministry.

### **SECOND INTERVIEW:**

If the application of prospective candidate is declined that person may reapply 12 months after the date of the previous interview date.

A letter requesting another interview will be sent to the General Superintendent along with:

- a) an account of the Applicant's spiritual and ministry journey since the date of the previous interview.
- b) the names of three referees, plus the name of the Applicant's Pastor to provide up to date references as is reasonably possible. If there is no Pastor, or the Applicant is the current Pastor the name of the Church Secretary.
- c) Four copies of a full manuscript sermon preached in the previous twelve months.

A statement from the Applicant's Church setting out the Church's recommendation regarding the application.

The Applicant will attend a full interview with the Committee for the Ministry which will include the various sub-committees as outlined in clause 5 (c) of the Guidelines.

If the Applicant is still a student of Morling College and is accepted by the Committee for the Ministry they will be subject to all the probation and supervision clauses as per the Guidelines.

If the Applicant has already graduated from Morling College and is accepted by the Committee for the Ministry the Applicant will normally:

- a) attend the "Readiness for Ministry" course before proceeding to Accreditation,
- b) be subject to the Probation and Supervision clauses (14-17) of the Guidelines.

## **APPLICATION SUBSEQUENT TO GRADUATION**

If a person applies for Accreditation within three years of graduating from Morling College that person will complete the Application Form and be subject to the process outlined in the forgoing provisions of these Guidelines including probation and supervision unless otherwise decided by the Committee for the Ministry.

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## **SECTION 2**

### **GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF CANDIDATES FOR ACCREDITATION**

This section applies to those who are not students at Morling College nor have graduated in the three years prior to their application. The Applicant must be a member of a Baptist Church affiliated with the Baptist Union of NSW.

There is no closing date for such applications.

1. Applications should be made on the appropriate Application Form to the General Superintendent.

Upon receipt of an application the General Superintendent shall:

- A. Place the name of the Applicant in a Register of Applicants.

If an Applicant has been divorced or married to a divorced person an interview shall be carried out by the Divorce Sub-Committee in accordance with the guidelines set down for that sub-committee before proceeding with the interview by the Committee for the Ministry. If the Sub-Committee recommends and this recommendation is accepted by the Committee for the Ministry that the Applicant can continue the process the fact that an Applicant or their spouse is divorced will NOT be considered again.

- B. Obtain a medical report, if possible from the Applicant's doctor, and submit it for report thereon to one of the Baptist Union Honorary Medical Officers.
- C. Obtain a statement from the Applicant's Church setting out the Church's recommendation regarding the application, activities and period of membership in their Church. The Church shall be asked to form a sub-committee to hear the Applicant preach, discuss their potential for ministry, strengths and weaknesses and any other matter that close contact with the Church family could reveal that would be relevant for the Committee for the Ministry.
- D. Arrange for Applicants to submit themselves to a professional examination for

personality and aptitude assessment. A panel to be set up for this process - the report would be available to the candidate.

- E. Forward a copy of a full manuscript sermon to the Principal of the Theological College, a copy to the Chairman of the Committee for the Ministry and a copy to one other member of the Committee for the Ministry for a report thereon, retaining one copy for filing.
- F. Forward a copy of two statements as prescribed having to do with Baptist Principles and Practice to the Chairman of the Committee for the Ministry and a copy to appointed member of the Committee for the Ministry for report thereon, retaining one copy for filing.
- G. Contact Referees nominated by the Applicant.  
Referees shall be:
  - 4 persons who know them well
  - The Pastor of the Applicant's current church - if applicable.
  - The Pastor of their previous church - provided that the association there is not more than five years before.
  - Their previous employer (or 5th person)
  - The Secretary of their Church (for reference per 3 C.)
  - If there is no Pastor a 6<sup>th</sup> person. These references will be concerning the Applicant's suitability for training for the Ministry

Morling College may be required to comment on the Applicant's experience in relation to any desired further training.

- 2, Applicants shall be heard to preach at a time and place either before the interview process, or at the time of the interview, by such persons as the Committee for the Ministry shall determine or part of the interview process.
- 3. The Applicant shall be given at least fourteen days notice of:
  - A. The time and place at which the Applicant is to preach from the text given to the Applicant by the General Superintendent.
  - B. The date of the Applicant's interview with the Committee for the Ministry.
  - C. The Applicant will meet with a series of small groups to examine the following areas and prepare reports for the Committee for the Ministry. The reports will be considered by the whole Committee prior to the interview of the Applicant.
    - i) Call and Commitment.
    - ii) Personality and Pastoral Competence.
    - iii) Doctrine and Denominationalism.
    - iv) Gifts for Ministry.

- v) Area of specialisation (if application is for specialised ministry). There will be a need to have two or three appropriate people (with power to co-opt) to interview the Applicant beforehand about the area of specialty.

Where the Applicant is married or engaged, the spouse/fiance/fiancee will be asked to attend the interview.

- 4. After interviewing the Applicant and considering all other matters herein mentioned and making such other enquiries as may be relevant, the Committee shall determine whether it can accept the Applicant to proceed towards Accreditation.

As part of the Application the Applicant will be asked their stance on the 1979 Statement of Beliefs. The Applicant should declare any differences in their belief.

The Applicant will be asked to affirm the Statement of Principle.

- 5. Successful Applicants will NOT be required to attend a "final interview" but will be required to attend the "Readiness For Ministry" course before proceeding to Accreditation.
- 6. Successful Applicants will normally NOT be required to fulfil the Supervision and Probation clauses.

### **CHANGE OF ACCREDITATION CLASSIFICATION**

If a person has been Accredited or Accepted to a ministry other than General Accreditation (eg. Missions) and that person seeks general pastoral ministry it would be desirable for that person to be interviewed by the Committee for the Ministry with a view to changing their Accreditation classification.

A reference from their previous ministry would be sought.

Upon a successful interview the Committee for the Ministry would recommend to Assembly a change in that persons classification.

If anyone applies outside any of the above guidelines the Committee for the Ministry will decide case by case.

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## **SECTION 3**

### **OTHER LISTS OF RECOGNISED PERSONS**

#### **1. RECOGNISED MINISTERS**

While the majority of pastors and persons from Baptist Churches involved in

Christian Ministry will be Accredited Ministers, there are others who do not desire Accreditation but want to be recognised by the family of Churches. Such persons may apply to be acknowledged as a "Recognised Minister".

A person applying to become a Recognised Minister:

- i) must be in membership of a Baptist Church affiliated with the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT.
  - ii) will be required to provide:
    - testimony of past and present spiritual and ministry experience including a statement as to why the Applicant believes God has called them to this ministry;
    - a statement on their convictions on Baptist doctrine and practice including views on the inspiration of the Bible and way of salvation;
    - a response as to their stance on the 1979 Statement of Beliefs.
    - Will be required to affirm the Statement of Principle.
    - the names of four referees one of whom shall be the Church Secretary with a Church recommendation. Where it is not a local church ministry then from an appropriate person in the relevant area of ministry.
  - iii) If an Applicant has been divorced or married to a divorced person an interview shall be carried out by the Divorce Sub-committee in accordance with the guidelines set down for that sub-committee before proceeding with the interview by the Committee for the Ministry. If the Sub-committee recommends and the Committee for the Ministry accepts this recommendation that the Applicant can continue the process the fact that an Applicant or their spouse is divorced will NOT be considered again.
  - iv) will meet with a sub-committee of the Committee for the Ministry. The sub-committee will interview the Applicant as to their character, gifts for ministry, proof of call, sphere of service and commitment to ongoing ministry development. Upon a satisfactory interview a recommendation will be forwarded to the Committee for the Ministry and if agreed to the person's name will be added to the list of "Recognised Ministers".
  - v) will be acknowledged as such for the period of their current ministry. When a change of ministry takes place notification is to be given to the Committee for the Ministry who will determine if the acknowledgement will continue.
- 2) are to be in their current ministry for 12 months before acknowledgment is given.
  - 3) will be listed in the Handbook of the denomination. Where applicable the area of specialisation will be shown e.g. Chaplain, Youth etc.
  - 4) may become Marriage Celebrants - see section on Marriage Celebrants. Section 3.2

## **2. MARRIAGE CELEBRANTS**

All *students who are accepted* Candidates in Training for the Ministry desiring to be registered as a Marriage Celebrant are required to complete the appropriate course within the Morling College curriculum.

Non Morling students desiring to be registered as a Marriage Celebrant are required to undertake a marriage preparation training program (as approved by Morling College) and have completed the training for administering "Prepare" or its equivalent.

Accredited persons transferring from another State shall be requested to apply for Accreditation prior to approval of application to be a Marriage Celebrant.

Ordained persons from another Denomination shall be required to apply for Accreditation prior to approval of application to be a Marriage Celebrant.

Unordained persons whether from another Denomination or from within the Baptist Denomination shall be required to apply for recognition as a Recognised Minister prior to approval of application to be a Marriage Celebrant.

All Applicants (other than Morling College graduates) for approval as Marriage Celebrants will agree to do a one day Marriage Preparation Training Course held annually at Morling College and do the "Prepare" Course - unless exempted by Ministry Support & Development Council. If this undertaking is not honoured then the appropriate Government Department shall be advised that requirements have not been completed and thus the Denomination's recommendation will be withdrawn.

## **3. WOMEN IN SPECIALISED MINISTRY**

Women in specialised ministry are those who are called by God to serve in a specialised capacity. They exercise a recognised and normally paid ministry in evangelistic, pastoral, educational, social or administrative spheres either within the Churches of the Denomination or within an organisation approved by the Committee for the Ministry.

An Applicant shall:

- be a member of a Church affiliated with the Baptist Union of NSW;
- give satisfactory evidence of character, gifts, experience and a call to specialised ministry;
- be a two year graduate of a recognised Bible College or other such course of training which is considered appropriate by the Committee for the Ministry

A Sub-Committee of the Committee for the Ministry shall interview such persons and bring a recommendation to the Committee.

Such persons shall be presented to the Assembly for Recognition.

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## **SECTION 4**

### **OTHER MATTERS**

#### **1. CONFIDENTIALITY**

##### **For Applicants:**

All written material relating to the application will be made available only to the members of the Committee for the Ministry. Only one copy will be kept in an Applicant's personal file at Church House under the direction of the General Superintendent. No other files are to be kept. No reports on the process of the application or the outcome of the application will be made to anyone other than the Applicant unless the Applicant gives express permission.

Committee members will not keep application papers after a decision has been made on an Applicant. All papers will be handed back to the Secretary of the Committee for shredding.

##### **For Referees:**

Reports from referees can be made available to the Applicant if the referee agrees. This is to protect the ability of a referee to be honest and frank in their report on the Applicant.

Attempts may be made to phone selected referees for further comment.

##### **For Committee Members:**

Comments of individual members of the Committee are not to be quoted to the Applicant or referees.

#### **2. PERSONS TRANSFERRING FROM ANOTHER STATE OR COUNTRY**

Ordained/Accredited persons transferring from another State or Country from a Union affiliated with the Baptist Union of Australia or Baptist World Alliance shall complete the appropriate transfer form.

The Transferee will normally be required to provide:

- testimony of past and present spiritual and ministry experience;
- the names of three referees - one of whom would come from the previous place of ministry.

A reference will normally be required from the appropriate Union.

The Transferee will normally be required to attend an interview with the Committee for the Ministry.

As part of the Application the Transferee will be asked their stance on the 1979 Statement of Beliefs. The Transferee should declare any differences in their belief.

The Transferee will be asked to affirm the Statement of Principle.

### **3. PERSONS TRANSFERRING FROM ANOTHER DENOMINATION**

Ordained/Accredited persons transferring from another Denomination will be required to complete the appropriate Application Form. The Applicant needs to be a member of a Baptist Church affiliated with the Baptist Union of NSW.

The Applicant will be required to provide:

- testimony of past and present spiritual and ministry experience;
- details of baptism and Church membership;
- three referees one of whom shall normally be from their previous ministry;
- normally a report from the previous Denomination;
- details of theological training;
- a Statement on their understanding of Baptist Distinctives.

The Applicant will normally be required to attend an interview with the Committee for the Ministry.

As part of the Application the Applicant will be asked their stance on the 1979 Statement of Beliefs. The Applicant should declare any differences in their belief.

The Applicant will be asked to affirm the Statement of Principle.

### **4. MINISTERS UNDER DISCIPLINE**

The Committee for the Ministry is responsible to insure all persons accredited by the Denomination maintain integrity in ministry. Any discipline that may need to be applied will be done so in a way that will build up the high standard of calling to ministry, rather than being punitive.

All cases appearing to call for Discipline will be handled by the Discipline Sub-Committee of the Committee for the Ministry which will make an appropriate recommendation to the Committee for the Ministry.

Such recommendations could include:

- Decide to take no action;
- Removal from the Accredited List; such removal would be referred to the Assembly.
- Supervision and or counselling and a review after an appropriate

period of time.

The Committee may advise that the person should withdraw from all preaching and speaking engagements and not accept any leadership role in the church until the issue is settled.

## **5. REMOVAL FROM THE ACCREDITED LIST**

Persons can be removed from the Accredited List under the following circumstances:

- The Accreditation to Ministry in another Denomination.
- Becoming a member of a Church of another Denomination.
- Upon ceasing to minister in NSW or ACT the person's Accreditation has not been transferred to another body affiliated with the Baptist Union of Australia or a body affiliated with the Baptist World Alliance within 12 months.
- Membership in a NSW/ACT Baptist Church has not been maintained
- The person has not been available to serve in a Pastoral position for a period of 2 years.

However the names of those persons who for a period of not less than two years, have ceased to engage in the ministry for which, in the opinion of the Committee for the Ministry as a Minister of the Union has significance will be transferred to the List of Accredited Persons.

Exceptions would be those who are in an Approved Ministry and Retirees.

- Found guilty of serious moral or ethical misconduct.
- Any circumstances that fall within Point 6 below.
  - At their own request subject to Assembly agreement.

## **6. DIVORCED PERSONS**

Being divorced or married to a divorced person is not an automatic bar to Accreditation.

When an Applicant for the Ministry has been divorced and/or is married to a divorced person;

When a Candidate in training is divorced and/or is married to a divorced person;

When an Accredited person or Recognised Minister is divorced and/or married to a divorced person;

Such person will meet with the Divorce Sub-Committee of the Committee for the Ministry as per the guidelines laid down by the 1983 Assembly and an appropriate recommendation shall be given to the Committee for the Ministry.

## **7. HUMAN SEXUALITY, MARRIAGE AND CHURCH LEADERSHIP**

(per Decisions of Assembly June 1999)

- 1. Dealing with applications for accreditation or ordination or for any other ministry from persons who engage in sexual relationships outside of marriage.**

The Baptist Union of NSW will not knowingly accredit, for ordination or any other ministry, persons who engage in sexual relationships outside the marriage relationship of a man and a woman. Applications for accreditation or ordination or any other ministry from persons involved in sexual relationships outside of marriage will be declined.

## **2. Putting Policy into Practice**

Upon preliminary inquiry regarding accreditation for ordination or for any other ministry candidates will be made aware of the Baptist Union's policies on eligibility for accreditation as in 1. above. Upon application candidates will be asked whether there is anything in these policies which would call into question their suitability for ministry in or on behalf of our churches.

Further, in all requests for reports and references from other parties the Union's policy will be advised as in 1. above.

Unless there is evidence to justify pursuing the matter further, the candidate's answers will be accepted as settling the question.

## **3. Dealing with revelations of sexual relations outside the marriage relationship by accredited ministers and persons in other ministries as defined in 1. above.**

If it is alleged that an accredited person is involved in sexual relationships outside the marriage relationship of man and a woman the matter will be referred to the Committee for the Ministry which will investigate the circumstances of the allegation, and, if necessary, bring a recommendation to Assembly.

Throughout the process, the Committee for the Ministry will do all it can to preserve confidentiality and act with pastoral sensitivity. The grounds upon which a person's name is to be removed from an accredited list will not be disclosed unless it is so requested by that person.