



Centre for
Ministry and
Leadership

PHASE 3 FORMATION

Outline





Purpose

This outline aims to provide a clear and flexible approach for Ministers in Phase 3 with respect to ongoing formation for ministry.

Background

The 12th Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia made the decision to implement the Third Phase of Ministerial Education. This third phase “is intended to be a period of sustained and intentional mentoring and support for newly ordained ministers during the first three years of ministry practice”.¹ Therefore, a significant focus of this phase of formation is for the church “to ensure that appropriate continuing education, supervision, collegiality and support arrangements are put in place for Ministers from the beginning of their first placement”.²

The Moreton Rivers Presbytery (MRP) is committed to the ongoing formation of ministers in this vital phase of ministry. A formation program will be delivered within MRP for Ministers in phase 3.

Formation Program

The Phase 3 Formation Program is aimed at enhancing the capacity of the minister as missional leader. The formation program seeks to resource newly ordained ministers with a flexible, directed approach to ongoing formation under the oversight of the Presbytery. The formation program will include the following elements:

- Formation and Education learning opportunities
- Ministry Formation Coaching
- Ministry Companionship
- Regular meetings with the presbytery minister or delegate
- Annual reporting to the presbytery
- Professional Supervision

Formation Plan

A formation plan (see appendix 1) will encapsulate the various components of the phase 3 program. The formation plan will include learning opportunities and ministry experiences that aim to fulfill the formation standards set by the UCA Assembly for this phase of ordained ministry. It will serve as the reference point for the presbytery to track the progress of the minister throughout phase 3.

¹ Uniting Church in Australia Assembly Guidelines for the Third Phase Ministerial Education 2009

² Uniting Church in Australia Assembly Minute 09.33



The formation plan will be developed by the phase 3 minister in consultation with a delegated representative from the presbytery. Completing the formation plan throughout the 3 years of phase 3 will be an essential part of capacity building for the minister.

The role of the church council is important in the minister fulfilling the requirements of the formation plan. Given the nature of phase 3, it is important for the church council to encourage ministers to take the mandated minimum 2 weeks of study leave each year. If the formation plan dictates a time commitment that extends beyond 2 weeks, then ministers should be empowered by the church council to take the amount of study leave necessary. As such, it is vital to note that phase 3 is a sustained period of formation aimed at consolidating ministry skills and practices and, more importantly, developing deep and mature discipleship that continues to form the minister for healthy sustainable ministry in the future.

Presbytery Engagement

A representative from the presbytery, usually the presbytery minister, will meet regularly with the phase 3 minister to encourage and empower them in their ministry practice and to monitor their progress with the various components of their formation plan. The presbytery representative will also be a means of providing pastoral care for the minister.

Presbytery Ministry Companionship and Coaching

A key requirement of the formation program involves the minister working with a delegated coach and a ministry companion throughout phase 3. It is the responsibility of the presbytery to provide coaching opportunities and allocate an appropriate ministry leader to companion the minister as a mentor and/or spiritual director. The minister will engage with a ministry coach as required by the presbytery. Furthermore, the minister will work for 12 months with a ministry companion. Following this period the phase 3 minister will consider whether they want to continue with the same ministry companion into the following 12-month period. The ministry companion will focus on developing specific areas of the minister's health and sustainability within ministry practice. This will be informed by the presbytery's approach to healthy sustainable ministry. The phase 3 minister will complete an annual report as part of their regulated responsibilities. This report will be used to inform coaching and ministry companionship into the following year.

Concluding Phase 3

A healthy ministry checkup will be conducted by the presbytery within the final 6-9 months of the minister's phase 3 formation. Phase 3 placements can conclude after 3 years. Therefore, the ministry checkup provides a means for the minister, placement context and presbytery to consider whether the minister continues in the placement. The PRC will oversee this process, ensuring that honest, robust feedback emerges to inform the discernment of all concerned. If significant concerns emerge about the minister's capabilities for future placements then the PRC will deal with these matters and refer them on to the relevant committees within the life of the church. In such circumstances the minister will not progress to phase 4 until the matters are resolved.



Ideally the PRC will approve the conclusion of the minister's phase 3 formation. The PRC, having approved the conclusion of phase 3, will advise the relevant Synod bodies including the Placements Committee. The Presbytery, in consultation with the Placements Committee, will give due consideration to the possible placements the minister might be suitable for in phase 4. Recognition of the minister progressing to phase 4 will occur at the next presbytery meeting following the PRC's decision.

Appendix 1

Phase 3 Formation Plan Template



Phase 3 Formation Plan

Name:

Ministry Context:

Email:

Presbytery:

Phone:

Commencement Date in Ministry Context:

Mentor:

Ministry Formation Coach:

Learning Opportunities

Completed

Details

CML Units

1. Foundations of a Healthy Church

2. Healthy Sustainable Ministry

3. Growing a Healthy Congregation

4. Preaching Seminars

5. Mission Planning

Required Courses

6. Code of Ethics Refresher

7. Safeguarding in the Church

Ministry Experiences

8. Ministry Companionship/Mentoring

9. Ministry Formation Coaching

10. Ministry Agent Retreat

11. Annual Reporting and Review

Regulated Responsibilities

12. Professional Supervision



13. Annual Reporting		
Requirements carrying over from Phase 2		
Academic Considerations		
Qualifications currently held:		
Qualifications currently being completed:		

Agreed Actions:

Signed:

Presbytery PRC Chairperson:

Phase 3 Minister: