



1.1 Purpose

The Synod Chaplaincy Commission (the Commission) assists and advises the Synod Standing Committee (SSC) in fulfilling its obligations as to oversight and development of chaplaincy within the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church (the church).

1.2 Scope

The Commission assists the SSC in the oversight of the Synod's¹ activities in accordance with the responsibilities of this Charter.

1.3 Responsibilities

The Commission has responsibility to:

- (a) promote and progress the ministry of chaplaincy within the Church
- (b) act as a 'think tank' on chaplaincy issues and an advocate to the Church on insights for mission emerging from the experience of chaplains, including the development of new styles of ministry in the context of the plan of strategic intent of the Queensland Synod
- (c) develop policies and protocols (e.g. ministry agreements) for the management of chaplains
- (d) liaise with Presbyteries, Assembly, sectors, ecumenical agencies on developments in chaplaincy
- (e) make appointments, with and on behalf of the relevant agency or body, of all lay and ordained chaplains working half-time or greater within the Queensland Synod, in accordance with the Regulations, Synod by-laws and policies, and with approval of Synod Placements Committee
- (f) exercise all Synod's authority, consistent with Regulations, for chaplaincy placements, including Synod's authority in preparation of position descriptions, joint nominating committee processes and review processes for chaplains. This is not intended to derogate from the role of the Placements Committee or any other body which may have a role in these matters under the Regulations, such as the Presbytery and the agency in which the placement is situated.
- (g) provide relevant advice to Councils of the Church, Selection Committees, and the Board for Christian Formation
- (h) provide resources as available to support chaplaincy throughout Synod
- (i) maintain standards of accreditation and training
- (j) recognise the multiple lines of accountability of chaplains, monitor accountability and develop appropriate guidelines
- (k) exercise oversight of Chaplains working within Queensland Synod, in conjunction with oversight by the relevant Presbytery under Regulation 3.7.3(b)
- (l) maintain a register of accredited chaplains in Synod
- (m) explore ways of resourcing chaplaincy.

The Commission performs an advisory role in carrying out its functions, authorities and powers, except regarding matters outlined in section 1.4 where it has an approval role from the SSC.

An Executive Officer, Chaplaincy Commission is appointed to administer Commission functions and is accountable to the Commission for implementing policies and decisions and to the Associate General Secretary for day-to-day matters.

¹ The definition of Synod incorporates all entities, agencies and institutions of The Uniting Church of Australia Property Trust (Q.) and entities where the Church provides membership of governance bodies.



1.4 Chaplaincy

The following sectors of Chaplaincy are recognised:

- (a) Health Care (hospitals)
- (b) Human Services (including Corrective Services)
- (c) Aged Care (Blue Care)
- (d) Education (schools and tertiary)
- (e) Defence Force
- (f) Sport, Tourism and Recreation
- (g) Police and Emergency Services.

Appointments of all lay and ordained chaplains working half-time or greater within Queensland Synod are Synod appointments made by the Commission in accordance with Uniting Church in Australia Regulations and Synod policies.

The pastoral care of chaplains is the responsibility of nominated congregations within Presbyteries. The Executive Officer, Chaplaincy Commission, on behalf of the Commission, requests the newly placed/appointed chaplain to nominate a preferred worshipping community that will be recognised as the main provider of pastoral care of the Chaplain.

The Commission is responsible for inducting/commissioning a chaplain into a placement/appointment, and will ensure the appropriate agency, presbytery (and congregation) participates.

The Commission is responsible for appointing representatives on behalf of the Synod to ecumenical committees/councils having oversight of chaplaincy matters.

1.5 Accountability

Each member of the Commission is entitled to rely on Synod office management on matters within their responsibility, and on external professionals on matters within their areas of expertise, and may assume the accuracy of information provided by such persons, so long as they are not aware of any reasonable grounds upon which to question its accuracy.

1.6 Composition and term

The Commission is a commission of the SSC and consists of 10 members being:

- (a) a chairperson
- (b) the General Secretary, or nominee, as an ex-officio member
- (c) the Executive Officer, Chaplaincy Commission as an ex-officio member
- (d) the Chief Executive Officer of UnitingCare Queensland, or nominee, as an ex-officio member
- (e) 6 other members chosen for their interest or expertise in the areas of theology, education, mission strategy and innovation, marketing, fundraising and finance.

The SSC appoints all members, other than ex-officio members, to the Commission.

Appointment to the Commission is for a 3 year term or as determined by the SSC. The maximum continuous time a person can serve as a Commission member is 9 years, unless that person has served 1 or more terms as chairperson, in which case the maximum continuous time is 12 years.

A member of the Synod office is the secretary of the Commission.



1.7 Meetings

The Commission meets a minimum of 4 times per calendar year. The Commission chairperson convenes meetings at other times when necessary to carry out the role of the Commission. Any member may request the Commission chairperson to convene a meeting.

The notice and agenda of meetings includes supporting papers. The agenda for meetings is determined by the Commission chairperson in consultation with the Commission secretary and others directed by the Commission chairperson.

General governance protocols, including those relating to quorums and electronic decision making, are outlined within the Synod by-laws.

In the absence of the Commission chairperson or appointed delegate, the members will elect one of their number as chairperson of that meeting.

The Commission may invite other people including any employee of Synod to attend all or part of its meeting.

Any person with a material personal interest in a matter being considered at a meeting must not be present for consideration of that matter.

Decisions of the Commission may be made at a duly called and constituted meeting or otherwise agreed by all Commission members. Where approvals are granted outside a meeting of the Commission, a report is to be provided to the next meeting of the Commission.

1.8 Minutes

The Commission secretary prepares minutes for each Commission meeting.

The draft minutes of each Commission meeting are reviewed by the Commission chairperson and circulated to all Commission members by the Commission secretary as soon as practicable after each meeting.

A copy of the Commission minutes, once they have been approved by the Commission, are signed by the Commission chairperson.

1.9 Access to information

The Commission has the authority to seek any information it lawfully requires from any employee of the Synod and all employees must comply with such requests.

The Commission has the right to direct contact with management. The Commission holds a separate private meeting at least annually with each of the Associate General Secretary and Executive Officer, Chaplaincy Commission.

Professional advisers may be appointed at Synod's expense to assist the Commission in evaluating specific issues or risks and mitigating strategies to meet the Commission's purpose and discharge its responsibilities. In engaging such advisors, the Commission must consider the reasonableness of the expense and budget availability.

1.10 Reporting to the Synod Standing Committee

The Commission chairperson reports to the SSC on the activities and considerations of the Commission during the period since the last report at a frequency to be determined by the SSC.



1.11 Performance review

The Commission performs an annual self-evaluation of its performance to determine whether it is functioning effectively and meeting the requirements of its Charter and submits the results to the SSC.

1.12 Review of charter

The Commission reviews their charter annually to provide assurance it remains consistent with the SSC's objectives and responsibilities.

The SSC approves or further reviews the charter.