

Procedure for Appointing Graduating Students

Introduction:

The Code provides that each graduating student, when licensed by the Presbytery, passes under the direction of the Ministry & Mission Committee for twelve months. The Committee then appoints those students to pastoral charges requesting such an appointment. These notes define the procedure to be followed by students and churches to facilitate those appointments.

Philosophy:

The Committee is eager to maximise "best fit" appointments between congregations, graduating students and their families to enhance the potential for relational, enthusiastic and joyful ministry in line with the needs of the church. Therefore the Committee values the active and informed involvement of congregations and students in the appointment process.

Limitation:

A congregation may wish to express an interest in a particular graduating student. The Committee welcomes such input. However, in order for the Committee to make optimal appointments for all parties, congregations and students must neither seek commitments from, nor give commitments to, one another. This limitation is imposed for a number of reasons. Some students might have special needs (e.g. medical needs which restrict their availability to certain areas). Equally, students will not be aware of all of the congregations seeking appointments and might be unreasonably restricted in their thinking and their prayers concerning the options that lie before them. All relevant factors need to be considered when decisions are being made about placement arrangements, and this cannot be done except with comprehensive knowledge of the needs of both congregations and students.

Process:

In outlining the following process, the Committee wishes to affirm the dignity of both students and congregations. For that reason, it will not allow conditions or procedures that are unfair or undignified, including competitive preaching.

The placement process will begin with the Superintendent writing to all graduating students, vacant charges and presbyteries seeking a relevant profile from each graduating student and each interested congregation or pastoral charge. (The content of those profiles is explained at the end of this statement.) All graduating students and their wives (if married) will then be required to attend a dinner with the Committee in order for the appointment process to be explained and for students and their wives to meet members of the Committee. (The same process applies to deaconess candidates and their husbands, if married.)

Profiles of students and congregations should be received by the Superintendent before the end of May (see Timeline).

At its June meeting the Committee will consider each of the congregational profiles and assign relative priorities to them. They will then be distributed to the students, each of whom (with their spouse, if married) will be interviewed by the Committee. In association with that interview, graduating students will have an opportunity to indicate and explain any preferences they might have among the applicant congregations. These preferences are for the information of the Committee and are indicative only. They are not binding on the Committee. While the Committee will fully consider student preferences, it cannot guarantee that students will eventually be assigned to one of their preferred placements. After due consideration, the Committee will recommend that particular students contact particular congregations. At that time, the student profiles will be provided to the relevant congregations, together with contact details. Churches which will not be involved in these "first-round" discussions will be informed of this fact before the end of June.

Discussions between the parties will follow and the Committee, through the Superintendent, will be informed of their progress.

If both parties agree to proceed with an appointment, a recommendation will be made to the Committee by the Superintendent and, for the benefit of all concerned, that appointment will be confirmed as soon as possible.

If the discussions indicate that the student and congregation are not suited to each other, the Superintendent may ask the student to contact a different congregation and the congregation to contact a different student until a satisfactory appointment may be made or it becomes apparent that there is no suitable appointment at that time. This process does not give licence for congregations or students to compete with one another. Nor will students be allowed to reject a proposed appointment until they have spent at least five days, including one Sunday, with the congregation involved.



resourcing the church
for spiritual vitality

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The aim of this process is to have harmonious appointments made as early in the year as possible. Ideally, the process should be completed before October.

Profiles:

Students will be asked to provide a personal profile. This will be made available to any congregation to which they might be recommended. An example is available at <http://mm.pcns.org.au/index.php/graduating-students/>. In general terms, the profile should outline the following:

- Personal background – upbringing, education and work
- Conversion and Christian experience
- Family situation: marital status, number and age of children, etc.
- Educational and professional qualifications
- Experience of ministry and leadership
- Philosophy of ministry and aspirations in ministry
- Preferred locations for ministry
- Any special needs: medical, family, etc.

Congregations will be asked to provide a profile of the congregation and its environment. A sample profile is available at <http://mm.pcns.org.au/index.php/graduating-students/>. Each congregational profile must:

- Identify the congregation/s seeking an appointee
- Identify the ministry location (with appropriate maps)
- List congregational aspirations in ministry and expectations of a graduating student
- State any other information that might interest a prospective minister.
- Include extract minutes of the congregation and the Presbytery endorsing the application
- Include a copy of the financial return from the previous year
- Include a copy of Terms of Call approved by the Ministry and Mission Committee and the Presbytery within the last twelve months.

Questions:

The Superintendent is eager to provide all possible help in the appointment process. Any questions about the process should be directed to him by:

Email	bmeller@pcns.org.au	Website	www.mm.pcns.org.au
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Summary Timeline for appointment process during 2011:

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| February 15 | ✓ Superintendent writes to all graduating students and vacant congregations seeking expressions of interest and profiles. |
| | ✓ Superintendent writes to all presbyteries informing them of the appointment process and seeking their support for those congregations that might wish to receive a graduating student. |
| March | ✓ Superintendent meets with all graduating students to detail process |
| April / May | ✓ Applications submitted to presbyteries for approval |
| May 5 | ✓ Dinner for graduating students and their wives, hosted by the Ministry and Mission Committee |
| May 20 | ✓ Lodgement date for profiles for students and congregations (congregations to have Presbytery support). |
| June 2 | ✓ Committee considers congregational profiles and assigns priorities to them. |
| June 6 | ✓ Prioritised congregational profiles are distributed to graduating students with preference sheet. |
| June 25 | ✓ Graduating students and their wives are interviewed by the Committee, non-binding preferences are lodged and recommendations are made for discussions between students and congregations. |
| June 28 | ✓ Students and churches informed of first-round discussions. |
| July | ✓ Graduating students initiate discussions with congregations. |
| July-Sept. | ✓ Appointments made when agreements are reached. |
| November 3 | ✓ Process completed wherever possible. |
| November 16 | ✓ Candidates wives invited to lunch with PWA Home Mission & Church Extension Committee. |

