



Baptist Churches
of South Australia

Recognised Pastor
Handbook

June 2018

INTRODUCTION

The Baptist Churches of South Australia (BCSA) resolved at an Assembly on 18 November 2017 to establish a “Recognised” status for people serving in pastoral roles in our churches. This status is specific to the ministry and church it is granted for and only transferable with review, and is not a status that carries any standing outside of BCSA. It is neither the equivalent of nor a replacement for Accreditation. It is not intended for Lead/solo pastors in member churches, who are encouraged to seek Accreditation. Candidates who have been accepted into the Accredited Ministry Formation program will normally be granted Recognised Pastor status automatically.

The Recognised Pastor status is designed to provide affirmation and accountability for people serving in specific pastoral roles within member churches of BCSA. It provides a pathway for greater relationship and alignment with BCSA including relevant training, information and support. Recognised pastors may be eligible to apply for marriage licence nomination through BCSA.

The process for obtaining the status of Recognised Pastor is overseen by the Accreditation and Ordination Committee (AOC), with the Director of Ministry Accreditation (DMA) and other members of the Ministry Team of BCSA responsible for managing the process in practice.

This Handbook explains the criteria for obtained Recognised Pastor status, the application process, the required training, and the ongoing review process. It aligns with the Recognised Pastor Policy, adopted by the BCSA Board on 9 April 2018.

1. Criteria

A person seeking to attain the status of Recognised Pastor must meet each of the following criteria. There may be various pathways for individuals towards some of these, depending upon past and present circumstances.

1. Membership

The person must be a baptised believer who is a member in good standing in a Member church of BCSA.

2. Ministry Context

The person must have been serving in an appointed pastoral role in a Member church of BCSA for at least 12 months, at not less than 1 day per week.

3. Church Endorsement

The Member church in which the person is serving must provide a letter endorsing the person's application, include a report on how they have demonstrated competency in their current role. A form is provided in the application pack for the church leadership to complete.

4. Learning

The person must have satisfactorily completed some biblical, theological and/or practical training relevant to the area of ministry for which they seek the status of Recognised Pastor.

A Diploma in Ministry or Theology from an accredited training institution or completion of the BCSA Ministry Apprenticeship program would normally fulfil this criteria. The sufficiency of other relevant studies will be determined by the AOC. Applicants should consult with the Director of Ministry Accreditation regarding study options and pathways.

The person must also complete the BCSA Intensive for Recognised Pastors, which is normally held at least once per calendar year.

5. Engagement

The person must demonstrate a connection to and engagement with the Baptist movement in South Australia. This could include, for example, participating in Journey Seminars, 4D Leadership Conference, Pastors Conference, Assemblies, Next Gen Networks etc.

6. Ethical Standards

The person must certify that they agree with and will abide by the BCSA Foundational Values, Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy. These are available on the Baptist Churches SA website.

2. Application Process

Applications for the status of Recognised Pastor are made to the Accreditation and Ordination Committee. An application pack is obtained by contacting the Personal Assistant to the State Executive Minister, Tam Battersby – tbattersby@sabaptist.asn.au

The application pack contains:

- An application form
- A church leadership endorsement form
- Declaration forms regarding BCSA's Foundational Values, Code of Ethics and Child Protection Policy
- Advice regarding obtaining a National Criminal History Record Check (NCHRC)
- A letter to the applicant's spouse or fiancée (if applicable)
- A draft Personal Learning Plan template

Applications can be made by anyone who:

- Believes that they meet the criteria set out in the Recognised Pastor Policy; or
- Meets some of the criteria set out in the Recognised Pastor Policy and wishes to determine a pathway to meet the remaining criteria

3. Training

As well as undertaking some level of biblical, theological and/or practical training relevant to their area of ministry, applicants for Recognised Pastor Status are required to complete training provided by Baptist Churches SA. This training will normally be offered as an intensive program over 2-3 days each year.

The training will normally include:

- Baptist history and distinctives
- Australian national Baptist movement
- BCSA mission, vision, values, ethos, strategy and polity
- BCSA organisational and operational frameworks
- Ministries of BCSA and supports offered
- BCSA policies: Child Protection, Code of Ethics and associated procedures
- Personal Learning Plans, self-care and appropriate mentoring

Once this training has been completed and all other criteria are met, the applicant will submit a draft Personal Learning Plan (PLP) for the next two years to the Director of Ministry Accreditation using the appropriate template. The PLP will outline what the applicant will endeavour to undertake to further develop their learning and practice in the ministry in which they are engaged.

After the PLP has been approved, the Accreditation and Ordination Committee will recommend to the Assembly Board that Recognised Pastor Status be approved.

4. Ongoing Review

The status of Recognised Pastor will be reviewed at the end of the two-year PLP period. A review pack will be sent to the Recognised Pastor requiring the following:

- Evidence that the ministry context of pastoral ministry in a Member church is continuing
- An updated endorsement from the leadership of the Member Church
- Updated commitment to the Baptist Churches Foundational Values, Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy (including an updated Police Check)
- A new draft two-year PLP

The continuation of the status may be approved by the AOC upon approval of the new PLP by the Director of Ministry Accreditation.

The status of Recognised Pastor will also be reviewed in any of the following circumstances:

- There is a change in the Recognised Pastor's Ministry role within their church
- The Recognised Pastor moves to another church
- There is concern any of the necessary criteria are no longer being met.

Recognised Pastors should contact the Director of Ministry Accreditation as soon as practicable when these circumstances arise.