



Statement on Accreditation and Divorce

adopted by the Assembly Board September 2019

Baptist Churches of South Australia affirms marriage as the union between a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life. This position is based on our view that the Bible is instructive for the flourishing of human life and authoritative for the community of faith.

The Accreditation and Ordination Committee recognises the unique challenges and pressures that ministry can place on a marriage relationship. Accredited persons, as well as applicants and candidates for accreditation, who are experiencing difficulties in their marriage relationship should seek professional help at the earliest opportunity and consult with a senior colleague, mentor, or peer group for advice and support. It would normally be advisable for a pastoral leader experiencing a marriage separation to take some time off from their pastoral duties to manage their own spiritual, emotional, physical and mental health.

Being separated, divorced, or married to a divorced person is not an automatic disqualification from Accreditation with Baptist Churches of South Australia, but is a serious matter requiring careful consideration. When an applicant for Accredited Ministry Formation or Accreditation has been or is divorced, separated, or married to a divorced person, or where an Accredited person becomes divorced, separated, or married to a divorced person, they should promptly notify the Accreditation and Ordination Committee, who will meet with them to consider an appropriate recommendation to the Assembly Board as to whether the application or accreditation continues, is suspended or deferred, or does not continue.

Each person's situation will be pastorally and prayerfully considered, and no decision concerning one person and their situation will be taken as a precedent when considering another.