

## **INFORMATION SHEET FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS SEEKING ADMISSION TO COURSES OF THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY**

The Australian College of Theology (ACT, the College) is a national provider of accredited higher education courses in theology. The College was established under the auspices of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia in 1891. It is now an ecumenical consortium of over 3,000 students enrolled in 17 affiliated colleges approved to teach the awards of the College on its behalf. These awards range from one and half-year diplomas, three-year undergraduate and coursework masters degrees to masters and doctoral research degrees.

The College was granted self-accrediting authority in mid-2010. The higher education courses of the College have been accredited by the Board of Directors for the period 2012-2016.

The College has a centrally devised and managed curriculum and a quality assurance process that is applied across the whole consortium of affiliated colleges. The day-to-day educational system is managed by the Dean from the College office in Sydney. The Academic Board and its Committees share this responsibility. The Board oversees policy, regulation, review of units, and course structure for research, coursework and diploma awards.

The Academic Board and its Committees are comprised mostly of principals or senior faculty members of affiliated colleges. A number of senior university academics also sit on the Board and its Committees to help ensure that the practice of the College (especially in the outcome of the consideration of research examiner's reports and general academic policy) remains in line with best practice in the university sector.

The College is governed by a Board of Directors. Its members are drawn from the General Synod of the Anglican Church in Australia, college principals and other persons consistent with the requirements of the Australian Government.

The Australian College of Theology welcomes students from overseas to study at its affiliated colleges which are authorised to accept overseas student enrolments.

In 2014, the Australian College of Theology was granted national CRICOS approval, under the single provider code 02650E, which replaced the former state-based registrations. The ACT is the registered Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) provider and the legal entity for all courses offered by affiliated colleges.

In NSW the following affiliated colleges are endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Christ College
- Morling College
- Sydney Missionary and Bible College
- Youthworks College

In Queensland the following affiliated colleges are endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Brisbane School of Theology
- Malyon College
- Queensland Theological College

In South Australia the following affiliated college is endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Bible College of South Australia

In Victoria the following affiliated colleges are endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Melbourne School of Theology
- Presbyterian Theological College
- Reformed Theological College
- Ridley Melbourne

In Western Australia the following affiliated colleges are endorsed to enrol overseas students:

- Trinity Theological College
- Vose Seminary

The following courses may be offered to overseas students:

CRICOS provider code 02650E	English delivery	Chinese delivery
Diploma of Christian Studies	088086F	
Diploma of Ministry	054659K	083078B
Advanced Diploma of Ministry	054667K	083080G
Diploma of Theology	054649A	083079A
Diploma of Theology / Diploma of Ministry	086267F	086269D
Advanced Diploma of Theology	054663C	083081G
Advanced Diploma of Theology / Advanced Diploma of Ministry	086270M	<b>086273G</b>
Associate Degree of Ministry	088087E	
Associate Degree of Theology	054716F	083082F
Bachelor of Christian Studies	054682M	083083E
Bachelor of Ministry	054670D	083084D
Bachelor of Ministry (Honours)	054673A	083085C
Bachelor of Theology	054676J	083086B
Bachelor of Theology / Bachelor of Ministry	086274G	086275F
Bachelor of Theology (Honours)	054679F	083087A
Graduate Certificate of Christian Studies	076016G	083088M
Graduate Diploma of Christian Studies	054691K	083092D
Master of Arts (Christian Studies)	054694G	083096M
Graduate Certificate of Divinity	076017G	083089K
Graduate Diploma of Divinity	054685G	083093C
Master of Divinity	054688E	083099G
Master of Divinity / Graduate Diploma of Divinity	086276E	086277D
Master of Ministry	088085G	
Graduate Certificate of Ministry	076018F	083090F
Graduate Diploma of Ministry	054696E	083094B
Master of Arts (Ministry)	054698C	083097K
Graduate Certificate of Theology	076019E	083091E
Graduate Diploma of Theology	054700C	083095A

Master of Arts (Theology)	054703M	083098J
Master of Theology	054705J	N/A
Doctor of Ministry	054710A	N/A
Doctor of Philosophy	076015J	N/A
Doctor of Theology	054711M	N/A

## 1. Responsibilities of the ACT and its Affiliated Colleges:

- (a) The ACT (as the legal entity for all courses and the Provider) ensures that no fees for a course from an overseas student, or an intending overseas student, are accepted if the ACT has not given the student a copy of the following refund policy and agreement:

### ***REFUND POLICY and AGREEMENT FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS***

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*The Australian College of Theology (ACT, the College) has developed this policy and agreement in accordance with Section 28(1) of the ESOS Act 2000 and the National Code 2007.*

*This policy and agreement, and the availability of the ACT Dispute Resolution Policy for International Students, do not remove the right of the student to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws (ESOS National Code, Standard 3.2.d). Moreover, the dispute resolution procedures of the ACT do not circumscribe the student's right to pursue other legal remedies, such as action under Australia's consumer protection laws.*

*A copy of this policy must be given to all intending and enrolling overseas students before any course fees are paid. This policy and agreement is available on the ACT website ([www.acttheology.edu.au](http://www.acttheology.edu.au)).*

*Affiliated colleges may levy a non-refundable Application Fee.*

*Tuition fees for ACT courses are subject to annual review and the annual tuition fee for a calendar year of study may change from 1 January each year. Thus, tuition fees for units studied will be at the rate applicable at the time of study.*

*Overseas students are required to pay their tuition fees up-front in full for the first half-year of full-time study (16cps), unless other arrangements have been agreed to in writing by the Registrar of the affiliated college at which the student proposes to enrol. The amount of the fees due at their enrolling college will take account of any subsidy provided by the college.*

*In the event that the information supplied by an applicant which was the basis for an offer of admission to a course is found to have been incorrect or insufficient for the offered course or to gain admission to another College course, the College shall withdraw the offer and reserves the right to withhold 10% of the tuition fees paid for the first half-year (or \$1000 whichever is the lesser amount) and to refund the balance.*

*Overseas students are obliged to make up-front payments of tuition and other fees normally no later than the first day in each study period of teaching of units in their course. Tuition fees will be charged according to the unit load for the next study period.*

*While the National Code no longer requires overseas students to enrol in a full-time unit load each study period, they are required to complete the enrolled course within the time frame as stated on the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) document. This means that if overseas students elect to*

take less than a full-time load in any study period, they need to keep in mind how they will organize their unit load in future study periods in order to complete the course on time.

## ***Refunds if the student defaults***

A student may withdraw from a course any time after acceptance and from a unit at any time during the course of study. However, students and colleges need to be aware of the consequences of such an action in relation to the National Code 2007.

After enrolment, all students will be subject to the provisions of the Variation of Enrolment policy as it relates to withdrawing from units and courses and the consequences according to the time in a study period that the action occurs. The Variation of Enrolment policy is available on the College's website: [www.actheology.edu.au](http://www.actheology.edu.au). A summary of the implications of the policy as relating to overseas students withdrawing from units and courses is available at appendix A-C in this policy.

## ***Refunds if the provider defaults***

Refunds if the registered provider defaults cannot be covered by a written agreement between the provider and the student. Such situations are covered by the provisions of the Tuition Protection Service. For more information about the Tuition Protection Service, please visit <https://tps.gov.au>.

## ***Other information concerning the refund of tuition fees***

The Registrar of the affiliated college at which a student is enrolled must pay the refund or respond to the request for a refund within four (4) weeks of receipt of the written claim from a student. Refunds will normally be made in the same currency as the fees were originally paid and will be made in the student's home country except in documented special circumstances.

As it is the student only who enters into the written agreement with the affiliated college, and no third party is normally involved, the refund will normally be paid to the student. If the student wishes the refund to be paid to someone else (eg. in the event that the tuition fees were paid by another person), the student must provide a letter of authority signed by the student and the receiving party, including account details of the receiving party, enabling the college to pay the other party. The letter should be attached to the request for refund.

In circumstances where a student is approved to study at another institution in Australia, any refund must be paid directly to the new institution accepting the student. Refunds in the form of transfer of fees to another institution will be made subject to the student presenting evidence of an offer of a place to study in that institution.

A notice of withdrawal due to special circumstances may be accepted as grounds for a total refund of fees, subject to the provision of acceptable documentary evidence in support of the application for a refund. Special circumstances include, but are not limited to::

- inability to obtain a student visa
- illness or disability
- failure to meet English language requirements for admission
- death of the student or a close family member (parent, sibling, spouse or child)
- political, civil or natural event which prevents full payment of fees.

14 April 2016

Simon Davies, Director of Academic Services

***Appendix A – Summary of the Variation of Enrolment Policy for the purposes of overseas student withdrawals – Definitions***

**The following definitions are intended to guide students understand Appendix B and C.**

**Administrative Date** – the date in the period of presentation of a unit after which payment of the Variation of Enrolment Fee is required up until the Census Date for addition or substitution of a unit for ACT credit or for withdrawing from the unit.

For semester-length units, the Administrative Date is 5pm (college local time) on the last day (normally Friday) of the second teaching week of semester. For intensive units, the Administrative Date is 5pm (college local time) on the second day of classes in the unit.

**Census Date** – the date against which enrolled load in a unit is tallied. For semester-length units, the Census Date is normally 31 March or 31 August. For units taught in intensive mode, the Census Date must be no less than 20% of the period from commencement of the unit to the final date for completion of assessment tasks. Requests to be actioned against a Census Date must be lodged by 5pm (college local time) on that date. [Census Dates do not apply to ThA or private ThL students.] The Variation of Enrolment fee shall not apply after the census date.

**Withdrawal Date** – the date after the Census Date of a unit and before which a student must withdraw from the unit so as not to incur academic penalty. For semester-length units, the Withdrawal Date shall normally be the Friday at the end of the second full teaching week after the Census Date. For intensive units, the Withdrawal Date is approximately 60% of the period from commencement of the unit to the final date for completion of assessment tasks. Requests to be actioned against the Withdrawal Date must be lodged by 5pm (college local time) on that date.

**Variation of Enrolment Fee** – Annually, usually in August for the next year, a Fee per credit point shall be set by the Dean in relation to withdrawing from unit after Administrative Date and before Census Date. See [http://www.actheology.edu.au/students\\_tuitionfees.php](http://www.actheology.edu.au/students_tuitionfees.php) for the most up to date information.

**Appendix B – Summary Table for Semester-length Units, adapted from the Variation of Enrolment Policy for the purposes of overseas student withdrawals**

The following table has been adapted from the Variation of Enrolment Policy for an overseas student withdrawing from a course or units. All enrolled students are subject to this policy.

<b>Withdrawing from Semester-length Units – Overseas students</b> <i>(assumes student has completed unit enrolment for ACT credit by the end of Week 2 of semester)</i>			
<b>Semester Week</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Action Date</b>	<b>Withdraw from unit(s)</b>
1	first day	Unit Start	No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies Unit deleted from record
2	last day - 5pm (college local time)	<b>Administrative Date</b>	No academic penalty No FEE-HELP liability Full refund of any up-front payments
3	after Administrative Date up to 31 Mar or 31 Aug 5pm (college local time)	<b>Census Date</b>	Variation of Enrolment Fee applies ( <b>2011 fee is \$340/unit except unit GSF, which is ¼ the norm</b> ) No academic penalty (unit graded AW) Full refund of any up-front payments
	after Census Date up to Friday at end of second full teaching week after Census date	<b>Withdrawal Date</b>	No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies No academic penalty (unit graded W) No refund of any up-front payments*
	after Withdrawal Date		No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies Academic penalty (unit graded FW) No refund of any up-front payments*

\* If a student considers “special circumstances” prevailed at the time of withdrawal from the unit, the student may request refunding of any up-front payment(s) made in relation to the unit.

***Appendix C – Summary Table for Units taught in intensive mode, adapted from the Variation of Enrolment Policy for the purposes of overseas student withdrawals***

The following table has been adapted from the Variation of Enrolment Policy for an overseas student withdrawing from a course or units. All enrolled students are subject to this policy.

<b>Withdrawing from units presented in Intensive mode – Overseas students</b> <i>(assumes student has completed unit enrolment for ACT credit by the end of Day 2 of unit presentation)</i>			
<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Action Date</b>	<b>Withdraw from unit(s)</b>
Presentation Day 1		Unit Start	No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies Unit deleted from record
Presentation Day 2	5pm (college local time)	<b>Administrative Date</b>	No academic penalty Full refund of any up-front payments
	after Administrative Date up to		
day more than 20% of the time into the unit (including assessment period)	5pm (college local time)	<b>Census Date</b>	Variation of Enrolment Fee applies ( <b>2011 fee is \$340/unit except unit GSF, which is ¼ the norm</b> ) No academic penalty (unit graded AW) Full refund of any up-front payments
	after Census Date up to		
approx. 60% of the time into the unit (including assessment period)	5pm (college local time)	<b>Withdrawal Date</b>	No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies No academic penalty (unit graded W) No refund of any up-front payments*
	after Withdrawal Date		No Variation of Enrolment Fee applies Academic penalty (unit graded FW) No refund of any up-front payments*

\* If a student considers “special circumstances” prevailed at the time of withdrawal from the unit, the student may request refunding of any up-front payment(s) made in relation to the unit.



- (b) The following information will be provided, either in print or by referral to an electronic copy, by affiliated colleges approved to enrol overseas students to each overseas student prior to acceptance for enrolment in an ACT approved course:
- the requirements for acceptance into a course, including the minimum level of English language proficiency, educational qualifications or work experience required and whether course credit may be applicable
  - advice that should an applicant wish to seek credit based on previous study or RPL towards the course for which they are applying, the application for credit needs to be lodged at the same time as the application for admission and, if credit is granted and reduces the period of study, this will be reflected in the offer letter (as this is the contract with the student) and will be indicated either on the eCoE issued for that student to commence the course, or reported on PRISMS. Such students are reminded that they must still maintain a full time study load and that credit can affect their visa status.
  - a general description of the content and duration of the course
  - the qualification gained on completion
  - the teaching methods used and modes of study available
  - the assessment methods used in the course
  - a general description of the facilities, equipment, and learning and library resources available to students on their proposed campus of study
  - an accurate description of the local environment in which the affiliated college operates including location of the campus and indicative costs of living and accommodation
  - details of any arrangements with other providers for recognition of the course or completed components of the course
  - an itemised list of all fees payable to the provider and the current Fee and Refund policy
  - a description of the ESOS framework made available electronically by the Department of Education
  - a copy of the Dispute Resolution Policy for Overseas Students
- [All Policies mentioned above may be accessed on the ACT website –[www.actheology.edu.au](http://www.actheology.edu.au)]
- (c) The affiliated college shall assist students to adjust to study and life in Australia, including through the provision of an age and culturally appropriate orientation programme that includes information about:
- student support services available to students in the transition to life and study in a new environment
  - legal services
  - emergency and health services
  - facilities and resources
  - complaints and appeals processes, and
  - any student visa condition relating to course progress and/or attendance as appropriate.
- (d) The affiliated college shall provide the opportunity for students to participate in services or provide access to services designed to assist students in meeting course requirements and maintaining their attendance.
- (e) The affiliated college shall provide the opportunity for students to access welfare-related support services to assist with issues that may arise during their study, including course progress and attendance requirements and accommodation issues. These services shall be provided at no additional cost to the student. If the affiliated college refers the student to external support services, there shall be no charge for the referral.

- (f) The affiliated college shall designate a member of staff or members of staff to be the official point of contact for students. The student contact officer or officers must have access to up-to-date details of the support services provided by the affiliated college.
- (g) While not obliged to do so under the *National Code 2007*, the affiliated college shall monitor the attendance records for non-attendance. Procedures are in place for contacting and counselling a student if the student has been absent for more than five consecutive days without approval, or is not consistently attending their course.
- (h) The affiliated college shall monitor the progress of each student to ensure that at all times the student is in a position to complete the course within the expected duration as specified in the student's CoE. In each study period, the student shall be required to study at least one unit that is not by distance or online learning.
- (i) The ACT shall monitor the progress of students in their course at the end of each study period and intervene in accordance with the Progression and Intervention policy which shall be provided to students by their college of enrolment.
- (h) The ACT will contact the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) if any overseas student is breaching the terms of their visa relating to academic performance (see [i] above).

## **2. Responsibilities of overseas students on a student visa:**

- (a) An overseas student will normally be enrolled in full-time only. Although the new National Code no longer requires this for each study period, students are required to complete the enrolled course within the time frame as stated on the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) document. This means that if overseas students elect to take less than a full-time load in any study period, they need to keep in mind how they will organize their unit load in future study periods in order to complete the course on time. Full-time is defined as normally not less than 16 cps per semester, or 32 cps per year. No more than 25 percent of the student's total course may be undertaken by distance and/or online learning.
- (b) Overseas students must be aware that any school-aged dependants accompanying them to Australia will be required to pay full fees if they are enrolled in either a government or non-government school.
- (c) Overseas students are not allowed to defer commencement of their studies, or suspend their studies after commencement, except on the grounds of illness, evidenced by a doctor's certificate, or other exceptional compassionate circumstances beyond the control of the student, for example, bereavement. If a student defers or suspends their studies on any other grounds, the ACT must report the student as not complying with visa conditions.
- (d) Overseas students must consistently attend classes in their course and seek approval for any absence expected to be longer than five consecutive days, unless prevented by illness or other exceptional compassionate circumstances beyond the control of the student.
- (e) Where an overseas student is required to take extra units to complete a course of study, and the remaining units do not constitute a full-time load, the student is not required to be enrolled in full-time study by the ACT. This may apply to students who are required to repeat a unit of study. Students are not allowed to repeat any unit more than once.
- (f) Overseas students have a duty to advise the ACT through their college of enrolment of any change in their contact details (i.e. Australian residential address and telephone number). If students do not keep their contact details up to date and the ACT has to send a notice

informing that student of their failure to satisfy course requirements or to progress satisfactorily, this may result in automatic student visa cancellation without the knowledge of the student. Such cancellation may not be revoked if it has occurred where the student has failed to keep the ACT informed of their address.

- (g) Overseas students are responsible for arranging health insurance, and for maintaining the currency of that insurance each year. Details of the insurance policy should be provided to the sponsoring college at the time of application.
- (h) Before arranging a visa, overseas students must ensure that they have the financial resources available to cover their tuition and other related study costs such as accommodation, health insurance, living expenses, childcare, etc.

**Regulations:**

The information provided by overseas students to the provider (the Australian College of Theology) may be made available to Commonwealth and State agencies and the Fund Manager of the Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Assurance Fund, pursuant to obligations under the *ESOS Act 2000* and the National Code; and the provider is required, under section 19 of the *ESOS Act 2000*, to tell the Department about: (i) certain changes to the student's enrolment; and (ii) any breach by the student of a student visa condition relating to attendance or satisfactory academic performance.

**Further information:**

For detailed information on accommodation resources, the local environment of the campuses, and other details of campus life, students should refer to the web pages of those affiliated colleges endorsed to enrol overseas students. These sites can be accessed to the right of the ACT's home page at [www.actheology.edu.au](http://www.actheology.edu.au) . Each endorsed affiliated college also makes this information available in hard copy. A copy of the marketing material of the affiliated colleges will be made available at the site inspection visits.

