

Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD)



Teaching & Learning Management Plan

2009

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PART I LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE MCD: *vision, mission, context, values*

Learning and teaching is the basis of the ‘core business’ of the MCD. This Plan for managing teaching and learning is grounded in the MCD Vision, Mission, Context and Values statements.

The MCD Vision Statement states that

the Melbourne College of Divinity commits to pursuing the highest standards in teaching and research in Christian theology and ministry. The College offers scholars and students the opportunity to anchor their faith in understanding and in a spirit of dialogue to engage with wider social contexts.

This statement identifies key pairings, teaching *and* research, theology *and* ministry, scholars *and* students, as inseparable aspects of learning. Working on behalf of the churches, the MCD upholds an ecumenical and dialogical ethos, grounded in Christian faith which engages with society.

The MCD Mission Statement expresses these commitments in this way:

The Melbourne College of Divinity is an *ecumenical* provider of tertiary education in theology, with commitment to

- *quality* in teaching and research
- the *understanding* of faith in secular contexts
- the *integrity* of the Christian churches.

This initial Teaching and Learning Management Plan seeks to be grounded in this Vision and Mission, and take account of the following responsibilities listed in its Context Statement:

- The MCD at strives to respect, encourage, challenge and inform those to whom it has a primary responsibility, the *students* who come to it to study, to learn and to be formed.
- The MCD responds to the needs of the *churches* from which it receives considerable financial assistance and the support of academic personnel.
- The MCD is subject to corporate law, and is required to report annually to the *Victorian Parliament* through the Minister for Education and Training. As such, the MCD supports the need of society that its world-views be informed and enlightened.

The Plan, with the MCD Academic Conduct Policy, seeks to express the values of the MCD through:

- Critical enquiry and open dialogue in the exploration of truth
- Active engagement with local, national and global societies
- Recognition and respect for the traditions of the member churches through mutual and ecumenical cooperation
- Interdependence in the development of all learning activities
- Honest professional relationships between students and staff
- Freedom from all forms of discrimination
- Respect and openness
- Enthusiasm, flexibility and innovation.

The MCD commits to learning and teaching that encompasses and enriches

- *students* and *faculty* engaged in high quality learning, through both coursework and research
- the mission and distinctive needs of the *Christian churches*; and
- the *ecumenical, dialogical* and *cooperative ethos* of the life and ministry of the College.

This Plan is structured around the first two of these dimensions, with matters relating to the ethos of

the College taken up ‘across-the-Plan’.¹ It builds on the increasingly planned approach to learning and teaching taken since 2002, focussed in the AUQA audit and revision to the MCD Act in 2005.

PART II THE MANAGEMENT OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

Towards an MCD Teaching and Learning Management Plan

Teaching and learning have always been the ‘core business’ of the MCD. Considerable changes took place in the mid-70s, with the official recognition of teaching colleges, and again in the period since 2000. The 2005 AUQA audit, and revision of the MCD Act, have already reshaped the structure of the College, and brought greater focus on student-centred learning. These events, alongside the major developments in the research activities of the College since 2002, and the current review of the Bachelor of Theology, pave the way for this Plan.²

Structure of the Plan: responsibilities

This Plan concerns the *management* of teaching and learning, not the latter in and of themselves. Every part of the MCD is involved with these educational activities, but the primary focus for teaching and learning is the RTIs, and the libraries related to them.

Responsibility for the management of learning and teaching in the MCD is thus twofold:

- a) Issues relating to the College as a Higher Education Provider, and the MCD Act, are the responsibility of the MCD Academic Board, administered by the MCD Dean, Registrar, Associate Registrar and Director of Research.
- b) Each RTI, through its academic leadership and faculty, bears responsibility for the immediate provision of teaching and learning.

The human and material resources required are largely provided through the financial support of the churches and religious orders which own and sponsor the teaching colleges and associated libraries.

Each RTI embodies the Christian tradition in a distinctive manner, is grounded in a particular spiritual heritage, and maintains an ecumenical commitment. These realities, which are valued and respected across the MCD, offer profound resources for mutual enrichment and cooperation. Likewise, faculty view their teaching as shaped by Christian traditions in which all are disciples, and where pastoral relationships and mutual growth characterise the community of scholarship.

In the light of these considerations, this Plan is divided into several major sections, corresponding to the accountability of the College to

- MCD students, focussing on learning (in both coursework and research modes)
- MCD faculty, focussing on teaching (in both coursework and research modes), and
- The Christian churches who support the MCD as an ecumenical community of scholarship.

The first two sections, *A: MCD Students – learning* and *B: MCD Faculty – teaching* are divided into sub-sections corresponding to the responsibilities of the MCD as a whole, and the RTIs (both individually and in cooperative relation). The demarcation between these responsibilities is not always clear, however: ***the main policy issue in this Plan is the way in which these responsibilities are shared***, not least the inter-related accountabilities of faculty to church, academy and society.

¹ The ecumenical ethos which characterises the life of the MCD was commended in the AUQA Report, and subsequently listed in the AUQA Good Practice database: www.auqa.edu.au/gp/search/detail.php?gp_id=2270.

² The Appendix: Learning and Teaching in the MCD – *the story thus far* outlines these developments.

Section C considers the responsibilities of the churches who sponsor the MCD, and a final section considers wider questions about the management of learning and teaching across the MCD as a whole. Taking this matter forward calls for a deepening partnership between the churches, the RTIs and their associated libraries and the MCD administration, within the governance framework of the MCD Council, Academic Board and their committees – the vision of the MCD as an ecumenical community of scholarship engaged with church, academy and society alike.

A MCD Students - learning

A1 MCD-wide responsibilities for learning

Tasks and objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
<i>Learning – MCD internal issues</i>				
Respond appropriately to learning enquiries Enrol coursework graduate students on time Enrol all HDR students after effective course checks	RTI Cwk Coords MCD AssocReg MCD office staff MCD DirRes, Res Coords	Ensure that each new student receives appropriate induction into the relevant RTI and to the MCD as a whole Review enquiries and promotion procedures Continue to improve admissions administration	Include orientation to ecumenical learning for new students, both at RTI level and online	Enrolments across coursework awards rise 3-4% each year High retention rate maintained
Ensure that each overseas student is appropriately equipped for learning in an MCD context	MCD Registrar, MCD ExecAsst	Establish links with English language-teaching bodies Communicate procedures to RTIs more fully Strengthen research students' association	Include OS orientation to Australian ecumenical and multi-faith contexts, where appropriate	Courses are completed by MCD OS students within Visa requirements.
Plan overall policy and procedures for student feedback, with annual course completion reports	CStC members, MCD AssocReg, MCD ExecAsst, MCD Registrar	Finalise common essay cover sheet and implement across RTIs Finalise common unit evaluation process (A3) Improve use of GCA (PG) Course Experience Questionnaires Monitor retention / drop out rates (A10)	Provide feedback from students studying at other RTIs to 'home' RTI.	Common cover sheet in use Unit evaluations in use both within and between RTIs GCA outputs used by faculty and MCD staff
Ensure all course requirements are fulfilled prior to Conferral	MCD Registrar	Ensure that MCD Registrar continues to receive timely and full transcripts and checks each for validity	MCD and RTI offices work well together	Conferral accords with the MCD Act and Regulations
Deal with academic misconduct issues, and grievance and harassment complaints	MCD Registrar, RTI Deans, Chairs of Examiners	Ensure that students continue to be informed of complaints procedures	Be aware of cultural issues in plagiarism Maintain best practice in tertiary sector	Normally, each complaint is resolved within one month of notification
Institute a cyclic process of course reviews and development (A5, A6, R9)	MCD AcBrd, CStC, RStC,	Complete the BTheol review and implement the resulting recommendations Institute a cycle of course reviews as delineated in D(c)	Ensure that courses are open to different Christian traditions. Encourage an ecumenical ethos in each course.	Revised BTheol Regulation and Working Procedures are in place and understood

Tasks and objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
<i>Learning – MCD external relationships</i>				
Maintain effective scrutiny of MCD auditing bodies	MCD Dean MCD Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Academic Audit Committee functions well (A7) • Support and endorse the HREC Committee 	Ensure the College consultation provides opportunity for all to contribute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular MCD internal audits • NHMRC Compliance
Further develop relationships with universities (R2, R13)	MCD Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage actively in Joint UniMelb – MCD Committee (R13) • Develop the Monash BA/Btheol and Melbourne BA units • Take staff training opportunities via university links (R2) • Establish benchmarking processes within the MCD between RTIS and with other universities (R3) 	Foster opportunities to contribute to interfaith and Religious Studies learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant numbers of MCD undergraduate and graduate students co-enrolled at other universities
Participate in wider learning in theological education	MCD Dean, all faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in ANZATS, especially 2010 Conference • Contribute to Committee of Deans of Theological Consortia • Support continued faculty papers at academic conferences • Establish benchmarking with other theological bodies (R3) 	Continue to learn from wider ecumenical and academic engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCD Centenary inaugurates new phase in MCD life • MCD gains Carrick recognition for good teaching and learning
Be accountable to Government bodies	MCD Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete quarterly reports to DEERW • Submit Annual Report on time to Victorian Parliament • Ensure that OS student procedures are in accord with The National Code 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely reports to government • Representation at all HE Sector conferences 	Compliance with all state and federal legislation. Increase in research funding
<i>Learning through coursework awards</i>				
Maintain the appropriate level of learning for each coursework award	MCD CStC, MCD AssocReg RTI AcBrds	Clarify and articulate distinct Learning Outcomes for Diploma / BTheol / PG units with a view to using common educational resources where appropriate (eg mixed classes) Confirm articulation paths [Diploma / UG / Graduate / PG] Implement existing policy that UG, graduate and PG units be separately drafted and considered for approval	Develop cooperation across RTIs in teaching Encourage ecumenically oriented MDiv Integrative units	Diploma / Degree / Graduate / PG learning strategies articulated and in practice

Tasks and Objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
Scrutinise draft unit descriptions and learning outcomes	CStC, MCD AssocReg RTI AcBrds	Finalise Learning Outcomes for disciplines and courses / levels Relate unit LOs to these, and to assessment methods Institute a cyclic review of all units (A4), including a time-limit for their approval and rationalisation across RTIs. Obtain external advice on Learning Outcome and assessment methods (R6) Implement a common MCD electronic handbook (StPlan)	Encourage cooperation in RTI unit offerings Develop cooperative teaching and learning strategies (eg team teaching, group work) Ensure that learning about other faiths or Christian traditions includes their input	Learning outcomes in all areas are followed Unit descriptions are up-to-date, with an agreed cycle Number of units offered is significantly lower A user-friendly common MCD handbook is on the web
Apply quality assurance measures through moderation of class mark range	MCD AssocReg, RTI Cwk Coords	Continue to ensure that reporting of grades is done on time and appropriately, and that moderation processes have taken place Implement existing policy on Extensions for all RTIs	Encourage the use of moderators from other RTIs	Adequate reporting to RTIs of issues raised from moderation processes Few E grades annually
<i>Learning through research</i>				
Review areas of research strength and specialisation (R10)	MCD DirResearch, RStC	Institute survey of research topics since 2000, and current faculty research interests, especially through RQF processes Revise research strengths listings in RRTMP and identify appropriate niche areas of research interest	Foster inter-disciplinary, cooperative and ecumenical research interests	MCD Research strengths are focus reflected in HDR these and research projects RRTMP is owned across MCD research community
Conduct all HDR Approval and Confirmation Panels	MCD DirResearch	Widen the range of scholars employed in Panels	Ensure ecumenical participation in Panel membership	Panel outcomes promote project assessment and thesis completions
Exercise effective oversight of the progress of all MCD students, especially HDRs (A9)	MCD DirResearch, RStC	Strengthen annual HDR reporting processes Institute survey of HDR students to track their progress (A3)		Annual Reports completed effectively, on time Progression rates are included in RRTMP
Oversee, administer and promote MCD Advanced Ministry Studies	MinSt Coord, RStC	Increase the time-load of the MinSt Research Coordinator Develop links with Otago Promote the GradDipMin	Foster the diffusion of MinSts ecumenical across the MCD research community	0.6 MinSts Coordinator time 6 Otago students by 2009 12 new GradDipMin enrolments each year

Tasks and objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
Plan and conduct regular and effective research seminars	MCD DirResearch, RStC, RTI RSt Coords	Develop seminar programme, with increased HDR student presentations Develop Annual Research Week Foster MCD Scholar positions and faculty grants	Encourage ecumenical engagement in research, and inter-disciplinary research projects.	3 seminars per semester per discipline take place Research week attracts 75% of HDR students 2 MCD Research Scholars active each semester
Utilise opportunities for research co-operation with universities (R2, R13)	MCD DirResearch, MCD Dean	Leverage existing university links to access research training Examine opportunities for developing ARC grants (R11)	Work cooperatively with universities and other research bodies	All new supervisors are trained ARC grant obtained by 2009

A2 RTI responsibilities for learning

<i>Learning – overall issues</i>				
Support a community of learning, with attention to personal integration	RTI governing bodies, faculty, staff, students	Academic advice for students to shape courses attending to award structures (e.g. ‘core’ units, sequences in the BTheol), personal development and ministry equipping aims.	Encourage students to take units at other RTIs	Award reviews strengthen course sequencing. Students experience a community of scholarship
Offer sound teaching and learning strategies, including effective lectures, seminars and tutorials	RTI Academic Dean, Cwk Coord, Faculty	Pay closer attention to the relationship between syllabi, assessment models and learning outcomes, setting these in the framework of award / level outcomes (A4) and of RTI identity. Encourage RTIs to share learning strategies, and equip faculty to do in-service work on learning, including use of online	Promote teaching and learning that recognises the contribution of different Christian traditions	Regular RTI seminars for teaching and learning All unit learning outcomes have clear relationship to course and RTI ones
Participate in the MCD internal RTI audit cycle Participate in AUQA audits	Head of college, Cwk & ResCoords, RTI faculty	Implement recommendations of the 2002-2006 audits cycle. Establish 2007-2010 audit cycle and undertake it thoroughly.	Encourage RTIs to further cooperation and continue to avoid a competitive spirit	RTI audit reports are fully implemented Positive 2011 AUQA Report is made

Tasks and Objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
<i>Student learning</i>				
Recruit, welcome and orient new students	RTI administration and faculty	Advertising and initial contact processes planned and personal Orientation days arranged for all RTI coursework students	Each course is open to all who are qualified and will benefit from it Pervasive hospitality	Total coursework numbers grow each year
Offer assistance with study and learning methods (especially for OS or NESB students)	CwkCoord	Check that study methods training is offered relate to the learning needs of students, and that students are made aware of the learning methods required by the discipline concerned Recognise the distinctive learning needs of international students, including facility in English, adopting an effective study style and orienting to Western academic conventions	Share cooperative learning methods (eg case studies) across RTIs Contribute to learning methods in religious studies at universities	Coursework completion times shorten by 20% over three years. Each RTI offers sessions introducing tertiary studies and learning methods
Foster the formation of ministry candidates	Head of college, RTI faculty	Seek to more closely relate academic and formational aspects of learning.	Explore possibilities for ecumenical formation in preaching, theological reflection and other common ministry areas.	Growth in the number of ministry candidates Growth in the number of ministers engaged in ongoing study
Be responsible day-to-day for welfare of OS, NESB & other students with particular needs	RTI faculty, staff	Develop RTI opportunities for students with special needs. Ensure that local induction programmes embrace all students.	Explore ecumenical and inter-faith opportunities offered by students with particular needs.	MCD becomes benchmark for faculty training across the Asia-South Pacific region. RTIs have handicap access and student support systems
Institute surveys at each MCD-related library (R7)	Library staff	Annual survey of library users at each MCD-related library Continue to support the effective working of LIAM	Facilitate library use by all MCD students, faculty and graduates	Library collections and services more targeted LIAM works well

Tasks and Objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
<i>Learning through coursework awards</i>				
Grade assessments fairly and on time	RTI AcadDean, faculty, tutors	Implement fully MCD Academic Conduct standards.	Ensure best practice of tertiary sector is in evidence	Review by CwkStCtee continues to be effective MCD reputation for solid standards remains in place.
Moderate mark ranges in classes, prepare data for the MCD Registrar	RTI AcadDean, Registrar	Ensure that MCD unit reporting regime continues effectively		
Conduct student unit evaluations (A3)	RTI AcadDean, Cwk Coord	Move to a course and unit evaluation system across the MCD, with full use of the GCA Course Experience Questionnaire.	Cooperate with other RTIs to avoid unit repetition	Course and unit evaluation system in place in each RTI.
Review and initiate courses and units	RTI AcadDean, Cwk Coord	Encourage faculty to assess their own satisfaction of teaching ideals / needs / preferences with a view to greater co-operation across disciplines and RTIs. Set procedures for what happens when minimum class sizes are not reached.	Do ecumenical audit of all coursework awards. Pursue MCD Dean's proposal for graduate inter-faith units.	Annual faculty learning strategy sessions in place Unit rationalisation succeeds in harmonious manner
<i>Learning through research</i>				
Manage effectively all HDR students and supervisors associated with the RTI	RTI ResCoord	Clarify the distinctive research strengths of each RTI, the individual faculty of each RTI, and deepen the contribution to the MCD research programme.	Increase co-operation across RTIs in sharing research resources. Improve RTI awareness of MinSts programme.	Increase the number of faculty capable of supervision. RTI ResCoord tracks RTI HDR students' progress RTI ResCoord funding matches MCD contribution

B MCD Faculty - *teaching*

B1 MCD-wide responsibilities for teaching

Tasks and Objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
<i>Teaching – faculty selection</i>				
Undertake academic approval of faculty	RTI AcBd MCD Academic Board	Include consideration of faculty ability and experience in teaching, and support needed, when approval is considered	Ensure all new faculty uphold MCD ethos	All new faculty are qualified as both teachers and scholars
Ensure an appropriate spread of teaching expertise	MCD Council, AcBrd, Churches, RTIs	Work towards a faculty selection process which takes account of teaching needs across the MCD as a whole (R14 - see also C and D below).	Consider ecumenical as well as academic factors in faculty planning	MCD Annual Report is able to specify faculty by discipline as well as location
<i>Teaching – faculty support</i>				
Support faculty new to teaching	RTI Deans, C'WkSC	Continue process of moderating assessments for first two years of teaching	Encourage ecumenical mentoring as well as moderation	Faculty are mentored and moderated
Develop MCD staff days and faculty Field meetings (currently June – research November – general)	MCD Dean, DirRes, AssocReg RTI Coords Chairs of Examiners	Provided adequate opportunities for faculty to meet in Field / discipline meetings (StPlan), with effective follow-up Ensure planning of each day is effective and consultative Evaluate outcomes and ensure planning towards improving teaching are acted upon	Encourage explicit recognition of ecclesial & ecumenical factors alongside academic disciplines	Annual program of staff days planned with consultation, and owned by all faculty. Outcomes are implemented by Academic Board
Provide faculty conference travel & small grants	DirRes, RStC, MCD Registrar	Keep budgetary provision under review Clarify administrative processes and Guidelines Evaluate outcomes from grants made	Encourage projects with ecumenical focus Make provision for inter-disciplinary and group projects in travel funding	Increase in faculty grant applications and publications. Faculty publications become models for RQF Panels Conference invitations for faculty participation increase

Tasks and Objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
Encourage faculty training in tertiary and adult education pedagogy	MCD AcBd, MCD AssocReg, CwkCoords	Utilise UniMelb resources for faculty teaching inservice Promote use of new federal applied research GradCert with HDR degrees for training Inaugurate MCD-wide sessions with facilitators, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of electronic equipment in the classroom • online education both directly and alongside face-to-face • assessment methods in relation to learning outcomes 	Utilise insights from other faith traditions as regards adult learning and spiritual formation.	Evidence an increase of faculty who are qualified as both teachers and scholars.
Implement system of faculty professional development across the MCD as a whole	Academic Board, Heads of colleges, Church leaders	Undertake survey of present provisions, then develop recommendations for faculty professional development.	Utilise MinSts resources for faculty professional development	Enhancement of faculty academic and sabbatical leave across the MCD.
<i>Teaching through research</i>				
Improve supervisor training (A8, R12)	MCD DirRes, MinSt Coord, RStC	Require supervisor training for new supervisors Encourage existing supervisors to undertake inservice training Include supervisor training elements in annual Research week Provide feedback to supervisors from Annual Reports	Encourage supervisors to affirm vocational & formational dimensions of research supervision	High satisfaction rates in GCA PGEQ surveys
Encourage faculty to be active in research alongside teaching	RTI AcBrd, MCD DirRes, Res Coords	Implement system to identify research-active faculty and encourage all faculty to be so identified Encourage faculty to contribute to research seminars regularly. Include the topic of the balance between teaching and research for faculty in research seminars	Encourage faculty to teach and research in colleges not of their own Christian tradition	All faculty model integration of ongoing research alongside teaching. At least one Carrick teaching award gained by MCD faculty member

B2 RTI responsibilities for teaching

Tasks and Objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
<i>Teaching – faculty management</i>				
Appoint and review faculty	RTI Heads and governing body	Identify the RTI faculty required for adequate teaching Include consideration of faculty ability and experience in teaching when appointing faculty. Institute regular review processes for all faculty	Co-operate across MCD in faculty appointments Look for ecumenical outlook in new faculty Approach reviews with MCD-wide focus	Disciplines are adequately staffed across MCD All new faculty qualified as both teachers and scholars All faculty have been reviewed by the end of 2009
Support and develop faculty as teachers	RTI AcadDeans	Include assessment of teaching in faculty reviews, and include faculty in outcomes from unit evaluations Equip faculty to provide for differing learning styles in students Provided practical inservice for teaching and learning Recognise teaching achievements publicly	Make provision for faculty to teach in ecumenical, inter-disciplinary, and field-based situations as well as a particular discipline	Student unit evaluations recognise good teaching All faculty have done at least one in-service on teaching
Provide adequate time and space resources for faculty	RTI Heads, AcadDeans	Ensure that teaching, supervision, research and administrative loads are fair, and that timetables facilitate effective work Provide appropriate office and common-room space Recognise ecclesial and MCD commitments in workloads	Allocate time and resources for ecumenical, social and inter-faith teaching and engagement	Faculty take annual leave Faculty engage as a community of scholars at RTI and MCD levels
<i>Teaching – administrative aspects</i>				
Manage academic administration effectively	RTI AcadDeans, RTI Coords, RTI Registrars	Ensure that accurate record-keeping is maintained – enrolment, assessments, reporting to MCD Registrar Prepare Handbook for checking by MCD office in August Implement TAMS for all MCD students in 2007 (A2)	Encourage cross-RTI enrolments Cooperative approach to common MCD handbook Co-operate in shared enrolment procedures	MCD office has < 5 errors to correct per RTI per year TAMS operates for all students and courses
Oversee student academic progress	RTI AcadDeans Cwk Coords	Ensure that each new student has appropriate course advice Ensure that students submit correctly completed Application and Re-enrolment forms Check that students can complete majors / course requirements Undertake annual review of all students' progress Check that MCD course requirements are fulfilled for students nominated for graduation	Communicate with other RTIs on student progress	Students complete courses in the standard time allowed GCA CEQ survey reports high standard of student satisfaction with courses

Tasks and Objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
Apply MCD policies on academic conduct, grievances and harassment complaints	RTI AcadDeans, Peer Contact Officers	Ensure that policies and procedures are available at RTIs and on the web and that processes are known by faculty and administrative staff Act on complaints effectively and promptly Maintain privacy and confidentiality on all matters, including enrolment, personal details and complaints	Maintain a standard of care which commends itself to wider society	All complaints are resolved within one month Complainants recommend others to study at MCD RTIs
Apply effective auditing of academic aspects of RTI life	Heads of colleges, RTI AcadDeans	Strengthen the prevailing culture of academic rigour, pastoral care and disciplined formation at each RTI Review risk management procedures at each RTI	Foster the ecumenical and cooperative ethos of the MCD	RTIs exist without threat of discontinuance or being sued
Participate in MCD cycle of internal RTI audits	Heads of colleges, RTI AcadDeans	Include review of future teaching plans Include review of teaching and learning methods and plans	Take account of ecclesial goals and the needs of the MCD as a whole	Audit Recommendations and Affirmations are taken up normally within twelve months
Prepare actively for the next AUQA audit of the MCD	RTI AcadDeans	Ensure that Recommendations and Affirmations from previous audits have been acted upon. Integrate RTI audit with preparation for AUQA audit	Attend to the ecumenical ethos of the MCD in preparation	Performance Portfolio ready for AUQA Audit. AUQA Report acknowledges RTI strengths and makes usable Recommendations

C The churches who support the MCD

Tasks and Objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
Contribute to the life of the MCD as an ecumenical community of scholarship	Church leaders, RTI / college governing bodies MCD Dean	Make effective, appropriate appointments to the MCD Council Meet with the church's Council members, College head(s) and the MCD Dean at least annually Challenge the MCD to shape its priorities and to orient its teaching and learning according to the Christian Gospel Encourage Council members to engage with the Christian vision of theological education in service of the churches	Sustain and promote good relations between churches, their colleges and the MCD as a whole Encourage each MCD church's college to participate in ANZSTS	Heads of churches are familiar with the MCD, and the MCD Council is aware of the churches' needs

Tasks and Objectives	Responsible person / body	2007-2009 plans	MCD ethos	Evidence of objectives achieved
Provide resources to 'employ' college faculty	Church leaders, RTI / college governing bodies MCD Dean, Councils, Business Managers	Identify the faculty required by each Church for adequate preparation for its ministries, and succession planning Co-operate with other churches in supporting sufficient faculty appointments to cover needed disciplines and skills (R14)	Co-operate with other churches in making faculty appointments	Disciplines are adequately staffed across the MCD
Recognise faculty as members of the team / pool of ecclesial ministers		Encourage faculty to contribute to the wider life of churches and society, including research, writing and speaking, ensuring that colleges make workload allowances for such commitments	Include other Christian traditions in faculty review processes	RTIs maintains records of faculty contributions to the wider church.
Provide resources to support adequate library facilities		Ensure that library buildings are adequate, safe and accessible. Identify coursework support needs and specialist research areas Employ sufficient qualified library staff Co-operate with other theological libraries, in particular through supporting LIAM and ANZTLA	Implement acquisition policies interlacing with needs of the churches, MCD and wider society	Libraries grow in quality, services, cooperation and comprehensiveness in designated specialist research areas 10% increase in library staffing by 2010
Fund high-quality facilities for learning and teaching		Maintain a high profile for theological education in church councils, synods and committees, and in budgets Give unqualified support to college building appeals Complete full audit of all RTI property as places supporting teaching and learning Make budget provision for equipment purchase, consumables, updating and replacement, and for computer software	Co-operate with other churches in planning new buildings, fund-raising and building use	MCD acquires its own administrative hub All RTI properties have had full OHS audit by 2010
Encourage research activity		Promote present MCD research activity to church leaders Encourage churches to look to the MCD for research needs Facilitate appropriate relations with the CRA Develop research scholarships	Encourage ecumenical cooperation in church research projects	Church-supported HDR students pursuing church-originated research projects
Provide safe learning and teaching environments		Ensure that grounds and buildings are secure, safe & accessible Have strong occupational health & safety regime in place, including cleaning, room safety checks and first aid Review teaching facilities annually as regards student access		

D Broader issues in managing learning and teaching

Several issues, flagged at a number of places in the above tables, need particular attention:

a) Managing the cycle of units (A4)

There is a pressing need to rationalise the range of units offered across the MCD as a whole, reducing their number to increase learning effectiveness and the allocation of teaching resources.

As regards the BTheol, this could be facilitated by agreement on 'core' requirements for the first year, and a planned roster of BTheol Level 3 (and thus MDiv Specialist) units across RTIs and disciplines. If this were accompanied by a similar roster for MDiv Integrative units, substantial gains would be made in effective learning. Such agreement cannot be forced, but depends on the co-operation and engagement of faculty, especially those whose teaching ministry is full-time.

Closely related to this is the aim of a common handbook (R5), which would indicate where there are overlaps or areas for possible co-operation. A further goal would be an MCD-wide timetable (or set of timetables – eg for BTheol Level 1, MDiv senior students, postgraduate units etc)

b) Managing faculty appointments and succession planning (R14)

Faculty appointment is the most difficult issue facing any HEP such as the MCD which operates under a 'federated' model, and intends to continue to work in this manner. Inevitably the body who provides the money to support a teacher will have the greatest say in the appointment. That said, however, ways need to be found which take into account the teaching needs of the MCD as a whole.

In the first place, this could include raising funds to support 'MCD Professors' in key disciplines. Another possibility would be the identification of the 'establishment' of faculty needed by each college. Once this is done, and the Business Managers can give assurances that it can be financially maintained, it would enable co-operative planning towards the provision of adequate teachers for each discipline across the MCD.

There is also the need to develop plans to manage succession planning. The recent internal review by the Jesuit Theological College included tables of faculty who will be teaching in 5 and 10 years' time at the UFT, which was most illuminating: similar exercises should be instituted at each college / RTI. It may well be possible to see which disciplines will need appointments over the next decade, and so institute proactive planning with the churches.

c) Managing a regular cycle of course reviews (A5, A6, R9, R14)

Course reviews have been taking place, as noted below: the following comments are designed to support a particular review cycle:

- ◆ The BTheol is currently under review, with a completion date of mid 2007.
- ◆ The Advanced Ministry Studies programmes have been settled since the GradDipMin was introduced, but the changeover of staff makes a review in 2007 appropriate.
- ◆ The MDiv commenced in 2002 with special 'changeover' provisions in place for 2002 and 2003: it is only now starting to settle, with questions being raised about Integrative units, and how adequate provision can be made for Philosophy. Further, its development has been RTI-specific: at Whitley and the UFT the MDiv now has the largest enrolments, and CCTC also offers the award. YTU supports the aims of the MDiv, while CTC sees it as not related to its needs, though some GradDip students move on to the MDiv from all colleges.

In the light of the above observations, review of MDiv would be appropriate for 2008, especially in the light of the implementation of the BTheol review

- ◆ The GradDip was introduced in 2000 and has been lightly adapted since, and appears to be working well, including its various specialisations, some of which have been re-worked as GradCerts. Review of the GradDip Counselling alongside the GradDip in the near future would be timely, since they share a common structure.

The MA has twice been changed since its inception, and its coursework mode (clarified in 2006) is proving useful. It is closely related to the GradDipTheol (originally Part A of the MA) and in a different way to the MTS, the other PG coursework award.

In the light of the above observations, review of the GradCerts, GradDipTheol, GradDip Counselling, MA and MTS awards would be appropriate in 2009

- ◆ All research degrees were reviewed in 2002-3, with admission and articulation clarified in 2006. Similarly, Diplomas were effectively reviewed with the update of their Regulations in 2006, alongside the admission of SATC as a Diploma-level RTI.

HDRs and Diplomas are thus the least awards in need of review, so 2010 is suggested.

A cyclic review of courses and RTIs could thus look like this:

Year	Course	RTI³
2007	BTheol GradDipMin, MMin, DMinStuds	UFT, UFT / Trinity <i>Online</i> TCTS, UCTC (Diploma level)
2008	MDiv	YTU
2009	GradCerts, GradDips, MA, MTS	CTC, ICSPF
2010	MTheol, DTheol, PhD AssDipMin, DipMin, AdvDipMin	SATC
2011		MCD as a whole (AUQA)

³ Earlier audits were conducted as follows:

2004	UFT, YTU, CTC	2003	ETA (Whitley and CCTC as one body)
2006	CCTC (confirmation audit)	2005	MCD as a whole (AUQA)
	ICSPF (clarification audit)		Whitley (confirmation audit)
			SATC (new application, Diploma level)

APPENDIX I: Learning and Teaching in the MCD - *the story thus far*

From 1910 to 1973

Learning has been the main concern of the MCD since its foundation in 1910, but until the introduction in 1973 of a taught degree, the Bachelor of Theology, the primary activity of the College was *examining*, mostly through the BD, LTh, and DipRE awards. Examination continues to be a crucial element of the MCD research studies programme, but since 2000 no enrolments have been accepted for the BD or examined Diplomas, and the last examinations take place in 2007. *Teaching* has thus gradually come to the fore in the College's work in the past three decades.

The commencement of the BTheol saw the establishment of separate Boards of Studies: one for the BD and examined Diplomas, the other for the BTheol (the latter transmogrifying into the Board of Undergraduate Studies with the introduction of the taught Diploma of Ministry in 1994). These Boards worked in different ways, guided by an MCD Handbook in two Parts (the final edition being 2001): Part I concerned *examined* awards (the focus of the BD & Diplomas Board); Part II concerned *taught* awards (overseen by the Board of Undergraduate Studies). The latter Board considered the approval of units and faculty proposed by the teaching colleges, the moderation of class marks, and wider matters of educational policy. This Plan owes a considerable debt to policy and procedures developed by this Board.

From 1973 to 2002

From 1990, Advanced Ministry Studies emerged as a professional programme, developing strategies for peer-group learning and wider research methodologies. The programme quickly spread across Australasia, operating out of the MCD office rather than the teaching colleges. Its work was overseen by the Board of Ministry Studies, alongside the Board of Postgraduate Studies: these Boards developed much of the policy on learning through research contained in this Plan.

The end of the BD from 2000 saw new taught awards introduced – Graduate Diplomas, and the MA (1999), then the MDiv (2002) – offered in both face-to-face mode and through ‘accompanied online learning’ (by Trinity College Theological School), renewing a growing emphasis on the student as the focus of learning. This emphasis was strengthened by the development of the annual audit of BTheol class-marks of each teaching college by the Chairs of Examiners, into full audits of each teaching college from 2001, leading to the AUQA audit of the MCD as a whole in 2005.

From 2002 - 2005

Alongside these changes, Commonwealth funding of MCD research activities commenced from 2002. This has fostered a growing research culture across the College, notably through the funding of an MCD Director of Research, and similar part-time positions in each RTI, together with research grants to faculty and research students, and support for library research acquisitions. One major outcome has been steady improvements in research supervision.

With the AUQA audit in view, a ‘Strategic Plan’ was developed in 2004-5. This included Mission, Vision, Values and Context Statements (cited earlier), and aimed to provide a policy framework of “educational coherence, efficient administration, ecumenical commitment and economic viability” – elements now widely internalized across the College. The Plan included a ‘five-year’ stage for MCD Kew staffing, a new shape for the Boards of Study, single-entry enrolment in degrees through the newly-commissioned web-based TAMS database, and a ‘two-year’ stage supporting Field / discipline meetings, the academic grading of all MCD faculty, greater library support, openness to specialist offerings, and a common (electronic) handbook.

This Strategic Plan was overtaken by revision of the MCD Act in 2005, and the subsequent establishment of much simpler and more effective academic structures than could have been dreamed of in 2004. It is striking to note that, except for the academic grading of MCD faculty and the common handbook, all other matters are in place from 2007.

2005: a turning point year

The changes and plans outlined above came together in the crucial events of 2005 – the audit of the MCD as a whole by the Australian University Quality Agency, and full revision of the MCD Act.

In preparation for the AUQA audit, three matters emerged, supported across the College:

- a) The MCD Registrar formulated policies and procedures on Academic Conduct, Grievances and Harassment policy, based on RTI Handbooks. These have been in place since the end of 2004, in accordance with DEST requirements. The nature and number of enquiries from RTIs, however, shows that they are yet to become fully part of the assumed ‘culture’ of teaching and learning across the College.
- b) The Bachelor of Theology is going through a full review, not least in the light of the new graduate coursework awards, and recent growth of Diploma offerings. Since this award remains the base of RTIs’ teaching and learning work, the review is expected to touch wider aspects of pedagogy. It is expected the outcomes of the review will be in place for 2008.
- c) The need for an explicit Teaching and Learning Management Plan (corresponding to the Research and Research Training Management Plan) was recognised.

The Affirmations and Recommendations in the AUQA Report on the MCD take up these matters, in particular affirming “the importance of [the] MCD developing a Teaching & Learning Management Plan” which identifies “a set of negotiated teaching and learning outcomes for the College as a whole, which have been developed through a process of consultation with the new Recognized Teaching Institutions; and a related policy on assessment which makes an explicit statement about assessment requirements across Recognized Teaching Institutions” (Recommendation 8).

Appendix II: Abbreviations

Cwk	Coursework
CwkStC	Coursework Studies Committee of the MCD Academic Board (which includes RTI Coursework Studies Coordinators)
AcadBd	Academic Board
AcadDean	Academic Dean
AssocReg	MCD Associate Registrar
DirResearch	Director of Research (Administration)
ExecAsst	Executive Assistant to the Dean
ExA Finance	Executive Assistant (Finance)
MinSt	Ministry Studies
RRTMP	Research & Research Training Management Plan
RStC	Research Studies Committee of the MCD Academic Board (which includes the RTI and MinSt Research Coordinators)
RTI	Recognised Teaching Institution

A(#), C(#) and R(#) refer respectively to Affirmation #, Commendation #or Recommendation # from the 2005 MCD AUQA Report.

StPlan refers to the 2004 MCD Strategic Plan, adopted by the MCD governing body in 2004.