



ACADEMIC BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

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1. ROLE

The Academic Board is a sub-committee of the Morling College Board, delegated to provide academic governance. Its role is to ensure the academic activities of Morling College Ltd (PRV12034), as a registered independent Institute of Higher Education (IHE), are reputable, of high quality, comply with institutional policy requirements, deliver expected outcomes for students and that all qualifications awarded are credible for the level of qualification involved. It also makes provision for the sharing of expertise between faculties and departments within Morling College (MC), to foster the overall quality of learning, teaching and research.

Its responsibilities encompass learning, teaching, scholarship, research, research training, and professional development. It is accountable to the MC Board for the development of academic strategy, the formulation of academic policy, the promotion of academic integrity, and the management of academic risk.

MC's academic governance must comply with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* under the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*. These standards require a clear demarcation between academic and corporate governance. Research is also governed by *The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*.

2. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for the purpose of this policy:

Key Term or Acronym	Definition
AB	Academic Board
AUT	Australian University of Theology
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
CCSC	The Faculty of Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care, includes professional supervision.
IHE	Institute of Higher Education
MC	Morling College
Member	Unless clearly indicated otherwise, means member of the Academic Board
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency

3. CONTEXT

MC has self-accrediting status authorised by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Authority (TEQSA). MC offers accredited courses in the disciplines of education, counselling, chaplaincy and spiritual care, and professional supervision.

MC also offers courses in theology (AQF 5-10), accredited through a third-party arrangement with the Australian University of Theology (AUT). Consequently, MC's policies will incorporate the appropriate academic requirements for each area according to the relevant accrediting authority.

For MC's theology students study courses from the AUT, academic and student policies are set by the AUT, and these can be located at <https://aut.edu.au/public-policies/>.

MC academic and student policies are set in areas based on its own IHE requirements in education, counselling, chaplaincy and spiritual care, and professional supervision, as well as IHE requirements relevant to the whole institution.

The Academic Board (AB) is the peak academic governance forum for MC. Its role primarily relates to the academic governance of courses offered by MC as an IHE. It relates indirectly to courses provided under third-party arrangements with other IHEs, for sharing expertise between faculties and departments, to foster the quality of learning, teaching and research within MC.

The AB also monitors quality indicators and academic risks for all courses offered at MC.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Establish, monitor, and sustain the high quality, compliance and integrity of the higher education provided by MC.
- 4.2 Confer awards, in accordance with the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) and the AQF *Qualifications Issuance Policy*. Delegate the Chair of the AB the ability to confer awards between meetings at the request of the Director of Student Services, the Dean of Education or the Dean of Counselling, Chaplaincy

and Spiritual Care (CCSC), when deemed necessary and the reason for the conferral is stated.

- 4.3 Ensure quality learning experiences and outcomes for students.
- 4.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of academic activities, including the establishment and external review of institutional benchmarks.
- 4.5 Ensure that the highest standards of academic integrity are maintained in all learning, teaching, and research activities and that all research activities occur under appropriate oversight and ethics approval regimes.
- 4.6 Identify, monitor and address risks to the academic standards and academic integrity of MC.
- 4.7 Oversee the development of new TEQSA complying awards and conducting regular reviews of existing awards.
- 4.8 Determine which courses will be removed from accreditation.
- 4.9 Approve units of study for courses accredited by MC.
- 4.10 Oversee unit moderation processes.
- 4.11 Identify, evaluate, and implement appropriate educational innovations.
- 4.12 Establish, oversee, and review academic policies for courses accredited by MC compliant with:
 - 4.12.1 statutory and regulatory requirements.
 - 4.12.2 MC academic policies, procedures, and standards.
- 4.13 Oversee the development, implementation, and monitoring of strategic plans for research and for learning and teaching.
- 4.14 Appoint committees, including approval of the membership and terms of reference for such committees, to fulfil these responsibilities.
- 4.15 Recommend the appointment of honorary research fellows to the MC Board for approval.
- 4.16 Approve the appointment of honorary research associates and the reappointment of honorary researcher fellows and honorary research associates.
- 4.17 Certify to the MC Board annually that the responsibilities set above have been discharged.

5. SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD

- 5.1 Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)
- 5.2 Research Committee (RC)
- 5.3 Low-Risk Ethics Committee (LREC)

6. MEMBERSHIP

QUALITIES

- 6.1 A person appointed to the AB is to have qualifications and experience appropriate to the discharge of the office as a member of the AB.
- 6.2 Members must subscribe to the Morling College Statement of Faith, the Lausanne Covenant or a statement of faith approved by the Morling College Board.

COMPOSITION

- 6.3 One Chairperson, appointed by the MC Board, who is to be a senior academic and a member of the MC Board.
- 6.4 Academic Dean (appointed the Executive Officer).
- 6.5 Vice-Principal (Academic).
- 6.6 Principal.
- 6.7 Director of Student Services.
- 6.8 One representative from each Faculty area of MC as an IHE (currently Education and CCSC), who shall be either the dean of that faculty or the dean's representative.
- 6.9 One representative from the Faculty of Bible and Theology, who shall be either the dean of that faculty or the dean's representative.
- 6.10 One representative from the Perth campus of MC, appointed by the AB.
- 6.11 One representative from the Brisbane campus of MC, appointed by the AB.
- 6.12 Chair (or representative) of the Learning and Teaching Committee.
- 6.13 Chair (or representative) of the Research Committee.
- 6.14 Chair of the Low-Risk Ethics Committee.
- 6.15 One postgraduate student elected from amongst the students enrolled in the Faculty of Education or the Faculty of CCSC.
- 6.16 Up to four (4) externals - academics or industry practitioners with relevant expertise in one of the disciplines taught at MC, appointed by the AB.
- 6.17 Quality and Compliance Officer.
- 6.18 Secretary (non-voting).

7. TERM OF OFFICE

- 7.1 The term of office for an appointed member of the AB is five (5) years.

- 7.2 An AB member may be appointed for a period of two consecutive 5-year periods, but then is to have a period of no less than one (1) year off the AB before being eligible for reappointment.
- 7.3 The student representative will be elected for a 3-year term. Graduation shall not terminate their membership of the AB.
- 7.4 The Chair of the AB may bring a motion to appoint or remove a member.

8. MEETINGS

- 8.1 There will be a minimum of four (4) meetings per year.
- 8.2 The quorum for meetings will be 50% of the members.
- 8.3 When a member cannot attend a meeting, they may nominate a replacement to attend in their place.
- 8.4 If not in attendance, the Chair will nominate a member to chair the meeting.

CIRCULAR RESOLUTIONS BY EMAIL OR ONLINE POLL

- 8.5 Decisions may be made by circular resolution, or awards conferred by the Chair, between meetings if deemed necessary.
- 8.6 The Chair should determine the time period for voting responses and advise the members accordingly. A circular resolution shall be considered passed when all available members in excess of the normal meeting quorum respond in favour of the resolution.
- 8.7 It is presumed that all members of the committee are present at an email meeting or online poll unless they have advised the Chair of their absence.
- 8.8 If any member votes against the motion, the email or online poll arrangement will, subject to the decision of the Chair, ordinarily, be suspended and a meeting by videoconferencing or teleconferencing convened or the matter adjourned to the next normal meeting at the discretion of the Chair.
- 8.9 All matters determined by means of a circular resolution by email or online poll must be tabled at the following normal meeting to ensure that the resolutions are recorded in the minutes.
- 8.10 Confirmed minutes will be provided to the MC Board.

9. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION

INTERNAL

- Academic Governance Policy
- Conferral Policy: CCSC; Education
- Learning and Teaching Committee Terms of Reference

- Low-Risk Ethics Committee Terms of Reference
- Research Committee Terms of Reference
- Responsible Conduct of Research Guidelines

EXTERNAL

- AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy, Second Edition 2013
- Australian Qualifications Framework, Second Edition 2013
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research.
- TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic Governance (November 2023)
- The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research

10. REFERENCES

- Avondale Academic Board TOR

11. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Changes made
9.00	MC Board	24 November 2025	24 November 2025	Amended 4.15 and 4.16 to clarify AB approves appointment of honorary researcher associates and reappointment of honorary research fellows as per updated policy. Amended 8 to add Circular Resolution arrangements including that they are passed when all available members in excess of the normal meeting quorum respond in favour of resolution. Amended policy to refer to AUT instead of ACT.
8.00	MC Board	18 November 2024	1 January 2025	Added: self-accrediting status; a representative from our Queensland campus (s 6.11); voting rights to the Quality and Compliance Officer. Changed contact details. Minor editing.
7.00	MC Board	11 September 2023	11 September 2023	Changed membership to include the Chair of the LREC, and to reflect changes to structure and roles: Academic Dean now the executive officer; the CAO replaced by the VP (Academic). Clarified membership of academic/industry reps have expertise 'in one of the disciplines taught at MC'
6.01	Policy Coordinator	March 2023	March 2023	Header table updated to include keywords
6.00	MC Board	22 December 2022	1 January 2023	Removed references to the University of Divinity and added 'Professional Supervision' throughout. Added 'The Academic Board is the peak academic governance forum for MC' to the Context Statement. Expanded 4.5 to add clarity. Added Low-Risk Ethics Committee to 5.
5.00	MC Board	29 March 2022	29 March 2022	Added 4.2 and amended 8.4 to include the Chair's conferral of awards. Removed wording from 4.16 made redundant by the above

				changes. 6.14: amended to Senior Quality and Compliance Officer to reflect change in role and title. Added to 9: Australian Qualifications Framework; AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy, Conferral Policy: ED, CCSC
4.01	AB, Leadership Team	September 2021	September 2021	Institute of Higher Education(IHE) replaced Higher Education Provider (HEP), to reflect the change in classification by TEQSA. Membership changes to reflect changes in roles. 6.5: Director of Student Services replaced Registrar. 6.14: Compliance Officer replaced Academic Quality Officer
4.00	AB, MC Board	24 November 2020	1 January 2021	Amended 4.8 to read 'Approve'. instead of 'Oversee the approval of'. Added 4.14. Added 6.2, 6.9, 7.3 and 7.4. Amended 6.7, 6.8 making the Dean or nominee voting members. Amended 7.1, adding '...the Lausanne Covenant or a statement of faith approved by the MC Board. Amended 7.3, adding 'Graduation shall not terminate their membership of the Board.' 9. Added TEQSA documents
3.1	AB, MC Board	21 March 2020	21 March 2020	Added quality and risk monitoring to 3. Added BAT representative (non-voting) member with a standing invitation. Added Secretary (non-voting) to membership.
3.0	AB, MC Board	6 August 2019	6 August 2019	Renamed Academic Board Terms of Reference. Updated to reflect change in MC structure and roles. Added 4.1 and 4.2 to Responsibilities. Added Principal and Academic Quality Officer to Membership. Postgraduate student to be elected for a term of 3 years; included representative from new Research Committee and Learning and Teaching Committees. Removed references to third-party providers and to courses not accredited by MC. Specified that the number of meetings is a minimum.
2.0	AB, MC Board	15 May 2018	15 May 2018	Renamed Academic Board Policy. Updated to reflect changes in TEQSA standards. Membership updated to reflect changes in MC Roles and to generalise representation of third-party providers. Term of office changed from 3 to 5 years. Streamlined and formatted into new template
1.0	AB, MC Board	July 2012	July 2012	Renamed Academic Board Framework. Provided more detail re responsibilities. Updated membership added Terms of Office. Included Board Executive.
0	MC Board	March 2009	March 2009	Original Terms of Reference

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