

Professional Development Plan (PDP) Guidelines

February 2008

(Updated)

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For a soft copy of PDP forms and other information, look on the BUU website www.buu.com.au. Hover your mouse over 'Supporting Pastors' and click on 'PDP'.

Introduction

Pastoral leaders in ministries recognised by the Baptist Union of Victoria (BUV) need to engage in a formal process of evaluation and accreditation every three years. For the purposes of this document the term 'pastoral leaders' refers to pastoral leaders in church-based ministries, chaplains, people engaged in recognised missions, and other forms of recognised ministries. From hereon in these guidelines the term re-accreditation covers pastoral leaders who are currently accredited and those pursuing accreditation for the first time.

Purpose

The purpose of the re- accreditation process is:

- For pastoral leaders to be encouraged in their journey of continued growth in body, mind, spirit and relationships;
- For pastoral leaders to have a structure to review and evaluate their ministry, and to develop Professional and Personal Development Plans (PDP) to map their continued growth in ministry.
- For pastoral leaders to certify their acceptance of and intention to comply with the BUV Code of Ethics.
- For pastoral leaders to be accountable to one other person for their compliance with their PDP and with the Code of Ethics.

Rationale

The PDP re-accreditation process emerged from the report and recommendations of the Ministry Review Task Force (MRTF) which were adopted by the December 2000 Assembly of the BUV. The need for involvement in continuing education, spiritual development and self-care were affirmed as important and valuable, not only for the pastoral leader, but also for the church or context in which the ministry takes place. The adoption of the Code of Ethics followed widespread consultation and workshoping with pastoral leaders and church representatives, with final approval at the November 2005 BUV Assembly.

The PDP Participants

BUV Pastoral leaders, whose names are, included in the 'Ordained and Accredited', 'Recognised Pastoral Leaders', or Candidates for Ordination lists, need to engage in forming a Professional Development Plan (Appendix 4) and a Personal Development Plan (Appendix 5) at least every three years.

Ordination candidates will do a PDP in their ordination year.

PDP participants will develop their plans in consultation with their families, colleagues, regional ministers, mentors, supervisors, spiritual directors, church leaders or members, or whatever combination of these they choose.

Benefits:

A. Pastoral leaders in church ministries:

There are clear benefits in this process for both the pastoral leaders engaged in church ministry and for the churches in which they pastor. The pastoral leaders will have a framework to develop dreams and plans for their continued growth which can then be validated by their church; they will have framework by which they can evaluate their growth as persons and as pastoral leaders; and churches will be able to recognise, affirm and support the need for their pastoral leader(s) to be engaged in significant continuing development.

The process will work optimally if the pastoral leader is supported by the church in the process of continuing education and growth, and has a personal sense of commitment to keeping his/her ministry skills, relationships and spiritual life vital and on a path of growth and discovery, rather than fulfilling an obligation imposed by others.

B. Non-church Based Pastoral leaders:

For pastoral leaders engaged in non church-based ministries (chaplains, teaching etc.) there will also be advantages. Many are already required to undertake regular reviews and appraisals, often with a focus on work and educational performance and goals. In this situation much of the Professional Development Plan will comprise a 'cut-and-paste' of their regular agency reviews. In addition the PDP process will encourage further reflection on their personal and spiritual growth (if not already addressed in their work reviews) and in particular their connection with the BUV, their local church and ecumenical networks.

Please Note:

The re-accreditation process is not a *catch all* for every pastoral and transitional need.

For instance, if a pastoral leader is contemplating leaving a pastoral settlement, or moving from a church-based pastoral ministry to a chaplaincy, s/he may not feel free to include such information in the PDP unless plans are well advanced.

Nor is the process designed to address pastoral leader/congregation conflicts; that is the province of the Regional Ministers.

The Re-accreditation Process

The re-accreditation process may take several months from invitation to completion, although not intensively all of that time. It begins with an invitation from the PDP coordinator to a pastoral leader on a BUV list, to engage the process and attend a PDP seminar.

With the invitation for those who have undertaken the process already, there will be a 'Second Annual Review' form which is returned to the PDP coordinator within a short time. Having attended a seminar and completed and returned the PDP, the next stage is the attendance of the pastoral leader for re-accreditation at a BUV Gathering.

It has been determined that the acceptable period from receipt of the invitation to re-accreditation at Assembly is twelve months. PDP seminars are held several times per year in a variety of locations to ensure that pastoral leaders' PDPs are not delayed because they are unable to attend a seminar. If the process is not completed by the first Gathering after twelve months has elapsed, the pastoral leader's name may be transferred to the 'Unofficial' list unless there are extenuating circumstances. In any event, the process will have to be fully re-engaged, including attendance at another PDP seminar. Extensions of the twelve month period require the approval of the PDP Coordinator.

Following re-accreditation, the pastoral leader needs to submit an 'Annual Review' form and attend an approved professional standards training opportunity each year.

REMEMBER TO RETAIN COPIES OF ALL PDP RELATED DOCUMENTS!

The Three Year Cycle

- Receive Invitation to begin PDP
- Book in and attend Seminar
- Meet with companion (3-4 times throughout the year if already accredited)
- Write PDP, then send to PDP Coordinator
- Receive PDP certificate

Three year period begins

- Meet with companion (3-4 times this year)
- Attend an approved Professional Standards Workshop
- Receive, complete and return Annual Review

End of first year

- Meet with companion (3-4 times this year)
- Attend an approved Professional Standards Workshop
- Receive, complete and return 2nd Annual Review

End of Second year

Some helpful hints:

- You will have received an invitation to re-engage the process, as well as a Second Annual Review. The Second Annual Review will assist you to reflect on your journey in ministry over the last three years; what have you experienced; what have you learned; what study have you engaged in? How have you nurtured yourself physically, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually and socially? Complete and return the Review form to the PDP coordinator, within one month of receiving it.
- In light of your reflection, consider the various aspects of the Personal and Professional Development Plans (Appendices 4 and 5) and what you might need, or wish, to include in your plans for the next three years.
- If you are not currently accredited you will receive an invitation to enter the Professional Development Process

In preparation for your PDP:

- Discuss your reflections and plans with those closest to you; partner, children, trusted friend or colleague, and invite them to indicate areas they think you should focus on. You may wish to discuss your PDP with your Regional Minister.
- Discuss your Professional and Personal Development Plans with your chosen PDP companion and negotiate the terms of your accountability relationship.
- At this point, or earlier, you may choose to discuss your plans with the church leadership, or with representatives of the leadership, or with your agency management. It is entirely your prerogative how much of your PDP you choose to share with the church.

PDP Companion

All people in ministry positions who are accredited by the Baptist Union of Victoria as 'Ordained and Accredited Pastoral Leaders', or 'Recognised Pastoral Leaders' are required to be involved in structures of accountability. For the purposes of the PDP process this involves having a 'PDP companion'.

All PDP Annual Reviews, Professional Development Plan, and Personal Development Plans must be signed by the PDP companion as an indication that s/he is familiar with the pastoral leader's plans and is taking a personal and continuing interest in her/his ongoing development and wellbeing.

Who can be a PDP companion?

There are no specific qualifications for those who serve as PDP companions.

Preferably the companion would be someone with whom the pastoral leader has a current relationship of trust so that the PDP becomes an extension of that relationship.

For example, one's supervisor, mentor or spiritual director would be an ideal choice; a peer support and supervision group could serve as PDP companions for each other; colleagues in ministry (preferably not on the same pastoral team) could companion one another; a mature and trusted member of the congregation would be able to observe a pastoral leader in their context and be able to offer invaluable feedback; likewise a colleague chaplain or chaplain supervisor would be an informed companion.

If possible one should avoid nominating a partner or close family member as this could potentially place unhelpful strains on the relationship.

The primary qualities to be looked for in a PDP companion include:

- A genuine commitment to the pastoral leader and to his/her development as a person and as a professional.
- A willingness to speak honestly and to ask the 'difficult' questions about performance, self care and faithfulness to the PDP and Code of Ethics.
- An understanding and affirmation of the requirements for accountability in the PDP process.
- A preparedness to enter into a long-term (minimum twelve months and preferably three years) commitment with the pastoral leader.
- A deep personal faith and commitment to pray for the pastoral leader.
- An ability to observe absolute confidentiality.
- A strong commitment to the fellowship of the church.

The PDP companion is a vital feature of the re-accreditation process and represents its most rigorous accountability requirement. Whilst the PDP coordinator reviews all

PDPs before re-accreditation, accountability depends on an ongoing relationship of trust and transparency.

For this reason the choice of companion is crucial for the process to be meaningful and beneficial for the pastoral leader and for the church. This is a position of great trust. Only the PDP companion is required to oversee the completed Personal Development Plan of the pastoral leader, and may therefore be privy to sensitive and confidential information.

The basic responsibilities of the companion include:

- Familiarity with the overall objectives and procedures of the re-accreditation process by reading these Guidelines thoroughly and discussing questions with the PDP coordinator if necessary.
- Familiarity with the provisions of the Code of Ethics and the companion to the Code.
- Discuss with the pastoral leader the PDP during the preparation stage.
- Sign the completed Personal Development Plan and the Professional Development Plan.
- Pray regularly for the pastoral leader, his/her family and the church/agency.
- Discuss the First and Second Annual Reviews with the pastoral leader prior to signing.

PDP Companions should enter into this relationship for a minimum of twelve months, but with the view to be a support for the entire three-year cycle. At the end of the agreed period, either renegotiate or terminate the arrangement by mutual agreement. There is no obligation, and there should be no expectation, that the relationship will continue indefinitely.

Notes for the Pastoral Leader regarding their Companion

- The primary responsibility for making the PDP process work lies with the pastoral leader undertaking the PDP and not with the companion. This includes giving serious attention and reflection to the Personal and Professional Development Plans, arranging the meetings with the companion, and ensuring that s/he has a PDP companion for the duration of the three year re-accreditation period (i.e. when the accountability relationship is terminated by either party, the pastoral leader must seek another companion).
- As a guide, each meeting should last approximately an hour and should allow time to hear any current issues facing the pastoral leader, progress on the goals set in the various categories of both PDPs (Professional & Personal), and then time to pray for each other and for the church.
- Anyone who has difficulty identifying a suitable companion should speak to the PDP coordinator or their Regional Minister.

Some helpful questions in assisting Pastoral Leaders in forming their PDP

- Is the pastor taking seriously the need for prayer, rest, Sabbath keeping, relationship with God?
- Is there real accountability reflected in the PDP in terms of mentoring/ supervision/ spiritual direction or spiritual companionship for the next year?

- Are the study and skill development plans clear and realistic?
- Has enough attention been paid to health and lifestyle plans? Are family and personal needs given adequate priority?
- Has adequate attention been paid to financial planning?
- What resources does this pastor need to be able to fulfil his/her PDP? Are there financial or other implications for his/her church?
- Does the pastoral leader grasp and affirm the principles and practice promoted in the Code of Ethics?
- What concerns would you want to raise that do not seem to be covered in the PDP

Code of Ethics

The principal guide for the observance of professional standards by pastoral leaders with the BUV is the Code of Ethics adopted at the November 2005 BUV Assembly. The same Assembly decided to link professional standards and professional ethics by requiring that pastoral leaders assent to the Code of Ethics as part of the PDP process.

It is essential that all pastoral leaders familiarise themselves with the document 'Code of Ethics for Pastoral Leaders – Companion Guide 14 October 2005' which can be downloaded from the BUV website or obtained from the BUV office. A journal article describing the relationship between professional standards and professional development ('Professional Development and Professional Standards: the odd couple in Baptist ecclesiology') is also available on the website and you are encouraged to read it to gain a greater appreciation of the importance of the two.

The provisions of the Code of Ethics are:

1. Pastoral Leaders must exercise ministry within the limits of their expertise and within the Code of Ethics for Pastoral Leaders.
2. Pastoral Leaders must treat those to whom they minister, and all with whom they come into contact, with respect, honesty and compassion.
3. Pastoral Leaders must respect the right of all people to make their own educated decisions and choices in life, and encourage them to move towards maturity in Christ.
4. Pastoral Leaders must refrain from any form of conduct that exploits another for their own advantage or the advantage of any third person.
5. Pastoral Leaders must respect the right of all to whom they minister, to a relationship of mutual trust, privacy and confidentiality.
6. Pastoral Leaders must commit themselves to ongoing personal and professional development.
7. Pastoral Leaders must accept responsibility for their own spiritual, emotional, physical and mental health and act with due care towards their families and friends.
8. Pastoral Leaders must avoid entering into relationships or situations that may diminish their ability to maintain professional integrity and independence.

9. Pastoral Leaders must maintain integrity and exercise faithful stewardship in managing finances.
10. Pastoral Leaders must treat all colleagues in ministry with respect, consideration and fairness.
11. Pastoral Leaders must respect the doctrinal basis and policies of the Baptist Union of Victoria and work within its officially recognized guidelines.
12. Pastoral Leaders must act lawfully at all times, unless to do so would clearly contravene Christian principles or good conscience.

These statements of principle are expanded in the companion to the Code and it is important that you read the complete document to understand the nuances of each of the twelve provisions before signifying your assent in the Professional Development Plan

Annual Reviews

The value of the re-accreditation process is greatly enhanced if the aspirations of the Professional Development Plan and Personal Development Plan are regularly reviewed, and revised if necessary to achieve the pastor's development goals. To this end on the first and second anniversaries of your re-accreditation you will receive an Annual Review form (see Appendix 2 or 3) which you are required to complete, sign, have your PDP Companion sign, and return to the PDP Coordinator.

The primary mode of review is the relationship between the pastoral leader and the PDP Companion, and so both are required to sign the Annual Review form.

Professional Standards Workshops

Attending a Professional Standards (PS) Workshop each year assists pastoral leaders to keep up to speed with matters relating to the Code of Ethics and professional standards. To assist in this a number of workshops will be arranged each year at Baptist events, for example, electives at Gatherings, Whitley School of Ministry, Rev Ups, Rural Ministers' Fellowships, and the Crossway conference.

Due to a variety of reasons, including availability of presenters, there may not be a PS workshop offered at every event. However, to broaden the availability of PS workshops there may also be options available through cooperation with other denominations and training institutions. Details of upcoming approved workshops will be posted and regularly updated on the BUV website.

In addition, other workshops deemed appropriate by individual pastoral leaders can be discussed with the PDP Coordinator for approval. **As part of their PDP it is a requirement for pastoral leaders to attend one approved PS workshop each year.** The PDP Seminar is one such approved workshop.

Frequently Asked Questions

These are typical questions and concerns many in BUV ministry have voiced. This list is not exhaustive; please feel free to contact the PDP coordinator for clarification of the process or specific details of your PDP.

1. With whom do I need to consult when preparing my PDP?

You have multiple options. The consultation guidelines are flexible to accommodate your particular situation and needs, to ensure you can enter into the vital reflective and consultative aspects of the process rather than approaching it as a routine, individual and detached process.

The intention is to offer you a specific opportunity every three years to reflect deeply on your journey in ministry, engagement in continuing education, and continued formation as a person and pastoral leader. The PDP provides a framework for you to reflect on your strengths and weaknesses in skills, personal relationships and spirituality so you can intentionally build on the strengths and strengthen the weaknesses.

People to help you identify strengths, weaknesses and development needs may include:

- your partner.
- a colleague in ministry.
- a trusted member of the church in which you serve.
- a friend who knows and understands you.
- your spiritual director, a mentor or professional supervisor.
- the PDP companion.
- your Regional Minister.

2. How much do I need to do to retain accreditation?

There is no fixed benchmark of hours of involvement in course work, leisure time, supervision, or spiritual direction. Rather the intention is to encourage rounded growth in all areas of life and ministry. Widely varying circumstances and contexts make it impractical and unfair to suggest each person should meet the same requirements.

- A part-time pastoral leader in a rural church would not have the same resources or access to programs and networks as a pastoral leader engaged as a team member in a large suburban church.
- A pastoral leader in industrial chaplaincy would be likely to engage in regular reviews and continuing education – which would meet the study/skill development component of the PDP. Therefore, their reflection and planning would focus on the other PDP sections.

Essentially, your PDP will be treated on its merits and according to the circumstances of yourself and the church/agency in which you minister.

3. Which ministries are acceptable for accreditation?

The MRTF intention was not so much to define what represents a 'ministry' as to articulate a vision for ministries that will serve the church in the future. Any person whose name appears in the list of 'Ordained and Accredited Pastoral Leaders', 'Recognised Pastoral Leaders' or 'Candidates in Training' is required to participate fully in the re-accreditation process. 'Candidates in Training' are required to submit their PDP in their ordination year. If your ministry does not fit into a category usually associated with pastoral ministry, you may wish to discuss it with the Director of Ministries to determine the most appropriate context for your ongoing development in that ministry.

(N.B Discussions are currently being held regarding who is required to undertake accreditation)

4. How does the PDP process affect retired pastoral leaders?

Fully retired 'Ordained and Accredited Pastoral Leaders' are exempt from the PDP process and their names will continue to be included on the list unless other circumstances constrain the BUV Assembly to remove their names. However as long as any pastoral leader is exercising a ministry recognised by the BUV s/he is required to participate in the re-accreditation process.

5. I have difficulty thinking and planning three years ahead.

For some three years will be an ideal time span; for others it will be too long; for still others (e.g. doctoral aspirants) it will be too short. A simple response to this dilemma is to do detailed planning for the next twelve months and have a 'plan in progress' for the remainder. Endeavour to use the PDP format year-by-year through the Annual Development Review to ensure growth and development remains on the agenda throughout the three years between PDPs.

6. Who will decide whether my PDP is acceptable?

Because the PDP is a process and not an examination, there will be a number of levels of assessment. Firstly, **you** will make choices about the categories on the PDP and then share your plans with your PDP companion and others. This is the most important phase of evaluation.

When you are satisfied your PDP is complete, send it to the PDP coordinator for approval. The PDP Coordinator is the only person to sign your PDP.

Note: only the Professional Development Plan is required to be sent, but the Personal plan may be included as well.

7. When do I begin the PDP?

You receive an invitation from the PDP Coordinator to undertake your three-year PDP re-accreditation. If the timing is inappropriate for you because of circumstances (an impending change of ministry context, illness etc) you need to notify the PDP coordinator immediately and negotiate a revised time frame.

You may wish to initiate the PDP process before the three year period has expired, perhaps because you are negotiating a new ministry settlement and would benefit from the evaluation process, or for some other reason. In this case you should first contact the PDP coordinator who will arrange for the documentation to be forwarded to you.

8. Do I have to go to a Gathering to receive my certificate of Accreditation?

The Ministry Review Task Force (MRTF) speaks of a pastoral leader's accreditation being celebrated in a BUV worship context. It is felt that the best context for giving out certificates is at a bi-annual Gathering. The benefits include public recognition, and exposure of the PDP process to the wider church. Should a pastoral leader be unable to attend the next Gathering upon submitting their PDP they will be asked to attend the following Gathering. Under certain circumstances (e.g. Illness) certificates may be sent.

The three year cycle (from an administrative perspective), commences when the certificate is presented.

9. Can my spiritual director or mentor be my companion as well?

Yes. The main consideration to be borne in mind is that the roles are not confused and that the companion functions in that role with both parties being clear. In the section, PDP Companion, from page 7 – there are descriptions of suitable companions.

**Extract from 'A Vision of Ministry' –
extracted from the Ministry Review Task
Force Final Report**

The various consultations signaled a loud call for pastoral leaders to be accountable, supported, growing in various skills and being refreshed.

3.1 We Affirm That:

- *That the call of God is dynamic, thus ongoing discernment and redefinition must continue through the process of formation and ministry, drawing upon feedback from the College, the churches and the Union.*
- *That self awareness, growth and openness to review are necessary through the duration of one's ministry.*
- *The call to ministry is a call to be accountable to each other and to the whole church*
- *Ministry is enhanced by a mutual openness to prayerful scrutiny, encouragement and support*
- *The need and value of recognition: for the guidance of the churches and for individual pastoral leaders*
- *Pastoral leaders need to be continually growing*

3.2 We Have a Vision For:

- *All pastoral leaders recognized for their continuing participation in:*
 - *ministry*
 - *personal development reviews*
 - *training*
- *Pastoral leaders who are continually engaged in spiritual growth and refreshment*
- *Pastoral leaders who are perceptive and self aware and who welcome the encouragement and scrutiny of others in mutual accountability*
- *A flexible, adaptable and adventurous approach to pastoral leadership in a dynamic and changing world*

Annual Review

Pastors Name:
Ministry Context (church and role, chaplaincy description etc):

- This review provides the opportunity for you to review your PDP in the twelve month period since your re-accreditation
- This review should be undertaken in consultation with your PDP Companion

Review Statement:

How many times have you met with your PDP Companion?
Which of the categories in your Professional Development Plan have you been able to complete/satisfy?
Which aspects of your PDP have you been unable to complete/satisfy?
What changes, if any do you wish to make to your PDP?

Second Annual Review

Pastors Name:
Ministry Context (church and role, chaplaincy description etc):

- This review provides the opportunity for you as a pastoral leader accredited by the BUV to review the aspirations in your current *Professional Development Plan* and to evaluate the extent to which they were realised.
- It is also an invitation to reflect upon your spiritual journey and growth in ministry gifts and capabilities.
- A realistic appraisal of the previous three years in ministry will assist you to identify aspects of your self care and growth which can be celebrated / or may need to be strengthened and to help develop a realistic PDP for the next three years.

As you reflect on the time since you were last re-accredited, what aspects of ministry stand out as highlights for you?
How have you grown in terms of your character, capabilities and ministry skills?
What have been your greatest challenges in ministry in this period?
Which of the categories in your Professional Development Plan have you been able to complete / satisfy?
Which aspects of your PDP have you not been able to complete / satisfy?

Professional Development Plan

Pastors Name:
Ministry Context (church and role, chaplaincy description etc):

- This form is a guide for pastoral leaders in the BUV planning their professional development in response to the three-yearly re-accreditation process.
- The headings are to assist in providing direction to reflection on your development needs.
- Be as specific as possible.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS (Quiet days, retreats, spiritual direction etc.)
SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT PLANS (Supervision, Pastors' Support Network, mentoring, etc.)
STUDY DEVELOPMENT PLANS (Courses, conferences, reading etc.)
SKILL DEVELOPMENT PLANS (Courses, coaching, reading etc.)
SHARING IN WIDER CHURCH & COMMUNITY LIFE (Assemblies, denominational & ecumenical roles, community roles etc)

OTHER DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Please indicate if you wish to discuss any aspects of your PDP with:

PDP Coordinator:
Regional Minister:
Other (please specify):

Signed:

Pastoral Leader

PDP Companion

Date: ___ / ___ / ____

___ / ___ / ____

CODE OF ETHICS

I declare that I have read and understood the Baptist Union of Victoria Code of Ethics and undertake to abide by the standards of ethical behaviour described in the Code.

Signature of Pastoral Leader

___ / ___ / ____

Date

Personal Development Plan

Pastors Name:
Ministry Context (church and role, chaplaincy description etc):

- This form is a guide for pastoral leaders in the BUV planning personal development in association with the re-accreditation process.
- This recognises that the demands of ministry can have an impact on one's personal health and family relationships.
- This form is for your personal use and should be shared with your PDP companion. It does not need to be returned to the PDP Coordinator.

<p>PERSONAL HEALTH & LIFESTYLE DEVELOPMENT PLANS (leisure, fitness)</p>
<p>PROVISION FOR PROTECTING TIME WITH FAMILY (holidays, nights at home etc)</p>
<p>FINANCIAL PLANS (Budgeting, debt reduction, saving, retirement preparation)</p>

Signed:

Pastoral Leader

PDP Companion

Date: ___ / ___ / ___

___ / ___ / ___