



Board for Lay Ministry

Accreditation Policy

The Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) is rightly concerned that those who serve as lay workers in the LCA are fully equipped to carry out the service for which they are engaged. They should also have sufficient theological understanding to uphold and promote the teachings of the LCA.

It is a requirement that people employed as lay workers who are not already accredited, work towards accreditation.

The accreditation of lay workers will be based on a blend of theoretical and practical competency-based learning.

The following four core competencies make up the requirement for lay worker accreditation:

1. Theological and Spiritual Development
2. Leadership Development
3. Ministry Skills
4. Personal Attributes

1. Theological and Spiritual Development

The ministry of the lay worker must be underpinned by key Lutheran Theological Foundations and understanding relevant to the ministry context, and the ability to apply that knowledge in ministry. Most importantly the lay worker is on a life-long spiritual journey and must demonstrate a personal faith, a lifestyle consistent with the Gospel, and ongoing commitment to spiritual development.

2. Leadership Development

This area includes the ability to develop and mentor others, manage conflict, direct or influence others, work as a team, facilitate ministry teams, engage, inspire and gain others' commitment. For more specific senior lay work positions it may also include strategic thinking and planning, and advanced people and resource management skills.

3. Ministry Skills

Generic ministry skills include: pastoral care, communication and relationship building skills, ministry planning, goal setting, administration, task and project management and other organizational skills. Other skills will need to be developed that are specific to the ministry role being performed, e.g. those related to being a youth worker, a contemporary worship leader, a spiritual life coordinator, a counsellor, a chaplain.

4. Personal Attributes

To be effective in ministry, lay workers need to develop attributes such as; interpersonal sensitivity, self-awareness, ability to show initiative, responsibility and accountability, self and time management, self-confidence, tenacity and resilience. They also need to be able to recognize and seek help in dealing with their own issues and demonstrate ongoing, self-initiated spiritual, ministry and personal development.

Development of individual learning and professional development pathways

The Board will appoint Lay Worker Formation Officers who will work with all lay workers to ensure they meet the core competencies for accreditation. The LWFO will work with the lay worker and their employer to identify gaps in prior learning and skills development, and determine an appropriate learning plan to resolve these gaps if they exist. The LWFO will be accredited by Board to:

- Be the first point of contact for individuals in developing a learning pathway
- Assist individuals to determine their gifting; including their learning, ministry, spiritual, and vocational pathway.
- Develop a learning plan that reflects the above.
- Facilitate discussions between the lay worker, the employer, the learning providers and others involved in the learning process on an ongoing basis.
- Periodically reviewing the learning plan to determine its ongoing appropriateness.

Flexible training pathways that combine Vocational Education and Training (VET), Higher Education options and on-the-job training within the lay workers ministry context will be encouraged. Assessment for lay worker accreditation will be based on the demonstration of the four core lay worker competencies. This can be done in conjunction with an academic qualification. Ministry and life experience can be used to demonstrate the four core competencies.

Lifelong learning

Learning shouldn't stop with achievement of the required studies. Continuing professional, personal and spiritual development will be important.

Employer commitment to lay worker development

It is the responsibility of the employing body to ensure that lay workers are properly equipped for the area in which they serve.

It will be important for employers to demonstrate their commitment to their lay worker and their development by:

- engaging the Board in the determination of the most appropriate learning pathway
- making time available to undertake development as part of their lay worker's workload
- providing regular ongoing support and feedback
- establishing clear goals and parameters for their lay worker's role

Qualifications

Successfully completing a qualification at Australian Lutheran College in the Certificate IV in Christian Ministry and Theology would lead to the lay worker being eligible to apply for accreditation.

The lay workers role classification might require a qualification which is over and above the Certificate level. Lay Workers will be encouraged to consider a qualification or equivalent that meets the requirements of the position.

Other Board requirements which include:

- Safe Place training
- Child Safe training
- Police checks/blue card

Applying for Accreditation

A lay worker will be eligible to apply for accreditation after they have met the core competencies required for accreditation. They are also required to have worked through the core competencies with a Lay Worker Formation Officer. If the lay worker is considered suitable for accreditation, they will be encouraged to make application for accreditation to the Board.

The Board shall support the training of lay workers through Australian Lutheran College (ALC) and other approved institutions. The Director for Lay Ministry shall liaise with ALC in regard to curricula. The Board shall review annually the appropriateness for education and training requirements for lay workers.

Application for accreditation shall be made to the Director for Lay Ministry on the form obtained from The Director.

When accreditation is granted the Board shall issue a certificate of Accreditation