



Dear

EXAMINING A DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS

Below are the criteria for the examination of any doctoral thesis from the Sydney College of Divinity, however, in the case of the Doctor of Ministry, it is important that they be applied in light of the particular nature of the award. The aim of the DMin is to provide an opportunity for professional development in ministry at the highest academic level, enabling candidates to make a distinct contribution to the profession of ministry through a critical, creative and academically informed investigation of an aspect of the profession.

The DMin thesis is one aspect of the ministry program as a whole, and builds upon four doctoral coursework units, research seminars and colloquia, and panel presentations. The thesis is written to the standard of professional doctorates in Australia. While seeking to make an original contribution, and respecting the canons of scholarship and the requirements for critical research of doctoral quality, the thesis should demonstrate ministerial practice informed by research, often of a multi-disciplined nature.

As a project in the broad field of ministry and practice, the work will be shaped according to the needs and requirements of the particular situation or question, and so may not conform to the expectations customary for a PhD or ThD. Often the study is an intentional application of theory to a specific situation. As well, many DMin theses will have practical components, for example a thesis might include the development of a teaching program in a particular area or the planning, execution and evaluation of a particular strategy for ministry. Another factor is length. The research piece already builds upon four completed coursework units and other presentations. Consequently the DMin thesis is approximately 60,000 words, a condition that sets limits both on what the candidate can write and what the examiner can reasonably expect.

It is with these points in mind that you as examiner are asked to use the following criteria to grade the thesis.

Dr Margaret Beirne
Director of Research

CRITERIA FOR EXAMINATION OF A DOCTORAL THESIS

The Thesis should be assessed, amongst other things, by the following:

1. The clarity with which the research question/problem is stated and the scope of the study defined.
2. The appropriateness of the theoretical or conceptual framework to the investigation.
3. The appropriateness of the methodology in relation to the research question/problem.
4. The precision and consistency with which key terminology is used.
5. The depth of the critical assessment of the relevant literature.
6. The capacity to demonstrate a link between the literature review and the research question/problem.
7. The degree of skill in constructing arguments and sustaining a position throughout the thesis.
8. The level of competency in considering possible objections to the position advanced in the thesis.
9. The high degree of proficiency in using rigorous argument.
10. The careful and accurate presentation of the scholarly apparatus.
11. The originality and the level of contribution made to the understanding of the subject.
12. The suitability of a substantial amount of the material for publication.
13. A clear statement of the conclusions reached.
14. The conclusions are justified by the arguments presented.
15. An ability to relate the conclusions of the study to the wider discipline.