



Uniting College  
Learn. Lead. Live.



# Period of Discernment

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## Welcome to the Period of Discernment

The Period of Discernment (PoD) is a structured process that helps you consider God's call through a combination of reflection, prayer, conversation and learning.

It combines formal study with pastoral guidance to help you enrich your relationship with God, recognise your skills and knowledge, and discern what kind of ministry you are being called to.

You may discern you are called to ministry within your local community of faith or an agency of the church, within the wider community or your workplace.

Alternatively, you may discern you are called to serve as a Youth Leader, Elder or Pastoral Carer or in one of the specified ministries in the Uniting Church (Ministry of Deacon, Minister of the Word, Minister of Pastor or Lay Preacher).

You will be guided by a supportive mentor as you undertake formal study, (including a study of the history and polity of the Uniting Church), get a taste for ministry through experience and attend a discernment retreat.

Throughout this process you will record your thoughts and reflections that will form a basis for discussion with your mentor and your final presentation to the Period of Discernment Team where you will share what you have discerned.

The length of the PoD is generally 12 months, however this can be shortened to recognise prior learning and ministry experience, or extended, if required.

This is an exciting and important journey where you will be supported as you explore your call, and one I feel privileged to be part of.

### **Judyth Roberts**

Period of Discernment Coordinator

# About the Period of Discernment

## Availability

The Period of Discernment is available to anyone who is in good standing in a congregation or faith community within the Uniting Church, regardless of academic background. People seeking appointment as a Deacon or Minister of the Word are required to undertake the PoD and have been a confirmed member of the Uniting Church for 12 months prior to applying for candidature.

## Study Requirements

You will be required to study two units comprising of a compulsory core unit and an elective. The core unit is 'Engage in our Christian Heritage' (VET Course Code 10496NAT). It is a vocational and educational unit that explores the history and polity of the Uniting Church, which is presented via a blend of online and distance teaching. It can be completed in 80 weeks of part-time study. Through the R H White Trust, you can apply for a scholarship for the compulsory core unit, 'Engage in our Christian Heritage'. An application form is available online: [www.unitingcollege.org.au/enrolment/scholarships](http://www.unitingcollege.org.au/enrolment/scholarships).

You can choose your elective from any that makes up the Certificate IV Christian Life and Ministry, Diploma of Ministry, Bachelor of Ministry or Bachelor of Theology. Please see the Adelaide College of Divinity handbook for further details and enrolment forms.

## Learning and Serving Agreement

With your mentor you will develop a 'Learning and Serving' agreement outlining a process, by which you agree to gain academic study and practical ministry experience during your PoD.

## Portfolio

Throughout the Period of Discernment you may wish to record your thoughts and reflections in a portfolio, which can take any form and include writing, photography, video or other creative elements. At the end of your PoD you will be required to write a 1000 word article summarising your experiences and reflections for the PoD Team. The L&S will form the basis of your discussions in your monthly mentor meetings as you as you reflect on your progress and discern God's call on your life.

## Discernment Retreats

It is recommended that you attend at least one overnight retreat to reflect on what has already happened in your life, what is currently happening, and where God might be leading you. The retreats are lead by experienced ministry practitioners at the Nunyara Conference Centre in Belair. All meals are provided. The PoD Administrator will provide further details.

## Code of Ethics Training

It is recommended that you attend this two day, non-accredited training about the Uniting Church's code of ethics, including the prevention of sexual misconduct. Code of ethics training is essential study for candidates for ministry.

## Location

Adelaide College of Divinity Campus  
34 Lipsett Tce BROOKLYN PARK SA

## Fees and Costs

The Period of Discernment attracts the following fees and costs:

- an administration fee of \$50 that is payable at is the time of registration
- study units attract the normal fees, which are payable at the time of enrolment (you can apply for a scholarship to cover the cost)
- the cost of attending a discernment retreat is to be advised closer to the date

## For enquiries contact us on

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**w:** [unitingcollege.org.au](http://unitingcollege.org.au)

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**Uniting College** is a member of the **Adelaide College of Divinity**. The **Adelaide College of Divinity** is an accredited Higher Education Provider and Registered Training Organisation RTO Code: 4863.



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