

---

# Contemplatively Forming Tomorrow's Spiritual Directors

---

Formation Guidelines for  
Spiritual Directors in  
Australia (Revised 2016)

---

Australian Ecumenical Council for  
Spiritual Direction

*- serving the spiritual direction community of Australia*

[www.spiritualdirection.org.au](http://www.spiritualdirection.org.au)

---

## **1 Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

Alongside international, national and local spiritual direction associations, the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction (AECSD) serves the Australian spiritual direction community. AECSD's assistance has included developing guidelines to form spiritual directors.<sup>2</sup> AECSD's *Standards for the Formation of Spiritual Directors (2005)*<sup>3</sup> and *Formation Guidelines (2008)* offered recommendations to spiritual direction formation programs about processes for selecting applicants and developing programs for forming spiritual directors.

## **2 Background to the Current Formation Guidelines (2016)**

During 2013-2015, AECSD reviewed its *Formation Guidelines (2008)*. The review surveyed current Australian spiritual direction formation programs and a broad range of local and international spiritual directors. An analysis of this data supported the *Formation Guidelines (2008)* and identified areas for further development.<sup>4</sup> Most significant of these was to incorporate a greater emphasis on the contemplative focus of the work. These 2016 *Formation Guidelines* build on and extend the 2008 revision by incorporating key findings from the survey.

## **3 Discerning Appropriate Contemplative Learning Strategies**

To apply for AECSD recognition, AECSD recommends a spiritual direction formation program first discern what is the program's **contemplative ethos**<sup>5</sup> that shapes how it forms spiritual directors. Once the contemplative ethos is identified, the program then specifically tailors AECSD's **Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning**<sup>6</sup> approach to form spiritual directors to fit the program's contemplative ethos. Therefore, the course is determined by the program's specifically tailored contemplative learning outcomes. Participants are required to display these outcomes on completing the program. Further, programs adapt their specific contemplative learning outcomes to the context within which they form spiritual directors. Examples include Practitioner-Apprentice,<sup>7</sup> Academic, Rural and Remote Area, and Distance Education.

## **4 Identifying the Contemplative Learning Outcomes**

AECSD recognises a spiritual direction formation program that specifically tailors the following three contemplative learning outcomes<sup>8</sup> to fit the program's contemplative ethos.

On completing a program, participants:

### **4.1 Hold a *contemplative attitude*<sup>9</sup> to themselves:**

Participants will integrate a contemplative approach into their lives demonstrating a clear understanding of, and personal transformational engagement<sup>10</sup> with, the principal spiritual practices consistent with the contemplative ethos specific to each program.

### **4.2 Adopt a *contemplative stance*<sup>11</sup> to their directees:<sup>12</sup>**

Participants will integrate a contemplative stance into their practice demonstrating:

#### **4.2.1 Knowledge of, and personal transformational engagement with:**

4.2.1.1 the scriptures, theologies and their associated spiritual traditions and cosmologies relevant to spiritual direction<sup>13</sup> practice;

4.2.1.2 developmental models of psycho-spiritual growth;

#### **4.2.2 Understanding of, and personal transformational engagement with:**

4.2.2.1 spirituality;<sup>14</sup>

4.2.2.2 the nature of religious experience;

4.2.2.3 the attitude required to adopt a contemplative stance relevant to directees' diverse life-contexts.

4.2.3 Proven ability in a broad range of spiritual direction attributes including to:

4.2.3.1 listen deeply;

4.2.3.2 discern with directees the presence of what they perceive as ultimate<sup>15</sup> in their lives.

4.2.4 Effective engagement in a supervised practicum with directees.

4.3 *Practice in an **ethical and professional manner**:*

On completing a program, participants will demonstrate the ability to develop and maintain a spiritual direction practice that adheres to the *AECSD Code of Ethics for Spiritual Directors* and relevant Australian State, Territory and Federal legislation.

4.4 A fourfold understanding of contemplative learning underpins the three contemplative learning outcomes.<sup>16</sup> The fourfold understanding incorporates the following formation agendas:

4.4.1 Transforming - opportunity to experience directly that which is beyond one's present ability to comprehend the Divine Mystery and journey with a diverse range of directees.

4.4.2 Conforming - engage with the disciplines of the traditions and community expectations that inform the spiritual direction vocation. These include the practices of confidentiality, hospitality and mutual respect for peers and directees.

4.4.3 Performing - the process of cultivating competencies in spiritual direction practice including how to listen contemplatively to and engage with directees.

4.4.4 Informing - bringing something of the academic discipline to understanding the basis on which spiritual direction practice and personal engagement are grounded and understanding the wisdom passed down from the generations of spiritual directors who have gone before.

(Appendix A details examples of the contemplative learning associated with each formation agenda.)

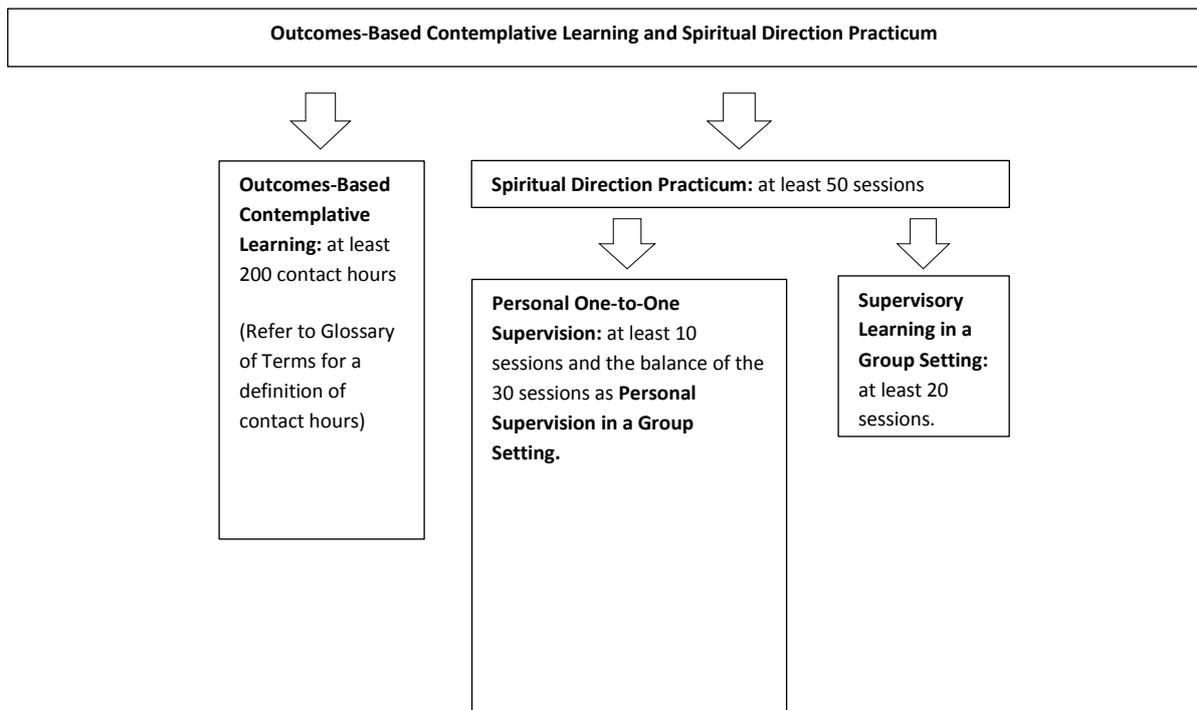
## **5 Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning and Spiritual Direction Practicum**

In specifically tailoring the three contemplative learning outcomes to fit a spiritual direction formation program's contemplative ethos, AECSD recommends that a program includes two elements.

1. At least 200 contact hours<sup>17</sup> of Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning.

2. A spiritual direction practicum with at least 50 sessions of supervision<sup>18</sup> for each participant. The 50 sessions consist of 30 sessions of personal supervision<sup>19</sup> and 20 sessions of supervisory learning in a group context.<sup>20</sup> Each session will be at least 45 minutes duration.

The 30 sessions of personal supervision include two modes of supervision: at least 10 sessions of one-to-one supervision between a participant (supervisee) and a supervisor, and the balance of the 30 sessions as personal supervision in a group setting.



Group settings may include accompanying fellow participants in dyads, triads, quads and so on. In group-settings, the supervisor should be present throughout the session. Only the person directly receiving supervision in the group contexts claims the time as part of his or her total number of sessions of personal supervision. The other group members may claim the time towards their 20 sessions of supervisory learning in a group context.

During both modes of personal supervision, participants discuss supervisory concerns. Supervisors need to ensure that the contemplative learning approach is an integral part of the supervisory process. Supervisory concerns may arise in the following contexts: when accompanying *either* fellow participants in a spiritual direction session in a group setting (internal directees) *or* people from outside the program whom participants may accompany (external directees). External directees may be people with whom they meet for regular spiritual direction or people whom they companion on a retreat.

## 6 A Pathway to Becoming a Spiritual Director

AECSD recommends that a spiritual direction formation program have a clearly presented outline of the program's content and procedures. It also recommends that in progressing towards achieving the desired three AECSD contemplative learning outcomes, the program be structured as a transformative, developmental process.

## **7 Assessment**

For each stage of the course, AECSD recommends that the spiritual direction formation program base its assessment on the three AECSD recommended contemplative learning outcomes as specifically tailored to fit the program's contemplative ethos. The contemplative learning outcomes combined with the content for individual courses provide a framework or grid for the design of assessment. Assessment may include essays, reflective papers, book reviews, oral presentations, participation in group-activities, supervision reports, discerning together through discussion and conversation with a program facilitator, self-assessment and review. The appropriate means of assessment will be determined by and be consistent with a program's paradigm. Examples include Practitioner-Apprentice, Academic, Rural and Remote Area, and Distance Education.

## **8 Requirements for the Acceptance of Applicants into a Spiritual Direction Formation Program**

AECSD recommends that applicants:

- 8.1 express a sense of call to the ministry of spiritual direction;
- 8.2 demonstrate a capacity to listen empathetically and sensitively;
- 8.3 have enough life experience to enable them to respond with wisdom to people from diverse lifestyles and with different levels of experience;
- 8.4 show an openness to learning from their and others' lived experience;
- 8.5 evidence a maturing spirituality and openness to other worldviews;
- 8.6 demonstrate a commitment to prayer and reflection;
- 8.7 have been engaged in receiving spiritual direction for some time;
- 8.8 show evidence of having the charism of spiritual direction.

## **9 Recommendations for the Application Process**

To apply for admission, AECSD recommends that applicants:

- 9.1 be given a clear outline of the program, indicating forms of assessment and expectations on completion of the course;
- 9.2 complete a detailed application form and an autobiography;
- 9.3 submit two recommendations from referees who may be consulted (excluding an applicant's current spiritual director);
- 9.4 participate in an assessment interview with two of the formation team who will assess the applicant's willingness and aptitude to engage in the process of formation. The interview may use videoconferencing, telephone or other appropriate means because of issues of distance and accessibility.

## **10 Periodic Program Review**

Recognition is granted for eight years, at which time the program will be reviewed by AECSD on the basis of updated information provided on the program. The review will be conducted in consultation with the formation program in accordance with the *Formation Guidelines (2016)*.

## **11     *The Contemplative Learning Environment***

AECSD recommends that a robust spiritual direction formation program will include attention to how the following shape participants' learning:

- 11.1    the formative process;
- 11.2    the formators;
- 11.3    the participants' awareness of the contemplative ethos of the program;
- 11.4    how a sense of community develops among the formation team and the participants during a program.

## **12     *Management and Administration of the Program***

AECSD recommends that a spiritual direction formation program ensure that its formation processes and administrative support structures support the Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning approach.

AECSD recommends the administrative process include:

- 12.1    appropriate Occupational, Health and Safety Policies and Procedures to provide a safe contemplative learning environment;
- 12.2    a code of conduct to address participants' grievances;
- 12.3    comprehensive Professional Indemnity and Public Risk insurances;
- 12.4    a Register of the formation team's Australian Federal Police Clearances and the respective State or Territory Working with Children Cards;
- 12.5    guidelines about the formation team staying abreast of developments in the field of spiritual direction through participating in professional development.

## **13     *Credentials of the Formation Team***

AECSD recommends that the core team members of a spiritual direction formation program:

- 13.1    are qualified, practising spiritual directors with proven ability, charism and at least five years' experience after completing a program;
- 13.2    are experienced in the supervision of ministry and in adult education as consistent with the context in which they form spiritual directors. Examples include Practitioner-Apprentice, Academic, Rural and Remote Area, and Distance Education;
- 13.3    engage in ongoing professional development;
- 13.4    hold a current Australian Federal Police Clearance and a Working with Children Card for the respective State or Territory in which the program operates.

## **14     *How a Spiritual Direction Formation Program Applies for AECSD Recognition***

The program forwards an application (two hard copies and one digital copy) to the AECSD Secretary with the recommended financial contribution<sup>21</sup> made payable to the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction. The application demonstrates how the program adheres to the Formation

Guidelines (2016) by noting page/paragraph/ numbered item next to each of the items on the Application Checklist that AECSD uses to review an application (See Appendix B).

## **15 Application Process**

i) Recognition is a collaborative process between the AECSD ('the council') and Formation Programs, grounded in a relationship of mutual trust.

Therefore, the council welcomes early engagement with a formation program ('the program') which is considering applying for recognition, even as early as the initial development stage in the process.

The council will appoint representative(s) to be available to work with the formation program throughout this contemplative process.

(ii) The director and /or team members of the program examine and assess their program in the light of the Formation Guidelines (2016).

They may make changes and adjustments to their program to ensure it is faithful to the Guidelines.

iii) The program director submits their Application for Recognition Checklist [See Section 14 and Appendix B of the Formation Guidelines (2016)] to the council, indicating they are confident their program is faithful to the Formation Guidelines (2016) to the best of their knowledge and interpretation.

Throughout this contemplative process the program director and representative(s) nominated by the council discuss any issues arising from their joint review of the submitted checklist that may seem to hinder the program fulfilling the Formation Guidelines (2016).

iv) The council representative(s) consults with the council during this ongoing process.

v) At some point the council representative(s) will arrange with the program director a mutually convenient time to visit the program to talk with the program team, supervisors, participants, and graduates (if possible), and which may include sitting in on selective sessions of the program, in order to experience the contemplative nature of the program.

vi) This ongoing collaborative process facilitates the council and program team's discernment that the program fulfils the Formation Guidelines (2016).

vii) The council representative(s) present a report to the council recommending recognition, a copy of which is sent to the program director.

viii) Following completion of at least one cycle of the program, the council recognises the program, signs and issues the Certificate of Recognition.

The program director may invite a council member to celebrate this recognition with the program community.

The recognition process is marked by mutual trust, respect and affirmation.

For further information please contact:

The Secretary  
Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction  
[E.secretary@spiritualdirection.org.au](mailto:E.secretary@spiritualdirection.org.au)

## APPENDIX A

### Examples of Contemplative Learning

Transformative contemplative learning in this agenda may include participants:

- demonstrating a personal awareness of their gifts and limitations
- expressing an openness to journeying with a diverse range of directees
- participating in regular reflective conversations with their formator, discerning together what has taken place, what interior movements have been noticed, and what growing edges have been identified
- exhibiting the capacity to be able to self-review; noticing their progress in areas such as deepening authenticity and openness to feedback

Conformative contemplative learning in this agenda may include participants:

- demonstrating an ability to hold in confidence material related to group interactions
- respectfully engaging with their peers and directees
- conforming to the requirements of the *Formation Guidelines (2016)*
- comprehending the implications and responsibilities outlined in the *AECSD Code of Ethics*
- practising in line with the distinctive characteristics of the tradition of spiritual direction on which the formation program is based

Performative contemplative learning in this agenda may include participants:

- participating as a spiritual director in a minimum of 10 spiritual direction sessions external to the program
- producing a weekly journal entry about their experience of spiritual direction practice
- presenting at least five verbatim reports to a personal supervisor
- demonstrating the skills of contemplative listening
- exhibiting the ability to evoke contemplative awareness within directees
- demonstrating the capacity to articulate movements in conceptualisation and understanding through reflection papers

Informative contemplative learning in this agenda may include participants:

- articulating the distinctive characteristics of spiritual direction practice
- conversing with a range of approaches to prayer
- comprehending the theological foundations of spiritual direction
- being assessed through discussion, conversation or reflection paper
- writing reflection papers in response, for example, to *lectio divina*, a history of spirituality, theological background, or the particular learnings gained through an exercise or prayer experience

## APPENDIX B

### Application for Recognition Checklist

1. The name of the spiritual direction formation program;
2. The name(s) and contact details of the person(s) who coordinates the application for the program;
3. Date of application;
4. Recommended financial contribution;
5. How the application addresses the following:
  - 5.1 the specific contemplative ethos that underpins the program (See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, section 3);
  - 5.2 a detailed outline of the course content for each segment as set out in Appendix C (See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, sections 4,5, 6 and 7);
  - 5.3 a detailed outline of the application process to enter a program (See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, sections 8 and 9);
  - 5.4 how the formation team periodically plans to assess the program in light of any updates in accordance with the *Formation Guidelines (2016)* (See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, section 10).
  - 5.5 the contemplative learning environment with particular reference to the formative process, the formators, the participants' awareness of the program's contemplative ethos and how a sense of community develops among the formation team and participants during a program (See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, section 11);
  - 5.6 how the program ensures that its formation process and administrative structures support the Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning (See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, section 12);
  - 5.7 a comprehensive list of the formation team and their credentials including:
    - 5.7.1 how long they have been a spiritual director;
    - 5.7.2 their experience in supervision of ministry and adult education as consistent with the context in which they form spiritual directors. Examples include Practitioner-Apprentice, Academic, Rural and Remote Area, and Distance Education;
    - 5.7.3 their engagement in ongoing professional development;
    - 5.7.4 and their current Australian Federal Police Clearance and a Working with Vulnerable People or Working with Children Card for the respective State or Territory in which the program operates (See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, section 13).

5.8 a detailed outline of:

- 5.8.1 the relevant Occupational, Health and Safety Policies and Procedures necessary to provide a safe contemplative learning environment;
- 5.8.2 a code of conduct to address participants' grievances;
- 5.8.3 comprehensive Professional Indemnity and Public Risk insurances;
- 5.8.4 guidelines about the formation team staying abreast of developments in the field of spiritual direction through taking part in professional development (See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, section 12).

## APPENDIX C

- 1 *Name of the program's segment*
- 2 *Content*  
Include detailed description of the content of the segment. See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, sections 4 and 5.
- 3 *Contemplative learning outcomes*  
On completing this segment, it is expected that participants will be able to name contemplative learning outcome(s). See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, section 4.
- 4 *Assessment*  
List and describe the types of assessment appropriate for the segment alongside the desired contemplative learning outcomes being assessed. See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, section 7
- 5 *Teaching Methods*  
Describe teaching methods. See Section 7 in *Formation Guidelines (2016)* and Contact Hour in Glossary of Terms, p 14.
- 6 *Number of Contact hours or Supervision Sessions*  
List hours whether contact hours or supervision sessions specifying whether the sessions are one-to-one personal supervision, personal supervision in a group setting or supervisory learning in a group context. See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, section 5.
- 7 *Name(s) of formation personnel facilitating the segment.* See *Formation Guidelines (2016)*, section 13.
- 8 *Recommended reading list* (recommended reading if applicable).

## ***Glossary of Terms***

### ***Contemplative Learning and Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning***

'Contemplative learning' underpins 'Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning'.<sup>22</sup> Contemplative learning assumes spiritual direction formation is about contemplatively forming a person in a program that specifically tailors AECSD's three contemplative learning outcomes to fit the program's contemplative ethos.

The 'spiritual director in process' is the outcome of contemplatively forming a person in a formation program. Implying from the gospel imperative that by their fruits you will know them (Mt 7:16), the fruitfulness of contemplative learning is demonstrated by how it produces assessable practical outcomes in the spiritual directors it forms. This is Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning.

Adrian Van Kaam describes formative spirituality as

... an intimate participation in an all pervasive mystery of formation and transformation, in commitment to and congeniality with our own formation tradition, and where and when possible, in compatibility with the varied ways in which the same mystery may speak to adherents of other traditions in their genuine striving for intimacy with the mystery.<sup>23</sup>

Taking a similar approach, Paul Bramer suggests a spiritual formation process has four aspects.

One is creating the opportunity for direct experience of God and God's grace; a second is implementing disciplines of reflection for savoring and learning, another is cultivating competencies in those who would facilitate spiritual formation, and the last is developing spirituality and spiritual formation as an academic discipline.<sup>24</sup>

Bramer's categories could be described as these four formative outcomes: the transforming, conforming, performing and the informing agendas. Each agenda distinguishes the various elements of contemplative learning that a formation program needs to incorporate.

**The transforming agenda** - *opportunity for direct experiencing that which is beyond one's present ability to comprehend the Divine Mystery.*

Transformation is described as "... a permanent shift of consciousness and such a transformation can occur in both individual and collective consciousness".<sup>25</sup> The transforming agenda identifies the recognised elements of the program that relate to the personal development of participants above and beyond their specific formation as spiritual directors while acknowledging the impact of their development on their practice as spiritual directors. This agenda would encompass such aspects as:

1. the personal contemplative attitude of the participant;
2. developing their spiritual practices in support of their vocation as spiritual directors;
3. participants' self-awareness;
4. openness to diversity;
5. ability to journey with a range of directees.

**The conforming agenda** - *engage with the disciplines of the traditions that inform one's spiritual direction vocation.*

The conforming agenda refers to the requirements for programs to correspond to:

1. agreed relational understandings of confidentiality, mutual respect and support
2. particular traditions of spiritual direction dictated by the organisation running the program;
3. standards of formation as outlined in the *Formation Guidelines (2016)*;
4. ethical standards reflecting the responsibilities and expectations of the broader community;
5. academic and training standards in situations where programs are associated with academic institutions;
6. communities of faith and support.

**The performing agenda** - *the process of cultivating competencies in the spiritual direction practices.*

The performing agenda refers to activities and exercises incorporated into the program to ensure that practical application of vocational attributes and disciplines have been engaged adequately as part of the forming process. The performing agenda in spiritual direction formation programs may be described in terms of:

1. fieldwork requirements;
2. small group practical spiritual direction sessions;
3. verbatim supervision sessions;
4. personal supervision;
5. written assignments;
6. journals;
7. workshop presentations;
8. retreat participation.

**The informing agenda** - *bringing something of the academic discipline to understanding the basis on which spiritual direction practice and personal engagement are grounded.*

The informing agenda describes aspects of formation that rely on the transfer of information to inform what it means to be a spiritual director. This information could include such aspects as:

1. the historical background of spiritual direction traditions;
2. concepts such as prayer, listening, discernment and experience;
3. theological background;
4. understanding of spirituality;
5. psychological issues and other related areas;
6. the distinction between spiritual direction and other helping professions.

AECSD encourages each formation program to devise a formation program that, based on AECSD's three contemplative learning outcomes, integrates the four agendas into its approach to contemplative learning.

### ***Personal Transformational Engagement***

'Personal Transformational Engagement' is the particular manner in which a participant engages formation to integrate the outcomes from the above four formational agendas into a contemplative approach that is reflected in his or her life and interactions with directees.

### ***Spirituality***

In general, contemporary spirituality distinguishes three dimensions.<sup>26</sup> The first dimension concerns the experience itself<sup>27</sup> that transpires at a real or existential level.<sup>28</sup> At this level, spirituality is a fundamental aspect of every human being,<sup>29</sup> which is not immediately evident.<sup>30</sup> At this deep

spiritual core, people encounter the transcendent dimension of their being; they connect to ultimate reality.<sup>31</sup> Here, people build the capacity to develop beyond themselves in relationship with others, with God and the cosmic world in understanding, liberty and love.<sup>32</sup>

The second dimension<sup>33</sup> of spirituality concerns the lived actuality of this first dimension.<sup>34</sup> This second dimension seeks to integrate all aspects of human experience in the pursuit of integration through self-transcendence<sup>35</sup> rather than restrict its concern to the interior life.<sup>36</sup> At this second dimension, spirituality incorporates the particular social and enculturated spirituality through which a person engages his or her spirituality.<sup>37</sup> This second dimension is often associated with beliefs, rituals, symbols and various schools or traditions of Christian spirituality.<sup>38</sup> This second dimension of spirituality is concerned with prayer, spiritual accompaniment, the different maps of the spiritual path, and the means of progress in the spiritual journey.<sup>39</sup>

The third dimension<sup>40</sup> is simply the practical or academic investigation of the two prior dimensions;<sup>41</sup> it is necessarily interdisciplinary<sup>42</sup> and takes note of contextual issues such as feminist concerns, the link between prayer and social justice, the wisdom of classical spiritual texts, developmental psychology and personal experience as the starting point of scholarly reflection.<sup>43</sup>

### ***Contemplative Stance and Contemplative Attitude***

First, drawing on the above contemporary description of spirituality, to 'contemplate' is to adopt an intentionally open and free approach to the whole of life and the presence of what one perceives as ultimate in all that one experiences. Second, 'attitude' refers to how a director and directee respectively approach their individual experience. Third, 'stance' is the approach a director takes to a directee. Therefore, 'contemplative attitude' refers to how a director and directee intentionally approach, in an open and free manner, the presence of ultimacy within their respective individual experiences. 'Contemplative stance' is the way a director notices and attends to the transforming engagement between a directee and what is ultimate within a directee's life experience.

### ***Spiritual Direction***

Various terms describe the ministry of spiritual accompaniment. This document uses the term 'spiritual direction' because of its common usage in the Christian tradition. In spiritual companionship, while holding a contemplative attitude towards him or herself, a spiritual director contemplatively attends to the transforming engagement between a directee and what is ultimate within a directee's life experience.

### ***Spiritual Director***

A 'spiritual director' is a person who while holding a contemplative attitude towards him or herself, contemplatively attends to the transforming engagement between a directee and what is ultimate within a directee's life experience.

### ***Directee***

A 'directee' is a person whom a director accompanies to help deepen how he or she attends to and engages with what is ultimate.

### ***Contemplative Ethos***

The 'contemplative ethos' of a program is the particular guiding beliefs or ideals that fashion the distinctive character or charism of a program's reflective approach to spiritual direction.

### **Contact Hour**

A 'contact hour' is equal to fifty minutes of continuous attendance and participation in a program that meets the recommendations of these *Formation Guidelines (2016)*. For example, if a formation program holds a training day from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, the eight clock hours could equate to eight, fifty-minute contact hours. The other eighty minutes for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea are included as contact hours.

### **Contemplative Learning and Teaching Methods**

Below are examples of contemplative learning and teaching methods that facilitate contemplative learning contact between the formation team and participants:

- Lecture: A presentation or talk on a particular topic;
- Seminar: A discussion or classroom session focusing on a particular topic or project;
- Tutorial: A meeting involving one-to-one or small group supervision, feedback or detailed discussion on a particular topic or project;
- Supervision: A meeting with a supervisor to discuss a particular piece of work (other than spiritual direction Practicum sessions);
- Practical classes and workshops: A session involving the development and practical application of a particular skill or technique;
- Reflective practice: Participation in and the leading of contemplative worship, liturgy;
- Fieldwork: Practical work conducted at an external site;
- External visit: A visit to a location outside of the usual learning spaces, to experience a particular environment, event, or exhibition relevant to the course of study.
- Intentional community time and transformative conversation.
- Modelling process: Formators are modelling the way of life and of prayer for participants in much the same way as leaders in a monastery have done in the past, as detailed in the Rule of St Benedict: "The prioress or abbot provides an environment that confronts the monastic with the presence of God that shows them the Way. After that it is up to the monastic to let the practices of the community and the rhythm of the prayer life work their way until the piercing good of God rises in them like yeast in bread."<sup>44</sup>

### **Supervision**

'Supervision' is a formal, collaborative process that monitors, develops and supports participants ensuring that the contemplative, formative approach is an integral part of the supervisory process. Supervision assesses and extends competencies, ensures adherence to standards and allows an individual's style to develop.

### **Personal Supervision**

'Personal supervision' is with a supervisor either in a one-to-one or in a small group setting.

### **Supervisory Learning in a Group Context**

'Supervisory learning in a group context' is the learning a group member receives through taking part in and attending to another group member's personal supervision in a small group (e.g., triads, quads).

---

<sup>1</sup> Background discussion and rationale available at [www.spiritualdirection.org.au](http://www.spiritualdirection.org.au)

<sup>2</sup> See definition of 'Spiritual Director', Glossary of Terms, p 13.

- 
- <sup>3</sup> The 2005 Interim Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction prepared this document for the 2006 Inaugural Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction.
- <sup>4</sup> The qualitative analysis of the 186 survey respondents used QSR International Nivo 10 software to identify the three contemplative learning outcomes the *Formation Guidelines (2015)* adopted. The survey canvassed respondents' views about (1) the *Formation Guidelines (2008)*, (2) the key characteristics of a good spiritual director and (3) what a spiritual direction formation program's curriculum needs to include to form a spiritual director with the characteristics so identified.
- <sup>5</sup> See definition of 'Contemplative Ethos', Glossary of Terms, p 13.
- <sup>6</sup> See definition of 'Contemplative Learning' and 'Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning', Glossary of Terms, pp 11-12.
- <sup>7</sup> Brandt, B. L., Farmer Jr, J. A., & Buckmaster, A. (1993). Cognitive apprenticeship approach to helping adults learn. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 59, 69-78.
- <sup>8</sup> Relating AECSD's three contemplative learning outcomes to the *Formation Guidelines'* three-dimensional model of spirituality (See discussion of 'Spirituality' in Glossary of Terms), the outcomes principally correlate with spirituality's second dimension as the outcomes seek to actualise the director's efforts to foster the first dimension of a directee's spirituality; this being the self-transcending integration of the directee with what is ultimate, as the directee perceives it. A program may include the third dimension in its course through promoting practical or academic inquiry into the first or second dimensions of spirituality with specific reference to spiritual direction however, AECSD recognition does not require such inclusion (See Glossary of Terms pp 12-13 for further discussion on 'Spirituality').
- <sup>9</sup> See definition of 'Contemplative Attitude', Glossary of Terms, p 13.
- <sup>10</sup> See definition of 'Personal Transformational Engagement' Glossary of Terms, p 12.
- <sup>11</sup> See definition of 'Contemplative Stance', Glossary of Terms, p 13.
- <sup>12</sup> See definition of 'Directee', Glossary of Terms, p 13.
- <sup>13</sup> See definition of 'Spiritual Direction', Glossary of Terms, p 13.
- <sup>14</sup> See definition of 'Spirituality' Glossary of Terms, pp 12-13.
- <sup>15</sup> See discussion of 'ultimate' in definition of 'Spirituality' in Glossary of Terms, pp 12-13.
- <sup>16</sup> See discussion of 'Contemplative Learning and Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning', Glossary of Terms, pp 11-12.
- <sup>17</sup> See definition of 'Contact Hour', Glossary of Terms, p 14.
- <sup>18</sup> See definition of 'Supervision', Glossary of Terms, p 14.
- <sup>19</sup> See definition of 'Personal Supervision', Glossary of Terms, p 14.
- <sup>20</sup> See definition of 'Supervisory Learning in a Group Context', Glossary of Terms, p 14.
- <sup>21</sup> Please contact the AECSD Secretary for the current recommended financial contribution. The contribution is to help cover the cost of processing an application.
- <sup>22</sup> The Outcomes-Based Contemplative Learning approach to forming spiritual directors is adapted from Davis, M. H. (2003). Outcome-Based Education. *JVME*, 30(3), 227-232. Retrieved March 7, 2014, from [http://www.utpjournals.com/jvme/tocs/303/258.pdf?origin=publication\\_detail](http://www.utpjournals.com/jvme/tocs/303/258.pdf?origin=publication_detail)
- <sup>23</sup> Adrian Van Kaam, *Scientific formation* (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 114.
- <sup>24</sup> Paul Bramer, 'Guest Editorial Introduction to the Special Focus: Spiritual Formation and Christian Education' in *Christian Education Journal*, vol. 7, no. 2, (2010), 335-336.
- <sup>25</sup> Hilary Dencev & Rupert Collister, 'Authentic ways of knowing, authentic ways of being: Nurturing a professional community of learning and praxis' in *Journal of transformative education*, vol. 8, no. 3, (2010), 179.
- <sup>26</sup> Sandra Schneiders is a good example of a contemporary scholar who adopts this three dimensional usage of the term 'spirituality' in a series of articles: Sandra Schneiders, 'Theology and Spirituality: Strangers, Rivals, or Partners?', *Horizons*, vol, 13, no. 2, (1986), 253-274; 'Spirituality in the Academy', *Theological Studies*, vol. 50, (1989), 676-697; 'Spirituality as an Academic Discipline: Reflections from Experience', *Christian Spirituality Bulletin*, vol. 1, no. 2, (1993), 10-15; 'A Hermeneutical Approach to the Study of Christian Spirituality', *Christian Spirituality Bulletin*, vol. 2, no.1, (1994), 9-14; 'Religion vs. Spirituality: A Contemporary Conundrum', *Spiritus*, vol. 3, (2003), 163-185; 'The Impact of the Classics of Western Spirituality on the Discipline of Christian Spirituality', *Spiritus*, vol. 4, (2005), 97-102.
- <sup>27</sup> Bernard McGinn, 'The Letter and the Spirit: Spirituality as an Academic Discipline', *Christian Spirituality Bulletin*, vol. 1, no. 2, (1993), 4.
- <sup>28</sup> Walter Principe, 'Christian Spirituality', *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, (ed.) M. Downey (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993), 932. A good example of this approach is Schneiders who considers that "in

---

its most basic or anthropological sense, spirituality, like personality, is a characteristic of the human being as such" (Schneiders, *Religion vs. Spirituality*, 165). Just as people have a certain 'psychology', "a centre of personal consciousness and subjectivity" (Schneiders, *Spirituality as an Academic Discipline*, 11) that is essential to their psychic life, Schneiders suggests that every individual likewise has a spirituality that is, "a fundamental dimension of the human being" (Schneiders, *Spirituality in the Academy*, 678). Therefore, Schneiders primarily applies the term spirituality "to that dimension of the human subject in virtue of which the person is capable of self-transcending integration in relation to the Ultimate, whatever the Ultimate is for the person in question" (Schneiders, *Spirituality as an Academic Discipline*, 11). It is interesting to note the polarity of her definition: spirituality is an intrinsic element of the human person, yet it is this specific aspect that is orientated towards self-transcendence or as McIntosh expresses it, "the integration of the human subject is the *telos* of spirituality, yet that integration is achieved not solipsistically but 'in relation to the Ultimate' " (Mark McIntosh, *Mystical Theology*, (Malden: Blackwell, 1998), 19). McIntosh further suggests that these terminological clarifications pinpoint that for Schneiders, spirituality is "an innate human aspiration towards ultimacy" (McIntosh, *Mystical Theology* 19). It seems that Schneiders concurs with this in as much as she further says, "In short, spirituality refers to the experience of consciously striving to integrate one's life in terms not of isolation and self-absorption but of self-transcendence towards the ultimate value one perceives" (Schneiders, *Theology and Spirituality*, 266). Therefore, from this perspective, Schneiders highlights the intrinsically human significance of spirituality (McIntosh, *Mystical Theology*, 19) and as she comments, she defines "spirituality broadly enough that the definition can apply to religious and non-religious or secular spiritualities and specifically enough that it does not include virtually anything that anyone espouses" (Schneiders, *Religion vs. Spirituality*, 166).

<sup>29</sup> Michael Downey, *Understanding Christian Spirituality* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1997), 43.

<sup>30</sup> Downey, *Understanding Christian Spirituality*, 14.

<sup>31</sup> Ewert Cousins, 'Preface to the Series', in *Christian Spirituality I: Origins in the Twelfth Century*, (eds.) Bernard McGinn and John Meyendorff (New York: Crossroad, 1985), xiii in Ewert Cousins, 'What Is Christian Spirituality?', *Modern Christian Spirituality: Methodological and Historical Essays*, (ed.) B. Hanson, American Academy of Religion: Studies in Religion, no. 62, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 40.

<sup>32</sup> Downey, *Understanding Christian Spirituality*, 35.

<sup>33</sup> Schneiders describes this well as "the lived experience which actualizes that dimension" (*Spirituality in the Academy*, 678). In this, she distinguishes between spirituality as an intrinsic element of humanity and the particular means by which this potential develops.

<sup>34</sup> Walter Principe, 'Towards defining Spirituality', *Studies in Religion*, vol. 12, no. 2, (1983), 135-136.

<sup>35</sup> Downey, *Understanding Christian Spirituality*, 43.

<sup>36</sup> Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality and History: Questions of Interpretation and Method* (London: SPCK, 1991), 50.

<sup>37</sup> Principe, *Christian Spirituality*, 932.

<sup>38</sup> Principe, *Christian Spirituality*, 932-933.

<sup>39</sup> Cousins, *What Is Christian Spirituality*, 40.

<sup>40</sup> Schneiders expresses this well in terms of "the experimental and theoretical study of human efforts at self-transcending integration and to the pastoral practices aimed at fostering the spirituality of individuals and groups" (*Spirituality as an Academic Discipline*, 11). It is worthy to note this expands the third element of her earlier definition from "the academic discipline which studies that experience" (*Spirituality in the Academy*, 678) by including "pastoral practices aimed at fostering the spirituality of individuals and groups" (*Spirituality as an Academic Discipline*, 11).

<sup>41</sup> Principe, *Towards defining Spirituality*, 135-136; Principe, *Christian Spirituality*, 933; McGinn, *The Letter and the Spirit*, 4; Downey, *Understanding Christian Spirituality*, 43.

<sup>42</sup> Elizabeth Dreyer, *Earth Crammed with Heaven: A Spirituality of Everyday Life* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1994), 11.

<sup>43</sup> Joann Wolski Conn, *Spirituality and Personal Maturity* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1989), 31 in Principe, *Christian Spirituality*, 934.

<sup>44</sup> Joan Chittister, *The Rule of Benedict – Insight for the Ages*, 37.