LA SALLE ACADEMY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1 October 2020

Contents

1. **Background to the Terms of Reference**

   a) Prior to these Terms of Reference, the Change Addendum of 2014 was the most recent document that outlined the role, membership, governance structure and management of the La Salle Academy for Faith Formation and Religious Education. In addition to this document, on 31 August 2017 (and following the meeting of the Senate that month) the Vice Chancellor confirmed by means of a university wide communication that the La Salle Academy had been placed within the newly created portfolio of the Office of the Vice President.

   b) These Terms of Reference do not make or propose to make any changes to the current management or governance structure of the La Salle Academy. Rather, these Terms of Reference acknowledge the existing arrangements, including any changes to the management, governance, and membership of the Academy, implemented since 2014.

   c) Furthermore, these Terms of Reference do not make any changes to the employment conditions or staffing arrangements of staff members who are currently working for the La Salle Academy.

   d) These terms of Reference seek to confirm the experience of the La Salle Academy as responsive to the Mission of the University and its strategic priorities.

   e) The Terms of Reference apply to the core responsibilities of the Academy for Religious Education, Faith Formation and Educational Leadership in Catholic education and associated Church ministries.

2. **Role and Scope of the La Salle Academy ("the Academy")**

   a) Scope: La Salle Academy ("the Academy") operates as a functional matrix organisation within the University, working in close collaboration with our Catholic education partners. It incorporates the provision of direct service delivery (teaching, research and community engagement) along with the provision of support and service in the areas of course and policy development, quality assurance, strategic planning, communications and accountability within its nominated disciplinary areas.

   b) Disciplinary areas: The Academy has responsibility for Religious Education, Faith Formation and Educational Leadership to prepare those who aspire to work, teach, lead and govern in a Catholic school. The Academy works with Catholic Education employing authorities in the development and implementation of accreditation requirements to work, teach and lead in the Catholic school.

   c) Organisational Context: Situated within the Office of the Vice President, the Academy collaborates with the Faculties of Education and Arts, and Theology and Philosophy to ensure that pre-service teacher programs and postgraduate courses meet the accreditation requirements and overall expectations of Catholic employers (both Diocesan and Religious Institute) across Australia.

d) Culture: As well as monitoring and improving existing university programs, the Academy designs new programs that are intentionally formative, attending to 'the head, heart and hand', developing people of faith as disciples of Jesus in service of mission within the tradition of the Church.

e) Professional Learning: Academy personnel provide professional learning, immersion experiences, formation in educational leadership and retreat opportunities such as spirituality days and workshops.

f) Resourcing: The Academy produces resources and engages in communications to support the Catholic Education sector, and in particular, Catholic schools and authorities, nationally and internationally.

g) Consultancy: The Academy is engaged in consultancy, reviews and research in its core areas of responsibility: Religious Education, Faith Formation and Educational Leadership.

h) Supervision: The Academy, at the invitation of the relevant faculties, supervises Higher Degree Research students in areas relevant to its strategic focus areas of Formation, Educational Leadership and Religious Education.

i) Teaching: Academy personnel engage in undergraduate and post-graduate teaching within the Faculties of Education and Arts, and Theology and Philosophy.

j) Collaboration: The Academy engages in relevant administrative, consultative and advisory bodies and committees within the University as deemed relevant to its role and as requested by the University.

k) Partner Engagement: The Academy engages and supports Catholic partner and related not-for profit organisations.

l) Internationality: The Academy engages academics from international Catholic universities in the work of the Academy and attracting international students into ACU programs in the areas of Religious Education, Faith Formation and Educational Leadership.

m) Policy: The Academy identifies, develops and supports the implementation of policy, processes and practices relevant to its key focus areas.

n) Innovation: The Academy is proactive in pursuing new and creative initiatives in support of Academy responsibilities.

o) Accountability: The Academy meets the collaborative, reporting and accountability requirements of the University through its governance structures and as required by the policies and practices of the University. As a member of the Boards of relevant faculties, the Dean provides regular reports.

3. Responsibilities and Staffing

The Academy is led by the Dean, who reports to the Vice President of Australian Catholic University.

a) The Dean has responsibility for:

  i) Strategic development and academic leadership in areas of Religious Education, Faith Formation and Educational Leadership in collaboration with the relevant Executive Dean;

  ii) Ensuring quality assurance to learning programs in Religious Education, Faith Formation and Educational Leadership, with particular attention to the accreditation requirements of Catholic Education employing authorities;

  iii) Ensuring compliance of such programs with regulatory requirements in curriculum development, accreditation and review (requirements of Catholic Education Authorities and Commissions, State and National teaching accreditation and registration agencies, TEQSA and ACU's Academic Board);

  iv) Ensuring the learning experiences of students and teachers of Religious Education, Faith Formation and Educational Leadership contribute to their development as people of faith;

  v) Ensuring responsiveness to Catholic education stakeholders through broad and regular communication;

  vi) The appointment of immediate 'direct report' staff and endorsement of membership of the Academy;

  vii) The professional development and effective collaboration of University academic staff involved in the development and delivery of Religious Education, Faith Formation and Educational Leadership; and

  viii) Management of Academy operations and Academy administrative systems, including the Academy budget.

b) The Dean is supported by the following 'direct report' staff members:

  i) The Deputy Dean;

  ii) Personal Assistant to the Dean;

  iii) Professor of Educational Leadership, Director of Catholic Leadership Studies;

  iv) Director, Teacher Faith Formation Programmes;

  v) Signum Fidei National Youth Minister;

vi) Project Officer; and

vii) Such other staff as may be required.

4. Relationships with Australian Catholic University Internal Stakeholders

This section describes the Academy's relationships with Australian Catholic University internal stakeholders, including the Office of the Vice President, the Faculty of Education and Arts, and the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy.

a) The Academy operates as a joint enterprise between:

   i) The Office of the Vice President;

   ii) The Faculty of Theology and Philosophy; and

   iii) The Faculty of Education and Arts.

b) The Academy sits within the Office of the Vice President.

c) The Dean of the Academy reports to the Vice President.

d) As a joint enterprise, the Academy provides an integrated approach to curriculum development, delivery and assessment, and formation activities.

e) The Dean of the Academy maintains *ex officio* Faculty Board membership for both the Faculty of Education and Arts and the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy.

f) The Dean of the Academy is also a member of the Executive Planning Group (EPG) and the Vice Chancellor's Strategy Group (VCSG).

5. Academy Advisory Board

a) In accordance with Australian Catholic University Statute 2 – Governing Bodies, Statute No. 2.7.4 (f), the Academy is advised by the Academy Advisory Board ("the Board").

b) The Board is chaired by the Vice President.

Duties of the Board

c) The Board advises the Academy on a range of matters including:

   i) the currency of programs for accreditation to teach Religious Education, Faith Formation and Educational Leadership;

ii) relationships with external partners, including the Directors of Catholic Schools Offices, State and Territory Commissions, the National Catholic Education Commission and its standing committees, and religious institute and PJP governing school authorities;

iii) the needs of Catholic stakeholders; and

iv) the collaborative opportunities and responsibilities within the Identity and Mission portfolio of the University.

d) The Board will meet four times a year.

Membership of the Board

e) The Board is comprised of the following members:

i) Dean, La Salle Academy;

ii) Vice President, Australian Catholic University; (Chair)

iii) Executive Dean, Faculty of Theology and Philosophy (Ex-officio);

iv) Executive Dean, Faculty of Education and Arts (Ex-officio);

v) Nominee of the Vice-Chancellor from among the Directors of Catholic Education on the recommendation of the Vice President;

vi) A representative from the Australian Catholic Bishop's Conference;

vii) A representative from the National Catholic Education Commission;

viii) A representative of the Association of Ministerial PJPs, Education Committee (CORMSSA);

ix) An elected member of the Academy; and

x) Such other members as determined by the Vice President and Dean.

f) Appointments to the Advisory Board are for a two-year period, renewable at the discretion of the Vice-President.

g) Sub committees or working groups may be established by the Advisory Board to engage in project work as appropriate.

h) The election of a member of the Academy (as required by clause 5 (e) (ix)) will be in accordance with the document, "La Salle Advisory Board Voting Arrangements".

6. Academic and Community Engagement

The following elements are integral to the work of the Academy and the preparation of teachers for Catholic schools. As such these elements are understood as interrelated.

a) Curriculum and Academic Programs

    i)   The Academy will regularly review the Religious Education, Faith Formation and Educational Leadership curriculum offerings to assure the adequacy and appropriateness of theological and formation elements, delivered in association with appropriate pedagogical training.

    ii)   In accordance with University governance of academic programs, La Salle participates in the design, delivery and evaluation of academic courses which have the oversight of the Provost, through the relevant faculty.

b) Faith Engagement Activities

In addition to academic opportunities, explore opportunities for students to enhance their knowledge, integration and practice as people of faith.

c) Consultancy and Research

The Academy provides consultancy and research services to Catholic Education offices and dioceses. This includes delivering publications and resources to support the Catholic Education sector.

d) Educational Leadership initiatives

The Academy is engaged in a range of activities that promote and support the development of leaders in the Catholic Education sector. This includes involvement in the planning, delivery and review of post-graduate Certificate, Diploma and Masters courses in Religious Education, Faith Formation and Ministry, and Educational Leadership, and the provision of associated professional learning opportunities.

e) Other activities

The Academy engages in a range of other related activities, including publishing the La Salle Journal of Religious Education, and planning and hosting conferences and colloquia.

7. Academic Membership

a) Membership of the Academy will be through assignment to the Academy for suitable qualified academics with a research or Pastoral Ministry Doctorate in Religious Education, Theology and Educational Leadership.

b) Membership criteria include:

   i) Evidence in teaching, research and community engagement of commitment and fidelity to Catholic teachings and to religious education in Catholic schools and/or Catholic agencies;

   ii) Demonstrated commitment to witness the Catholic identity and mission of ACU;

   iii) Demonstrated record of quality teaching;

   iv) Demonstrated quality research and publication in high quality refereed journals and publishing houses, and;

   v) Demonstrated leadership in the field of Catholic religious education and the facilitation of faith engagement opportunities as appropriate;

   vi) Membership of the Academy is required of all ongoing and fixed term lecturers for the teaching of units that accredit ACU graduates to teach religious education. Lecturers must meet the requirements of the Mandatum in accordance with Australian Norms for Ex Corde Ecclesia and the Code of Canon Law;

   vii) Membership of the Academy may be ongoing or for a fixed period. It will be reviewed annually, as part of the academic staff member's performance review and planning process; and

8. Finance

Support for the Academy's financial activities will be provided through the office of the Vice President.

9. Principles of Collaboration

Integral to achieving its objectives is the continuing mission partnership of the Academy with Catholic employing authorities and Faculties within the University guided by established operational principles:

i)   **Engagement**: Being attentive to the readiness levels of participants and the strategic and operational priorities of Catholic Education authorities and participant schools and colleges.

ii)   **Tradition**: Supporting the vocation and ministry of teaching through the provision of learning that is theologically centred and educationally contextualised within the revelation and person of Christ.

iii) **Creative Pedagogy**: Balancing direct instruction with experiential learning and providing an emphasis on capabilities (knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions) reflective of academic priorities and authentic witness.

iv)   **Community**: Encouraging a community of learners' model through collegial relationships supported by shared practice partnership arrangements.

v)   **Outcomes**: Supporting the development of the whole person within flourishing communities through processes that integrate faith, life and culture in ways that are personally meaningful, ecclesially relevant and strategically effective.