

THE BRADLEY REVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Submission from the Committee of Deans
of Theological Consortia and University Schools¹

The Committee is a peak body of theological providers in Australia and New Zealand, and has representatives from all the major theological consortia in Australia and New Zealand and from those universities and colleges which contain schools of theology.²

The Committee of Deans of Theology welcomes the opportunity provided by the review to place the concerns and interests on the sector before the review committee. In the present environment the constituent teaching bodies which comprise the sector, and the students which learn through them, face various difficulties which we hope the present review will be able to address.

The tertiary theology sector is constituted largely by private, church-sponsored colleges accredited as Higher Education Providers (HEPs) through state higher education authorities. It is one of the oldest parts of Australian tertiary education: for example, the *Australian College of Theology* (ACTh) was founded by the Anglican Church in 1891; the Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD) is established by its own Act of Parliament in Victoria (*The Melbourne College of Divinity Act 1910*, comprehensively revised in 2005). Many colleges operate in consortia, others as stand-alone HEPs accredited by various state authorities. In more recent times these colleges have been supplemented by a growing number of universities offering degrees in theology, or in affiliation with theological colleges.

Most of these colleges originated to ensure the proper training of ministers. This role continues, but today they also provide ongoing education to a large number of students seeking to deepen their understanding of faith and life, and contribute to the life of their church and wider community in a variety of ways, in a paid or voluntary capacity.³ In the private tertiary sector, theological education is one of the largest providers of accredited degree programs in Australia, with some 6,640 full-time equivalent students.⁴ These range from undergraduate diplomas, bachelor degrees, graduate coursework awards to research masters and doctorates. A number of colleges also run programs accredited through the VET sector.

The theological sector thus makes a substantial contribution to higher education in Australia and Australian society, but remains largely under-recognised by government bodies and programs. The sector is finding the current accreditation environment increasingly onerous and costly, designed as it is to the circumstances of commercial operations rather than the not-for-profit sector. This is particularly the case where consortia operate across different jurisdictions and must face multiple costs of registration and authorisation to operate. Colleges are also impeded by overly bureaucratic requirements and constraints emanating from DEST / DEEWR and state accrediting authorities which slow down the responsiveness of the sector to respond to new opportunities.

¹ This submission was written by Professor Neil Ormerod (ACU), Dr Mark Harding (ACTh), Dr Paul Beirne (MCD) and Dr Charles Sherlock, project officer for the Committee's ALTC project on "Uncovering Theology", on behalf of the committee of Deans.

² The Australian membership of the Committee consists of representatives from Table A, Table B and from non-self-accrediting colleges: Adelaide College of Divinity (linked with Flinders University); Australian Catholic University; Australian College of Theology; Avondale College; Brisbane College of Theology; Charles Sturt University (incorporating St Mark's National Theological College and the United Theological College); Melbourne College of Divinity; Perth College of Divinity (linked with Murdoch University); Sydney College of Divinity. The New Zealand representatives are the theological schools at Otago and Auckland Universities.

The Committee came into existence in 1997 and was expanded in 2007 to include universities and colleges with schools of theology. It is currently reviewing its membership to include a wider range of theological HEPs.

³ The proportion of ministry candidates varies across the sector: in the MCD it is 17.2 %, in the ACTh it is 46%. In Roman Catholic colleges, seminarians and religious men and women comprise approximately 30% of the student body.

⁴ Appendix A lists all accredited private HEPs in the sector, together with estimates of 2007 enrolments by EFSTL.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The tertiary theological sector contributes significantly to the diversity of the Australian Higher Education sector. Its student profile demonstrates a commitment to life-long learning to meet the challenge of an ageing population needing retraining and upgrading of generic skills. Through its close ties with church communities it promotes social inclusion and makes higher education available to many who would otherwise not seek out such qualifications. Many colleges in the sector also provide VET programs which help transition students into the higher education sector. In responding to the current review the Committee of Deans of Theology would make the following recommendations:

- ◆ ***Student support:*** To further access to higher education
 - ◆ FEE-HELP arrangements should be fully maintained;
 - ◆ Or be replaced by a higher education learning entitlement system as means of funding for Australian citizens;
 - ◆ Or Commonwealth supported places be expanded to the private sector.
- ◆ ***Accreditation:*** That, in order to reduce the overall costs of mounting and maintaining higher education programs, accreditation processes should be nationally coordinated or centralised, with cost structures that take into account the size of institution and their 'capacity to pay'.
- ◆ ***Quality Assurance:*** That inequities and inconsistencies in quality assurance processes be minimised through better national coordination.
- ◆ ***ARC Grants:*** That access to Australian Research Council funding should be available to the private sector on the same competitive basis as currently exists in the Commonwealth funded higher education sector.
- ◆ ***Learning & Teaching funding:*** That access to *Australian Learning and Teaching Council* learning and teaching awards and funding should be made available to the private sector on the same present competitive basis as currently in the public sector.
- ◆ ***Research funding:*** That access to research training funding, including Australian Postgraduate Awards, the Research Training Scheme and the Institutional Grants Scheme, should be made available to the private sector on the basis of a demonstrated and benchmarked capacity in research training.
- ◆ ***Endeavour scholarships:*** That Endeavour Scholarships for overseas students pursuing Higher Degrees by Research should include a Living Allowance on the same terms as those provided for students holding Australian Postgraduate Awards.
- ◆ ***Articulation from VET to HE:*** That where impediments to credit transfer between the VET sector and the higher education sector exist these should be reviewed to allow for greater flexibility.

DIVERSE, HIGH PERFORMING INSTITUTIONS WITH A GLOBAL FOCUS

The theology sector contributes significantly to the diversity of the higher education sector. Theology has a long history of involvement in higher education. Indeed the foundation of modern universities can be traced back to institutions established primarily to teach theology, such as the universities of Paris, Bologna, Leuven, Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard and Princeton. All these universities continue to teach theology in the present era. In Australia the university sector has not maintained this history. It must be acknowledged that much of the reason for this was the rivalry between the churches until the mid-twentieth century. More recently, a few universities have developed programs in theology in conjunction with previously established theological colleges (Charles Sturt, Flinders and Murdoch Universities). Australian Catholic University has had a School of Theology since its establishment, as has the University of Notre Dame (Table B). Newcastle University is currently establishing a School of Theology.⁵

The sector has a strong global and regional focus. Many of the teaching faculty have trained overseas, and many are part of international academic networks of theologians and church communities. Australian theologians have strong international profiles in publishing and research. The sector contributes to the training of church ministers in the Australasian region and the continuing education of professionals in a wide range of fields.⁶ It attracts overseas students both at undergraduate and post-graduate levels. Graduates from the Australian theological sector have performed well at overseas institutions in research programs and a good number are now employed overseas. Australian theologians also serve on international church committees and some have attained high office in their churches.

The sector also caters for a significant number of international students, particularly from the Asia-Pacific region and East Africa. These students have typically completed their initial studies in theology in their home contexts, and come to Australia for post-graduate work. They are often sponsored by their local church communities, often at great cost, and return to their countries of origin to provide leadership in their church and wider communities, equipping these churches to meet their ministerial requirements in the local culture and context. Many Australian theological colleges have been responsive to particular and personal educational needs of these students, providing them with special support for their learning and cultural adjustment.

Most of this has been achieved without any significant funding from government sources.

For some years theological students who meet the eligibility requirements have had access to Austudy, which has been of assistance to them. The absence of rent assistance from Austudy, however, in comparison to Youth Allowance and Newstart, disadvantages students, especially those whose colleges require them to study in a residential environment. The advent of FEE-HELP funding from 2005 enabled students to have direct access to loans to assist in the payment of fees. This has encouraged access to theological education, offered welcome financial assistance to the sector, and also brought it into the open as a result of the public reporting of enrolments.

The Committee of Deans are aware that there has been some public criticism of the theology sector in relation to FEE-HELP, since students employed by churches may never be in a position to repay their FEE-HELP loans. Generally speaking clergy receive benefits in relation to fringe benefits tax and the like in recognition of the benefit gained by society overall through the services provided by churches to building social capital, and the provision of education, health and welfare services to the community. Additionally, clergy stipends are minimal in comparison to other professions: a

⁵ We would draw a clear distinction between theology and religious studies. A number of universities offer programs in religious studies where no explicit faith commitment is presumed of the teaching staff: an analysis of 2005 figures suggested that some 300 EFTSLs were being taken in undergraduate religious studies across Australian universities. Theological programs however generally presume the faith and professional commitment of those teaching the program and the church context of the studies involved.

⁶ See Appendix B for a list of theological disciplines.

recent survey of ACTh graduates revealed an average salary of \$38,000. As noted above, most theological students are not training for ministry and continue with their present employment and salaries.

In order to ensure the current contribution of theology and to address equity issues whereby some students can access Commonwealth Supported Places (if enrolled at those providers listed in Table A) while others cannot, the Committee of Deans therefore recommends:

- ◆ **Student support:** To further access to higher education:
 - ◆ At a minimum, FEE-HELP arrangements should be fully maintained;
 - ◆ Or be replaced by a higher education learning entitlement system as means of funding for Australian citizens;
 - ◆ Or Commonwealth Supported Places be expanded to the private sector.

Access to FEE-HELP however has come at considerable costs to the educational institutions in terms of registration as a HEP and the further costs of quality audits. Given the non-profit nature of the sector and of the employers of graduates, these costs are difficult to recoup through higher fees. Many colleges are subsidised or underwritten by their church communities. Nonetheless theological students have made great use of FEE-HELP, with a current estimate of around \$20 million for 2008. Meanwhile students undertaking theological programs in Table A providers (Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University, Flinders University and Murdoch University) have access to Commonwealth Supported Places.

There are also important questions of equity in relation to research funding. Currently the Melbourne College of Divinity, as a Table B provider, has (competitive) access to Endeavour Scholarships, Australian Postgraduate Awards, the Research Training Scheme and the Institutional Grants Scheme. Other major theological providers not on Table A or B do not have such access though their research standards are comparable to those of the MCD. We would urge that access to research funding be made to those theological consortia and colleges which can demonstrate a benchmarked capacity in research.

- ◆ **Research funding:** That access to research training funding, including Australian Postgraduate Awards, the Research Training Scheme and the Institutional Grants Scheme, should be made available to the private sector on the basis of a demonstrated and benchmarked capacity in research training.

Theological colleges not associated with universities are also precluded from other forms of higher education funding such as *Australian Research Council* grants and *Australian Learning and Teaching Council* grants and awards. Currently the private higher education sector is expected to meet all the requirements of research and learning and teaching excellence aspired to within the public sector, but is not given access to crucial funding that would make this possible. In addition, while Endeavour Scholarships have assisted some overseas theological students take their doctorate in Australia, the lack of a Living Allowance for such students has placed significant burdens on their sponsors, especially where Australian costs of living are considerably higher than in their countries of origin.

- ◆ **Learning & Teaching funding:** That access to *Australian Learning and Teaching Council* learning and teaching awards and funding should be made available to the private sector on the same present competitive basis as currently in the public sector.
- ◆ **ARC Grants:** That access to Australian Research Council funding should be available to the private sector on the same competitive basis as currently exists in the Commonwealth funded higher education sector.

- ◆ **Endeavour scholarships:** That Endeavour Scholarships for overseas students pursuing Higher Degrees by Research should include a Living Allowance on the same terms as those provided for students holding Australian Postgraduate Awards.

PRODUCTIVITY AND PARTICIPATION

The theology sector has been responsive to the needs of and challenges facing the churches in developing accredited programs which provide professional education for ministers and others not only in theology, but in theological related disciplines such as religious education, chaplaincy work in prisons, hospitals, schools, the defence forces, counselling and so on.

At a time when higher education is beginning to take seriously the issue of community engagement, theological colleges have had a long history of providing graduates who make a substantial contribution to the building up of the social capital of the Australian community. Theological graduates contribute to both private and public education, health and welfare sectors, not least through church-based agencies. These activities enhance the overall social capital of the society and so contribute to national well-being.

The study of theology also can contribute to social harmony and mutual understanding between different cultural groups in our multi-cultural, multi-faith society. As noted in the British Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education of 2007 on Theology and Religious Studies (TRS):

The nature of TRS means that studying the subject may have a profound impact on the student's life and outlook. The experience of studying this subject may contribute to a student's personal development, transforming horizons by engaging with cultures and societies other than their own, whether ancient or modern. It may foster a lifelong quest for wisdom, respect for one's own integrity and that of others, self-examination in terms of the beliefs and values adopted for one's own life, a better understanding of its role in geo-political conflict and, not least, the challenging of prejudices. The multidisciplinary nature of much TRS also means that students have breadth of vision and intellectual flexibility.⁷

The greatest impediment to the responsiveness of the sector to meeting the needs of the churches and wider society, however, has been the increasingly bureaucratic demands placed on the sector by state accrediting agencies and DEST / DEEWR. This both slows down the processes of course development, review and implementation, and significantly increases their costliness. This is particularly the case where consortia operate in multiple jurisdictions across state boundaries. This has led to experiences of inconsistent requirements and consequent inequities. The sector would strongly support greater consistency and coordination in accreditation, registration and authorisation processes, with cost structures which take into account the size of institutions and their capacity to pay.

We therefore recommend:

- ◆ **Accreditation:** That, in order to reduce the overall costs of mounting and maintaining higher education programs, accreditation processes should be nationally coordinated and/or centralised, with cost structures that take into account the size of institutions and 'capacity to pay'.

Similar concerns arise in relation to quality assurance process where varying cost structures and other inconsistencies lead to inequity between providers who have used AUQA or state quality assurance processes.

We therefore recommend:

⁷ Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2007), *Theology and Religious Studies*, 4.

- ◆ **Quality Assurance:** That inequities and inconsistencies in quality assurance processes be minimised through better national coordination.

SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY

The theological sector encourages greater social inclusion in higher education. It is particularly responsive to providing lifelong learning so as to meet the challenge of an ageing population. The age spread in the sector is from early 20’s to late 60’s, the average age in many colleges being around 40. Such students bring both considerable life-experience and high expectations and lively engagement to their learning; they are attracted to theological study due to the opportunities presented to explore questions relevant to their life and work.

As noted already, a good proportion of theological students hold a previous tertiary qualification, and come to study theology through a personal commitment to life-long learning. Also, theological education has a much higher percentage of mature age entry students with little, if any, formal education since leaving school. The smaller class sizes and community-based nature of theological colleges assist these new students to adapt to the demands of higher education and so develop confidence and skills. Other students, including significant numbers of women preparing to re-enter the workforce after raising a family, come to theological colleges in search of a ‘second career’ with a view to service in the church and wider community welfare and teaching sectors. Some go on to higher research degrees, the average age of research students over 50 in some institutions. The research skills developed are easily transferable into other areas of social and academic research.

Data on student profile from the MCD

- The average MCD student age is 46 (44 for males, 48 for females), with the highest age grouping between the 36-40 year bracket.
- As regards gender mix, male and female students are approximately equal: 52.5 % are male, 47.5% are female.
- A majority of students (66%) come with a prior tertiary qualification, many at postgraduate level.
- Some 17.3% of students are ordination candidates. The vast majority are professional people who enrol not to so much to advance their careers, to enrich society, their churches and their immediate environment.

Data on student profile from the ACTh

- The average ACT coursework student age is 36; for research students it is 45.
- As regard gender mix, 60% are male, 40% are female.
- A majority of students (68%) come with a prior tertiary qualification
- Those intending professional ministry constituted 46% of the student body

Many ethnic communities with strong church commitments find in theological colleges a point of entry into higher education in the Australian context. These include students with permanent humanitarian visa holders and permanent residents who have migrated.

MCD data on country of origin

Asia	33	Pacific	24	Other	5
China	3	Fiji	2	Colombia	1
India	5	Mexico	1	Nicaragua	1
Indonesia	2	New Zealand	11		
Japan	1	PNG	1	Ghana	1

Korea	6	Solomon Islands	2	Sudan	1
Macao	1	Tonga	2	Zambia	1
Malaysia	2	USA	3		
Myanmar	3	Vanuatu	1		
Philippines	3	Western Samoa	1		
Singapore	3				
Sri Lanka	1				
Vietnam	3				

ACTh data on country of origin

Asia	44	Pacific	7	Other	26
Thailand	1	New Zealand	5	UK, nfd	2
Viet Nam	1	Solomon Islands	1	England	2
Indonesia	2	Vanuatu	1	Scotland	1
Malaysia	8			Austria	1
Philippines	1			Germany	3
Singapore	4			Switzerland	3
China	4			Sweden	1
Hong Kong	2			Canada	2
Taiwan	2			USA	3
Japan	2			Brazil	1
North Korea	1			Ghana	1
South Korea	13			Nigeria	2
India	2			Kenya	1
Sri Lanka	1			Malawi	1
				Mauritius	1
				Tanzania	1

In these various ways, the theological sector contributes significantly to the upgrading of the generic skills of their students. In all cases students emerge with new graduate attributes which contribute to their life opportunities and employability.

ENHANCED QUALITY AND HIGH STANDARDS

The theological sector is particularly sensitive to the issue of standards in higher education. All theological colleges (apart from the MCD⁸) are subject to regular reaccreditation processes by state government accrediting agencies. These processes review the qualifications of teaching staff and the standards of all programs offered by the colleges. As a significant number of staff have qualifications from major overseas institutions, there is also a concern to keep standards at an appropriate international level, for the purposes of recognition for students transferring to overseas colleges for their research training.

As HEPs, colleges have also been subject to quality audits by AUQA and other bodies. The MCD was one of the first private providers to undergo an AUQA audit (in 2005) and received significant commendations from the review panel. The ACTh has also been audited (2006) and has received significant commendations. This demonstrates the commitment of the sector to maintaining high quality standards in the provision of higher education.

In 2007 the sector, under the leadership of the Committee of Deans of Theology applied for and received a *Carrick Institute* (now the *Australian Learning and Teaching Council*) Discipline-based Initiative grant of \$100,000 to undertake a scoping exercise to uncover the ‘depth, reach and utility’

⁸ MCD does however submit its Annual Report to both houses of the Victorian parliament, together with those of Victoria’s eight public universities.

of theological education in Australia. This research is currently being undertaken and will be completed by February 2009. This research will facilitate future benchmarking and moderation processes across the sector. Again this demonstrates the commitment of the sector to maintaining and enhancing quality higher education.

The sector engages in various moderation and benchmarking procedures with other colleges and the university sector. Colleges use external examiners for research theses (doctoral, masters and honours); there is wide consultation across the sector in curriculum development quality assurance processes; various colleges utilise internal and external moderation processes to ensure proper academic standards are being met. The Committee of Deans facilitates the exchange of a wide range of data and assists in promoting quality education across the sector.

Students come to theological colleges with high expectations in term of educational quality and standards. Examination of MCD enrolment records, for example, indicates that approximately two-thirds of undergraduate students already hold a tertiary qualification, with many being at the postgraduate level. This pattern is repeated in many theological colleges. The high retention rate in the sector indicates the continued satisfaction of students with the quality and standard of education in theological colleges.

A BROAD TERTIARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING SECTOR

As noted above many theological colleges run programs both in higher education and VET. Many of these operate in regional areas, or provide transition paths for holders of humanitarian visas, refugees and others whose access to post-primary learning is limited. VET programs develop student skills and confidence, and students in the theology sector commonly move into higher education programs on successful completion of a VET program. In this regard theological colleges are an excellent example of the integration of the higher education and VET sector.

This integration however is undermined by state accrediting authorities who may forbid any credit being granted from VET programs into higher education programs.⁹ This is despite the fact that the university sector regularly allows such articulation. These constraints place the private sector at a competitive disadvantage to the university sector. We would support moves that encourage and allow for greater articulation from VET programs into higher education programs.

We therefore recommend:

- ◆ **Articulation from VET to HE:** That where impediments to credit transfer between the VET sector and the higher education sector exist these should be reviewed to allow for greater flexibility.

⁹ This is certainly the case in NSW where the recent reaccreditation of the Sydney College of Divinity made it a requirement that no credit be given for VET Certificate IV courses into the bachelor degree program, despite evidence of such practice in the university sector.

APPENDIX A: Approved Private Higher Education Providers in the Theology Sector

These HEPs with theology courses are approved to offer FEE-HELP on behalf of their students. The EFSTL estimates are as far as possible based on figures published for 2007 by DEEWR, adjusted for non-theological units and courses (indicated by an asterisk *).

	Est EFTSL
1. <i>Adelaide College of Divinity</i> (SA)	41
an ecumenical consortium affiliated with Flinders University ¹⁰ :	
a) Catholic Theological College (Roman Catholic)	
b) Parkin-Wesley College (Uniting Church)	
c) St Barnabas' Theological College (Anglican)	
d) Coolamon College (Uniting Church)	
2. <i>Australian College of Theology</i> (multi-state)	1,252
a consortium accountable to the Anglican Church of Australia:	
a) Anglican Youthworks (Anglican, NSW)	
b) Macquarie Christian Studies Institute (Interdenominational, NSW)	
c) Mary Andrews College (Anglican, NSW)	
d) Morling College (Baptist, NSW)	
e) Presbyterian Theological Centre NSW (Presbyterian, NSW)	
f) School of Christian Studies (Interdenominational, NSW)	
g) Sydney Missionary & Bible College (Interdenominational, NSW)	
h) Bible College of Queensland (Interdenominational, Qld)	
i) Malyon College (Baptist, Qld)	
j) Mueller College of Ministries (Brethren, Qld)	
k) Queensland Theological College (Interdenominational, Qld)	
l) Bible College SA (Interdenominational, SA)	
m) SA Graduate School of Theology (Interdenominational, SA)	
n) Bible College of Victoria (Interdenominational, Vic)	
o) Presbyterian Theological College of Victoria (Presbyterian, Vic)	
p) Reformed Theological College (Reformed Church, Vic)	
q) Ridley Melbourne Mission & Ministry College (Anglican, Vic)	
r) Trinity Theological College (Interdenominational, WA)	
s) Vose Seminary (Baptist, WA)	
3. <i>Australian Lutheran College</i> (Lutheran, SA)	75 *
4. <i>Avondale College</i> (Seventh-Day Adventist, NSW)	90 *
5. <i>Brisbane College of Theology</i> (Qld)	94
an ecumenical consortium consisting of	
a) St Paul's Theological College (Roman Catholic)	
b) St Francis' Theological College (Anglican)	
c) Trinity Theological College (Uniting Church)	
6. <i>Christian Heritage College</i> (Christian Outreach Centre, Qld)	120 *
7. <i>Harvest Bible College</i> (Assemblies of God, Vic)	44
8. <i>John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family Life</i> (Roman Catholic, Vic)	20 *
9. <i>Melbourne College of Divinity</i> (Vic)	526
an ecumenical consortium consisting of:	
a) Catholic Theological College (Roman Catholic)	

¹⁰ There are an additional 75 EFTSL enrolled through Flinders University.

b) Churches of Christ Theological College (Churches of Christ)	
c) The Institute for Christian Spirituality and Pastoral Formation (ecumenical)	
d) The United Faculty of Theology, an ecumenical faculty embracing Jesuit Theological College (Roman Catholic) Trinity College Theological School (Anglican) Uniting Church Theological College (Uniting Church)	
e) The Salvation Army Training College (The Salvation Army)	
f) Whitley College (Baptist)	
g) Yarra Theological Union (Roman Catholic)	
10. <i>Moore Theological College</i> (Anglican, NSW)	351
11. <i>Perth Bible College</i> (Interdenominational, WA)	18
12. <i>Sydney College of Divinity</i> (multi-state), an ecumenical consortium consisting of:	1,002
a) Australian College of Ministries (Churches of Christ, NSW & Qld)	
b) Broken Bay Institute (Roman Catholic, NSW)	
c) Catholic Institute of Sydney (Roman Catholic, NSW)	
d) Nazarene Theological College (Nazarene, Qld)	
e) St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College (Greek Orthodox, NSW)	
f) Booth College (The Salvation Army, NSW)	
g) Southern Cross College (Assemblies of God, NSW)	
h) Emmaus Bible College (Brethren, NSW)	
i) NSW College of Clinical and Pastoral Education (ecumenical, NSW)	
j) Garden City College of Ministries (Assemblies of God, Qld)	
13. <i>Tabor College Victoria</i>	130 *
14. <i>Tabor College Adelaide</i>	275 *
15. <i>Tabor College NSW</i>	50
16. <i>Tabor College Tasmania</i>	40
17. <i>University of Notre Dame</i> (Roman Catholic, WA and NSW)	258 BTh + 1,167 'service'
18. <i>Wesley Institute</i> (Uniting Church, NSW)	190 *

In addition, three state-accredited HEPs not recognised for FEE-HELP offer theology courses. Fifteen of the colleges listed above within various HEPs offer VET training, as do a further ten colleges not listed above.¹¹

In addition to the above 5,788 EFSTL, it is estimated that in university schools of theology, some 325 EFSTLs of study are being taken towards a theological degree, plus a further 400 EFSTLs of study in theological units not forming part of such a degree ('service teaching'), a total of 6,513.

¹¹ Two of these VET-only colleges, Nungalinga College NT and Wontulp-Bi-Buya College Qld, are church-sponsored ecumenical bodies which specialise in indigenous education, and have close links with HEPs in the theology sector. Two others, Tahlee College and the Cornerstone Community, have long-standing ties with the ACTh.

APPENDIX B: The scope of theological education

Theological education covers a variety of disciplines beyond the study of scripture and Church doctrines. These include:

- Scripture studies and associated ancient languages and cultures (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, Syriac).
- Patristics and classical Greek and Roman society (Latin, Greek, with classical as well as Church authors of the early Christian era)
- Philosophy (particularly in the Catholic tradition), and its contribution to Western culture.
- Systematic theology as the systematic study and exposition of Christian belief
- Christian ethics, social justice teachings, bioethics, and professional ethics.
- Pastoral theology, Christian counseling, and pastoral care.
- Interreligious dialogue and comparative religious studies.
- Church history and its contributing to the formation of Western society.
- Church liturgy and art and its contribution to Western culture.
- Spirituality, spiritual direction and the search for meaning in contemporary society.
- Humanities such as literature, languages, history, media, sociology, and psychology.