



# GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

## ACT'S LEARNING OUTCOMES AND GRADE DESCRIPTORS



- Knowing what the ACT expects you to achieve is an excellent starting point when planning and writing your essay. Below are the Grade descriptors and learning outcomes for each level offered by the ACT. They come directly from the *ACT Handbook for Registrars, Teachers, Moderators and Examiners* (8th Edition, 2009).
- You can also download the Undergraduate or Postgraduate ACT handbooks from their website: <http://www.actheology.edu.au/handbooks.php>

## SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES AND GRADE DESCRIPTORS

### (a) (Advanced) Diploma (200) Level—

- Units at this level introduce students to the introductory features, broad scope and principles of a discipline or topic appropriate to the content of each unit but not at the breadth and depth required for leaders and teachers in congregations for which vocation the undergraduate degrees in theology and ministry and the Master of Divinity have been devised. It is acknowledged, however, that some students will be already academically equipped and motivated to operate at levels consistent with 300 and even 400 undergraduate level. The study of primary sources and the principles underlying their analysis are introduced, especially in units in the fields of Biblical Studies and Church History and where relevant in other fields of study.
- Pass—evidences a basic understanding of the foundational and introductory features of the discipline that intersect with the topic or unit; attempts to engage primary sources (if these are relevant to the unit) and is aware of their significance for the discipline
- Credit—shows emerging skills in engaging primary sources and is aware of their significance for the discipline; evidences a basic understanding of the foundational features of the discipline; shows an awareness of relevant scholarly viewpoints without necessarily engaging these in depth
- Distinction—demonstrates an engagement with primary sources; has begun to grasp the foundational features of the discipline; is beginning to engage with a range of scholarly viewpoints
- High Distinction—demonstrates ability in engaging primary sources, is beginning to understand their setting and historical context; evidences a grasp of the foundational features of the discipline; shows emerging skills in the task of critically evaluating a range of scholarly viewpoints
- Projects (++)—Projects at 200 level are assessed at first year undergraduate level, i.e., at foundational (300) level.



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## **(b) Foundational Undergraduate Degree (300) Level—**

- Units at foundational level introduce undergraduate students to the foundational features and principles of a discipline or topic. A foundation for the critical evaluation of ideas is also established.
- **Pass**—The candidate attempts to engage primary sources (or documents), shows an awareness of relevant scholarly viewpoints and evidences a basic understanding of the foundational features of the discipline as that intersects with the topic.
- **Credit**—The candidate demonstrates an engagement with primary sources, has begun to grasp the foundational features of the discipline, and evidences engagement with a range of scholarly viewpoints.
- **Distinction**—The candidate demonstrates ability in engaging the primary sources, evidences a grasp of the foundational features of the discipline, and shows promise in the task of critically evaluating a range of scholarly viewpoints.
- **High Distinction**—The candidate demonstrates a pronounced ability to engage primary sources, a sound grasp of the foundational features of the discipline, and shows promise in the task of critically evaluating a range of scholarly viewpoints.

## **(c) Advanced Undergraduate Degree (400) Level (excluding 400H units)—**

- Units at advanced level build upon foundational studies. Critical issues are introduced and evaluated; documents analysed; and the critical and evaluative faculties of the student are developed.
- **Pass**—The candidate demonstrates an engagement with primary sources, has begun to grasp the foundational features of the discipline as that intersects with the topic, and evidences engagement with a range of scholarly viewpoints.
- **Credit**—The candidate demonstrates a pronounced ability in engaging primary sources, a sound grasp of the foundational features of the discipline, and shows promise in the task of critically evaluating a range of scholarly viewpoints.
- **Distinction**—The candidate demonstrates a pronounced ability to engage primary sources, a sound grasp of the foundational features of the discipline, and an ability to evaluate critically a range of scholarly viewpoints.
- **High Distinction**—The candidate demonstrates a pronounced ability in the analysis of primary sources and in the tasks of evaluating and assessing empathically a range of scholarly points of view, and an ability to evaluate critically a range of scholarly viewpoints.



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## **(d) Foundational MDiv, GradDip (500) Level—**

- Units at foundational level introduce graduate students to the foundational features and principles of a discipline or topic. The critical and evaluative faculties of students are developed.
- **Pass**—The candidate demonstrates an engagement with primary sources, has begun to grasp the foundational features of the discipline, and evidences engagement with a range of scholarly viewpoints.
- **Credit**—The candidate demonstrates ability in engaging the primary sources, evidences a grasp of the foundational features of the discipline, and exhibits engagement with a range of scholarly viewpoints.
- **Distinction**—The candidate demonstrates a pronounced ability to engage primary sources, exhibits a sound grasp of the foundational features of the discipline, and evidences ability in the task of critically evaluating a range of scholarly viewpoints.
- **High Distinction**—The candidate demonstrates a pronounced ability in the analysis of primary sources and in the tasks of critically evaluating and assessing empathically a range of scholarly points of view.

## **(e) MDiv Advanced (600) Level—**

- Building upon both knowledge and skills developed at foundational levels, candidates will be expected to analyse texts and ideas and come to independent judgements in a select area of study.
- **Pass**—The candidate demonstrates ability in engaging the primary sources, evidences a grasp of the foundational features of the discipline, and exhibits engagement with a range of scholarly viewpoints.
- **Credit**—The candidate demonstrates a pronounced ability to engage primary sources, exhibits a sound grasp of the foundational features of the discipline, and evidences ability in the task of critically evaluating a range of scholarly viewpoints.
- **Distinction**—The candidate demonstrates a pronounced ability in the analysis of primary sources and in the tasks of critically evaluating and assessing empathically a range of scholarly points of view.
- **High Distinction**—The candidate demonstrates superior ability in the analysis and critique of primary sources and ideas in critical dialogue with a wide range of scholarly points of view reporting these empathically.

## **(f) MA (700) Level and Honours (400H) Level—**

- Candidates will be expected to demonstrate superior knowledge and skills in their analysis of texts and ideas, and to arrive at independent judgments appropriate to early postgraduate level in their select area of study. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a developing capacity for further postgraduate research.



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- **Pass**—demonstrates pronounced ability in engaging primary sources and understands their setting and historical context; evidences a sound grasp of features of the discipline as they intersect with a select area of study; shows an ability to evaluate critically a range of scholarly viewpoints with empathy
- **Credit**—demonstrates pronounced ability in the analysis of primary sources and understands their setting and historical context; evidences a confident grasp of the features of the discipline as they intersect with a select area of study; exhibits an ability to evaluate and assess empathetically a range of scholarly viewpoints that suggests the emergence of independent thinking and research skills required at early postgraduate level
- **Distinction**—demonstrates superior ability in the analysis and critique of primary sources and ideas and understands their setting and historical context; evidences a confident grasp of the features of the discipline as they intersect with a select area of study; exhibits superior ability in assessing and reporting on a range of scholarly viewpoints empathetically that exhibits the emergence of independent thinking and research skills required at early postgraduate level.
- **High Distinction**—demonstrates superior knowledge and skills in the analysis and critique of primary sources and ideas and understands their setting and historical context; evidences a confident grasp of the features of the discipline as they intersect with a select area of study; exhibits genuinely independent scholarly judgments appropriate to early postgraduate level in a select area of study

### **(g) Learning Outcomes for the DMin**

- This degree is designed along the lines of a professional doctorate as taught in many Australian Universities. While the course involves rigorous scholarly inquiry, it locates that inquiry within the context of the ministry practice. The course design aims to effect growth and change in the ministry person and the organizations they serve.
- The course is designed to develop leaders in various fields of Christian ministry along five critical domains of Biblical theological reflection, critical analysis, development of the person, communication skills and decision-making. The ultimate purpose of the course is to assist the ministry practitioner to be able to exploit his/her full potential, achieving high levels of reflection, resulting in a deepened understanding of their calling as a foundation for effectiveness through their middle and later years of service.
- Unless otherwise specified in the learning outcomes for particular units at 800 level, the coursework units of the degree will promote a searching review of relevant literature integrated with ministerial experience. Such units will be of practical nature and content and will enhance professional competencies, develop not only the skills that are relevant to ministry but also deal with and explore issues and problems arising out of the context of ministry and the practice of Christian leadership.
- The coursework component of the degree is designed to give candidates the necessary research tools relevant to their profession, and the academic content required to negotiate the demands of the research component of the degree.



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- Fail—little or inadequate attempt at reflection on and analysis of the topic; ambiguous or lack of evidence of competency in the practice of ministry and in the capacity to think strategically; little or no engagement with the body of literature and/or the professional contributors in the field; evidence of unoriginal conclusions or argument by assertion.
- Pass—some evidence of reflection on and analysis of the topic; evidence of a basic, though underdeveloped, competence in the practice of ministry and the capacity to think strategically; evidence of basic reading and/or acquaintance with some professional contributors in the field and empathic reporting; articulation of conclusions distilled from reading and basic analysis.
- Credit—clear evidence of reflection on and analysis of the topic, arguments generally sustained with evidence; some evidence of a developing mature professional, ministerial competence and the capacity to think strategically from a more basic competence in the practice of ministry; evidence of wide reading and/or engagement with some of the major professional contributors in the field, and empathic reporting; articulation of informed conclusions, though not making an original contribution to the study and practice of Christian ministry.
- Distinction—reflection on and analysis of the topic at a high level, arguments sustained with evidence; evidence of a developing mature professional, ministerial competence and the capacity to think strategically; clear evidence of thorough reading and/or careful engagement with the major professional contributors in the field, with empathic reporting; articulation of independent and informed conclusions, though not necessarily making an original contribution to the study and practice of Christian ministry.
- High Distinction—reflection on and analysis of the topic at the highest level, arguments clearly presented and sustained with evidence; clear evidence of the development of mature professional, ministerial competencies and the capacity to think strategically; clear evidence of thorough reading and/or careful engagement with the major professional contributors in the field, with empathic reporting; clear articulation of fully independent and informed conclusions making an original (and publishable) contribution to the study and practice of Christian ministry.