

Tasmanian Baptists Pastoral Accreditation

October 2023

Tasmanian Baptists accreditation has the following objectives:

- To provide a positive support framework for Pastoral Leaders to enable them to thrive in their commitment to God's call.
- To support the establishment of rhythms and disciplines as a foundation to the health and sustainability of Pastoral Leaders.
- To equip and ensure commitment by Pastoral Leaders to ethical and professional practice.
- To ensure the Pastoral Leader is and remains in good standing within the church and the wider community.
- To give substance to the various contexts in which Tasmanian Baptists commends a Pastoral Leader to church and society

Please note: The description 'Pastoral Leader' is used throughout this page and can also be interchanged with 'Missional Leader', 'Pastor' or 'Minister' in referring to a person recognised as a leader of others in a particular community to advance the Kingdom of God and building up the church. (Ephesians 4:11-13)

What are the benefits of Tasmanian Baptist Accreditation?

- Full membership and voting rights as a pastor at the Assemblies of Tasmanian Baptists.
- Access to specialist Tasmanian Baptist leadership services including structured opportunities for training and development, assistance with accountability, performance reviews and professional development and entry into the Tasmanian Baptist Long Service Leave Scheme.
- Confidence for the community and peer groups that the accredited Pastoral Leader is engaged in practices that are ethical and professional, and they are employing healthy and sustainable behaviours.
- Some funding support for counselling and the pastoral recovery process when and where appropriate.
- Conditionally eligible to hold a Tasmanian Baptists Marriage License.

Please note: If a Tasmanian Baptist accreditation lapses, there is a risk of losing the benefits that are available as a Tasmanian Baptists Accredited Leader, including the revocation of their Marriage License.

Who must be accredited?

- Any person in a Pastoral or Missional leadership position that is more than 1 day per week.

Who is not eligible for accreditation?

- Any Pastoral Leader who is employed less than 1 day per week whether they are a locally appointed or an ordained Pastor.
- Any retired Pastor who is not involved in pastoral leadership more than 1 day per week is not eligible for accreditation and must relinquish their marriage license.

Please note: where a Pastoral Leader is not eligible for accreditation, the local church still carries a duty of care for the pastoral leader's practice of ministry. The church should set its own requirements with a Police Check, Working with Children Check and assent to the Tasmanian Baptists Code of Ethics regarded as foundational requirements.

What are the different types of accreditation?

There are 4 different types of accreditation.

1. Tasmanian Baptists Ordained Pastor

Available for all currently ordained Baptist Ministers of Religion (Australian). This type of accreditation makes you a member of the Tasmanian Baptists Assembly with full voting rights. You can also use the prefix

“Reverend” in official correspondence as appropriate. To maintain accreditation as a Tasmanian Baptist Ordained Pastoral Leader the Pastoral Leader must complete and have approved a *Sustainability, Health and Growth Agreement*.

Please note: any ordination candidates who hold Tasmanian Baptists Pastoral Leadership will have their accreditation transferred to Tasmanian Baptists Ordained Pastoral Leader upon ordination. The expiry date will not change.

2. Tasmanian Baptists Local Pastor

Available for Pastoral and Missional Leaders who have served in their current position for at least 12 months, are appointed by their local church, are in good standing with Tasmanian Baptists, and who are in a leadership position no less than 1 day per week. To maintain accreditation as a Tasmanian Baptist Local Pastoral Leader the Pastoral Leader must complete and have approved a *Sustainability, Health, and Growth Agreement*.

3. Tasmanian Baptists Probationary Pastor

Available for all new locally appointed Pastors, Pastors transferring from outside Tasmanian Baptist and Pastors ordained outside Tasmanian Baptist with less than 12 months service. Tasmanian Baptists Probationary Accreditation is available for 12 months and is not renewable. It is expected that at the end of the 12 months the Pastoral Leader will apply for accreditation either a Tasmanian Baptists Ordained Pastoral Leader or Tasmanian Baptists Local Pastoral Leader.

4. Tasmanian Baptists Provisional Pastor

Available for Pastors who are performing an Interim Pastoral Leadership position or are between positions and/or looking for a new pastoral opportunity. Accreditation as a Tasmanian Baptists Provisional Pastoral Leader must be applied for every 12 months, as necessary.

What is the Tasmanian Baptists accreditation criteria?

All Pastoral Leaders must complete and have approved a Tasmanian Baptists Accreditation application and maintain their accreditation annually. In the initial application they are required to submit a copy and then hold all original documentation as evidence of their meeting the requirements of the criteria necessary for accreditation. Updates of this documentation will be required at various intervals.

Healthy Pastoral Leadership is a supportive partnership between a church, Tasmanian Baptists, and the Pastoral Leader. Each Pastoral Leader applying for Tasmanian Baptists Accreditation must have a Church Leader (an elder, deacon or member of the Baptist church’s leadership team) confirm and complete the relevant sections of the application. This is both to provide accountability of the local church for supporting the accreditation, health, and development of their Pastoral Leaders, and to provide rigour to the system of accreditation. Churches affirm their partnership supporting their pastor through several questions in the annual Safe Church Audit.

Criteria for Pastoral Accreditation:

- Annual Review via a successful submission of the *Sustainability, Health, and Growth Agreement* (see below).
- In good standing with Tasmanian Baptists.
- A current Working with Vulnerable People’s Card
- Attendance at a Professional Standards Workshop (PSW) and a commitment to attend at least one PSW per year over the next 3 years.
- A recommended annual Pastoral Review undertaken by the current church (at least within the past 3 years).
- Personal support and accountability (a mentor/coach and Professional Supervision)
 - A minimum of 4 professional supervision sessions per year with a suitably qualified Professional Supervisor as listed by Tasmanian Baptists.

- Then a minimum of 2.5 hours for each day worked each week. (1 days = 4 hours, 2=5, 3=7.5, 4=10, 5=12.5)
- Collegial support and accountability (regional gatherings, renewal groups)
 - Attendance at one Assembly each year, then 4 hours for each day worked per year
- Pastoral Development
 - A minimum of 4 hours for each day worked per year
 - For appropriate development activities see below.
- Marriage Celebrant Training within the past 5 years (if holding a Marriage License)

How to apply for Tasmanian Baptists Accreditation:

- If you are already accredited with Tasmanian Baptist to maintain “Accreditation Currency” please complete the annual *Sustainability, Health, and Growth Agreement*.
- If you wish to begin the process of Accreditation, please ring the office, and ask for an Expression of Interest Form.
- If you wish to be considered for ordination, please ring the office, and ask for an Expression of Interest Form.

Ordination

Tasmanian Baptists celebrate ordination with the recognition that a Pastoral Leader is called by God, gifted for the task, and prepared to be recognised as a spiritual leader in church and society.

Ordination is a calling of sacred trust, privilege, and responsibility. It is not to be taken lightly. Because of this a journey of prayer and discernment is undertaken by the church leader, their local church community, and the wider body of Tasmanian Baptists in discerning the person’s call and whether the necessary character and capacity formation, and readiness is in place for ordination.

There are three phases of learning and formation for candidates and ordained leaders:

1. Undertaking and successful completion of a degree in Ministry or Theology.
2. Undertaking and completing a Formation Process with a focus on Spirituality, Practical Theology, Leadership and Mission.
3. Undertaking all that is required to maintain continuing accreditation.

1. The Academic Degree

Completion of a Bachelor of Ministry, Master of Divinity or equivalent is the usual, necessary foundation for ministry leadership in a Tasmania Baptist church. The following units of study are recommended:

- Biblical studies: including Old Testament and New Testament overviews, hermeneutics, and two exegesis subjects
- Theology: including an introductory subject, church history, and two further subjects
- Ministry: including preaching, leadership, a cultural awareness subject, a local mission subject, two pastoral care subjects and at least two semesters of Supervised Field Education

Tasmanian Baptists, in partnership with Kairos University in North America, offer degree pathways for applicants.

2. Ministry Formation

This formation process is focussed on:

- **Head:** A body of knowledge - Learning via formal courses (if the applicant has a degree in another field at least four post-graduate intensives are required), peer group, supervision, and ministry experience.

- **Hands:** Competencies - Ministry skills are developed with attention paid to four areas: Pastoral care, Leadership, Communication/Self-leadership, Mission.
- **Heart:** Character and Spiritual Formation - Attention to the whole person, who you are and who you are becoming. This is about intentional formation via a range of means including Spiritual Direction, attention to spiritual disciplines, prayer retreats, theological reflection, exploration of character growth and emotional intelligence. Normally a candidate takes a minimum of two years to engage all the elements of this process satisfactorily.

The application process normally involves: Written responses, references, an Interview with the Pastoral Committee, a psychological assessment, and a presentation to Assembly on a topic relevant to Tasmanian society or culture and Tasmanian Baptist churches.

3. Continuing Accreditation

On completion of the Ordination Ministry Formation process the person may be accredited as a Tasmanian Baptist Ordained Pastoral Leader. They will engage in ongoing learning along with professional development and professional supervision that requires annual renewing through the *Sustainability, Health, and Growth Agreement* (see below).