



Policy Document Administrator	Vice-Chancellor
Policy Document Approver	Council
Responsible Body/Person	Vice-Chancellor
Next Review date	15 Aug 2029
Superseded documents	None
Related documents	AUT Constitution, Freedom of Intellectual Inquiry Policy
Related HE Standards	3.2, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2
Related National Code (ESOS) Standards	1, 6, 11

1. PURPOSE

To provide guidance and context for the interpretation and implementation of the **AUT Constitution's Christian Foundation**.

2. DEFINITIONS

Definitions for any words in **Bold** in this document can be found in the [Policy Glossary](#). The first instance of each defined term has been outlined in bold.

The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

Christian Foundation means clause 1.1 of the **AUT Constitution**.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies across the University and all its **Affiliated Colleges**.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The University is a Christian institution founded on the beliefs listed in the **Christian Foundation**. This Policy describes the Christian Foundation and how it should be applied and interpreted in various AUT contexts, particularly in **Affiliated Colleges**.

5. POLICY APPLICATION

Christian Foundation in the AUT Constitution

5.1 The AUT Constitution begins with the Christian Foundation as follows:

1.1 The Australian University of Theology Limited:

(a) holds the Christian faith as professed by the church of Christ from primitive times and in particular as set forth in the creeds known as the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed;

(b) receives all the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the ultimate rule and standard of faith given by inspiration of God and containing all things necessary for salvation; and

(c) obeys the commands of Christ, teaches His doctrine and follows and upholds His discipline.

- 5.2 In accordance with the AUT Constitution clause 2.1: *The purpose and objects of the University are to foster and direct the systematic study of theology and other disciplines related to Christian ministry, thought and practice, primarily through Affiliated Colleges which act consistently with the Christian Foundation of the University.*

Application of Christian Foundation to members of the AUT Consortium

- 5.3 In accordance with the AUT **Affiliation Agreement**, all Affiliated Colleges affirm their agreement with the Christian Foundation, with further details provided in clauses 3.3 to 3.7 of the Affiliation Agreement.
- 5.4 All **AUT Office staff** affirm their personal understanding and acceptance of, and agreement to, the AUT's Christian Foundation as an essential and ongoing condition of employment.
- 5.4.1 Any exception to the requirements of 5.5 must be approved in writing by the **Vice-Chancellor**.
- 5.5 AUT **Council** and **Committee** members affirm their personal understanding and acceptance of, and agreement to, the AUT's Christian Foundation as an essential and ongoing condition of membership.
- 5.5.1 Any exception to the requirements of 5.5 must be approved in writing by the **Vice-Chancellor**.
- 5.6 AUT and Affiliated College staff who teach in AUT **Courses** affirm their personal understanding and acceptance of, and agreement to, the AUT's Christian Foundation as an essential and ongoing condition of approval to teach in AUT Courses.
- 5.6.1 An exception to the requirements of 5.6 may be approved by the Vice-Chancellor (or delegate) or an Affiliated College **Principal**, for **Guest Lecturers** where such approval supports AUT teaching and learning.
- 5.6.2 An exception to the requirements of 5.6 may be approved by the Vice-Chancellor (or delegate) or the Research Committee in the case of **Co-Supervisors** or **Adjunct Supervisors of Higher Degrees by Research** where such approval supports AUT teaching and learning.
- 5.6.3 Any exception to the requirements of 5.6 apart from 5.6.1 and 5.6.2 must be approved in writing by the Vice-Chancellor.
- 5.7 Affiliated College general and professional staff who provide administrative or other non-academic support to AUT students either:
- (i) affirm their personal understanding and acceptance of, and agreement to, the AUT's Christian Foundation as an essential and ongoing condition of approval to teach in AUT Courses; or
 - (ii) meet any faith requirements determined by their Affiliated College Principal, based on the context of the role and the Affiliated College.
- 5.8 As a **Consortium** of Affiliated Colleges, AUT students are based at an Affiliated College (a "home" College) except in special cases (see 5.9). Students must meet

any Christian belief and, if relevant, practice requirements of their current “home” Affiliated College. These requirements may take the form of: the AUT Christian Foundation, a statement of belief listed in Appendix 1; a College or denominational statement of belief; a statement of Christian practice (including a code of conduct or similar); and/or an equivalent requirement set by the College.

- 5.8.1 Any belief and/or practice requirements of Affiliated Colleges will be in keeping with the AUT Christian Foundation (including Christian belief and practice requirements held “from primitive times”) and any applicable legislation.
- 5.9 In special cases, and only with the prior approval of the Vice-Chancellor (or delegate), (i) an AUT coursework student may be transferred from an Affiliated College to the AUT Office as the student’s home College, or (ii) a **Higher Degree by Research** student may commence at, or be transferred to, the AUT Office where the **Primary Supervisor** is an academic within the AUT Office. If an AUT student has the AUT Office as their home college rather than at an Affiliated College, the student is not required to meet any specific belief or practice requirements, in keeping with clause 3.4 of the Affiliation Agreement (“...the University does not impose any denominational or religious restrictions in relation to a student’s enrolment...”).
- 5.10 In accordance with the AUT Constitution clause 3.6, Members of AUT Ltd are required to affirm their agreement with the Christian Foundation, with the exception that members in Category L (student representatives) are not required to affirm their agreement with the Christian Foundation.

Statements of Belief related to the Christian Foundation

- 5.11 Interpretation of the Christian Foundation is guided by the statements of belief listed in Appendix 1.
- 5.12 While not all elements of these statements agree with each other, they collectively provide a historical foundation and interpretive framework for the understanding of the AUT’s Christian Foundation.
- 5.13 The presence (or absence) of a particular issue in any one statement does not set an expectation that this applies (or does not apply) to any particular Affiliated College, as each Affiliate College determines its own statement of faith in the context of the Christian Foundation and its college context.

Freedom of Intellectual Inquiry and Christian Foundation

- 5.14 In keeping with the AUT Constitution clause 2.1(c) and the Freedom of Intellectual Inquiry Policy, AUT fosters freedom of intellectual inquiry as part of “engaging in student-centred teaching and learning that advances knowledge, encourages freedom of speech and academic freedom, and enhances the pursuit of vocational excellence”, noting that “Freedom of intellectual inquiry for both individuals and institutions includes the freedom to adopt a faith-based approach to education.”
- 5.15 AUT’s Freedom of Intellectual Inquiry Policy provides further detail on how intellectual inquiry relates to the Christian Foundation.

Reporting of Exceptions

5.16 Exceptions approved by the Vice-Chancellor will be reported to the Chancellor.

6. QUALITY ASSURANCE

This policy will be evaluated by Council through discussion with Affiliated College Principals and Boards, and using data from relevant surveys.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION

Higher Education Standards Framework – Threshold Standards (2021).

AUT Affiliation Agreement

Statements of belief in Appendix 1.

8. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
1.0	Council	15 August 2026	15 August 2026	New Policy

Any hard copy of this electronic document may not be current as the University regularly reviews its policies. The latest version can be found online at

Appendix 1: Statements of Belief related to the AUT's Christian Foundation

The AUT's Christian Foundation identifies two foundational statements of Christian belief¹:

- [The Apostle's Creed](#)
- [The Nicene Creed](#)

While there are many other statements of Christian belief, the AUT has identified the following statements as representative of its historical understanding of the Christian faith. These statements provide an interpretative framework for understanding the wording of the AUT's Christian Foundation. While there are disagreements between statements on some issues, the statements collectively provide a framework for interpreting the wording of the AUT's Christian Foundation. The presence (or absence) of a particular issue in any one statement does not set an expectation that this applies (or does not apply) to any particular Affiliated College, as each Affiliate College determines its own statement of faith in the context of the Christian Foundation and its college context.

- [The 39 Articles](#)
- [The Westminster Confession](#)
- [The Three Forms of Unity](#)
- [The London Baptist Confession of 1689](#)
- [The Savoy Declaration](#)
- [The Belief Statement of the Baptist World Alliance](#)
- [The Doctrinal Basis of the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students](#), and
- [The Confessional Statement of The Gospel Coalition Australia](#).

¹ Given AUT's heritage as an institution of the Anglican Church of Australia (ACA), the ACA versions of these creeds is provided in the links.