

OVERVIEW

EQUIPING CHRISTIAN LEADERS FOR THEIR UNIQUE CALLING IN COUNSELLING		
AC's Master of Counselling is designed to produce graduates who can apply integrated technical and theoretical concepts in a counselling context from a Christian worldview, as well as embody integrity, professional knowledge and social skills, making a positive contribution to society.	Program Director	Sharon Garro
	AQF Level	AQF Level 9
	Qualification	Master Degree
	Subjects	16
	IELTS	6.5
	Languages of Instruction	English
	CRICOS Code	108386B
	ASCED Code	090513 Counselling
	Accreditation	Until 2028 (TEQSA) Australian Counselling Association (ACA) Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA)
	Course Length	2 years full-time; up to 4 years part-time

The Master of Counselling provides a core of counselling knowledge and professional application and provides training which emphasises vocational application as counsellors. The course draws on Alphacrucis University College's (AC) expertise in social science and record of educating successful community service practitioners across a range of contexts. The course will prepare students for further study through a structured program of independent research culminating in the integrative research project. Graduates will have writing and research skills and be able to demonstrate an ability to apply a body of knowledge in a range of contexts. Graduates will also have developed skills in research, critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication.

Graduates of this course are eligible to seek recognition as registered Counsellors in Australia. Graduates of the Master of Counselling may find employment as counsellors across a range of professional and educational contexts, not-for-profit, and mission-focused organisations, or in chaplaincy positions, community service-orientated positions, and positions that require research skills and critical thinking.

Mandatory Supervision and Face-to-Face Requirements

Students will be required to participate in individual and group supervision as part of this course. Students will also be required to attend a minimum 166 hours of face-to-face learning, in addition to 100 hours of face-to-face work-integrated learning (professional practice), which includes 40 hours of client contact. Students who are unable to attend one of AC's campuses are encouraged to contact the Program Director to discuss

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options for completing the minimum face-to-face components.

AC GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

Christian Worldview

A knowledge of the Christian story, derived from the Scriptures and tradition of the church. An awareness of the implications of this story for self-identity in the context of local and global communities. This includes a commitment to engage with alternate worldviews, showing appreciation of the values and perspectives of others.

Leadership

The ability to provide effective Christian leadership to individuals, groups and organisations, demonstrated in the capacity to influence and enable others to accomplish worthwhile objectives which contribute to the human good and the kingdom of God. This includes seeking to emulate the example of Jesus Christ in serving and empowering others.

Integrity and Justice

The ability to apply a Christian worldview in the diverse situations and responsibilities of life, and to exercise faith, hope, love and generosity as prevailing attitudes. This includes the active promotion of the gospel, social justice, equality, mutual respect and an ecological ethos.

Communications

The ability to communicate effectively to a range of audiences, in appropriate contexts using high levels of verbal, written and technological skills. This includes visual and media literacy, numeracy, rhetoric and persuasion.

Personal and Social Skills

Demonstrate relational skills that incorporate the flexibility for both independent and collaborative situations. This includes personal and group organizational skills, conflict management and resolution, as well as the ability to value and respect the opinions of others.

Critical and Creative Thinking

A capacity for critical and reflective thinking that is explored not only individually but within a community context. This includes a capacity to be creative and to research, analyse and resolve problems in innovative and prophetic ways.

Professional Knowledge

Maintenance and use of knowledge about a discipline or field, involving theoretical, conceptual and methodological elements. This includes striving continually and independently to secure further knowledge and where appropriate, defined professional skills.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Specification	AQF Level 9: Master's Degree	AC Learning outcomes
Knowledge	Graduates at this level will have advanced and integrated understanding of a complex body of knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice.	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advanced and integrated understanding of key issues, practices, scholarship and recent developments within the specialisation of counselling; • knowledge of general research principles and methods, and advanced knowledge of specific research approaches used in counselling; • advanced and integrated understanding regarding the planning, implementation, assessment and reporting of counselling activities consistent with a Christian worldview and appropriate to the demands of the counselling context.
Skills	<p>Graduates at this level will have expert, specialised cognitive and technical skills in a body of knowledge or practice to independently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse critically, reflect on and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts and theories • Research and apply established theories to a body of knowledge or practice • Interpret and transmit knowledge, skills and ideas to specialist and non-specialist audiences 	<p>Demonstrated ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate, synthesise and critically engage the theoretical knowledge in the counselling contexts; • analyse and synthesise counselling approaches and develop skills and strategies (including technologies) in counselling practices; • design and implement an action research project which examines a complex problem or issue using appropriate counselling methodologies and theories; • communicate effectively complex ideas and proposed solutions to peers and general audiences; • identify and critically evaluate new developments of research and scholarship in counselling.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Specification	AQF Level 9: Master's Degree	AC Learning outcomes
Application of knowledge and skills	Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, expert judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner.	Demonstrated ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• articulate new questions or issues and apply the knowledge and skills developed in the counselling field to develop appropriate solutions;• work independently, responsibly and with the level of professionalism expected of an expert in the counselling field;• design and implement a major research project to advance personal and professional development;• comply with professional codes of ethics and regulations which impact on the ability to work in counselling contexts and keep abreast of changes in the legislation and practice applicable to the specific counselling context.

COURSE STRUCTURE (CURRENT)

This structure applies from Semester 1, 2023		
<p>The course structure is based on four semesters (each of 13 weeks duration), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120 credit points of core subjects • 30 credit points of specialisation • 10 credit points of research subjects <p>To qualify for award of Master of Counselling a candidate shall accrue an aggregate of at least 160 credit points, including satisfactory completion of the core subjects noted below.</p>		
CONTENT OF THE COURSE OF STUDY		CREDIT POINTS
CORE SUBJECTS	SSC400 Foundations in Social Research, Writing, and Methods <i>(former RES401 Postgraduate Research and Writing)</i> ACA401 Faith and Purpose <i>(former THE401 Christian Worldview)</i> SSC410 Psychology of Emotion and Wellbeing SSC413 Interpersonal Communication Skills <i>(former SSC412 Counselling Practice I)</i> SSC510 Human Lifespan Development SSC521 Foundations of Professional Practice <i>(former SSC514 Counselling Practice II)</i> SSC516 Mental Health SSC517 Applied Counselling Theories SSC519 Professional Accountability SSC522 Ethical and Professional Issues <i>(former SSC520 Professional Considerations)</i> SSC535 Culturally and Socially Diverse Practice SSC500 Professional Placement	12 x 10
SPECIALISATIONS	Professional Practice Specialisation 10cp Counselling Theory and Therapies*, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSC531 Solution Focussed Therapy and Positive Psychology • SSC536 Cognitive Behaviour Theories and Therapies <i>*Please consult with the Program Director on which Professional Practice Specialisation on offer as not all specialisation subjects may be offered every semester.</i> 20cp SSC 400 level or above	3 x 10
CAPSTONE	RES500 Independent Guided Research	1 x 10
RULES OF PROGRESSION	120 cp core, 30 cp specialisation, and 10 cp capstone subject	

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OTHER PROTOCOLS OF THE COURSE	<p>This course involves minimum 166 hours of face-to-face learning, including at least 40 hours of face-to-face counselling and 39 hours of face-to-face group supervision. SSC500 Professional Placement involves an additional 100 hours of work-integrated learning, including at least 6 hours of individual supervision.</p> <p>Students must have the appropriate police checks and/or approvals for working with children before they may undertake professional placement subjects.</p>
PRE-REQUISITES FOR SPECIFIC SUBJECTS	<p>Pre-requisites are noted on the subject outline. Students must have completed the pre-requisite to enrol in the subject.</p>

For information on the teaching faculty for this subject, please visit our [website](#).

COURSE STRUCTURE (PREVIOUS)

This structure applies from Semester 1, 2023

The course structure is based on four semesters (each of 13 weeks duration), including:

- 120 credit points of core subjects
- 30 credit points of specialisation
- 10 credit points of research subjects

To qualify for award of Master of Counselling a candidate shall accrue an aggregate of at least 160 credit points, including satisfactory completion of the core subjects noted below.

CONTENT OF THE COURSE OF STUDY		CREDIT POINTS
CORE SUBJECTS	SSC400 Foundations in Social Research, Writing, and Methods ACA401 Faith and Purpose (<i>former THE401 Christian Worldview</i>) SSC410 Psychology of Emotion and Wellbeing SSC413 Interpersonal Communication Skills (<i>former SSC412 Counselling Practice I</i>) SSC510 Human Lifespan Development SSC521 Foundations of Professional Practice (<i>former SSC514 Counselling Practice II</i>) SSC516 Mental Health SSC517 Applied Counselling Theories SSC519 Professional Accountability SSC522 Ethical and Professional Issues (<i>former SSC520 Professional Considerations</i>) SSC535 Culturally and Socially Diverse Practice SSC500 Professional Placement	12 x 10
SPECIALISATIONS	Professional Practice Specialisation 10cp Counselling Theory and Therapies*, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSC531 Solution Focussed Therapy and Positive Psychology • SSC532 Narrative Therapy • SSC533 Creative Therapies • SSC536 Cognitive Behaviour Theories and Therapies <i>*Please consult with the Program Director on which Professional Practice Specialisation on offer as not all specialisation subjects may be offered every semester.</i> 20cp SSC 400 level or above	3 x 10
CAPSTONE	RES500 Independent Guided Research RES503 Specialised Stream Research	1 x 10
RULES OF PROGRESSION	120 cp core, 30 cp specialisation, and 10 cp capstone subject	
OTHER PROTOCOLS OF THE COURSE	This course involves minimum 166 hours of face-to-face learning, including at least 40 hours of face-to-face counselling and 39 hours of face-to-face group supervision. SSC500 Professional Placement involves an additional 100 hours of work-integrated learning, including at least 6 hours of individual supervision. Students must have the appropriate police checks and/or approvals for working with children before they may undertake professional placement subjects.	
PRE-REQUISITES FOR SPECIFIC SUBJECTS	Pre-requisites are noted on the subject outline. Students must have completed the pre-requisite to enrol in the subject.	

For information on the teaching faculty for this subject, please visit our [website](#).

COURSE STRUCTURE (PRIOR TO 2023)

This structure applies prior to Semester 1, 2023	
The course structure is based on four semesters (each of 13 weeks duration), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 120 credit points of core subjects• 30 credit points of specialisation• 10 credit points of research subjects To qualify for award of Master of Counselling a candidate shall accrue an aggregate of at least 160 credit points, including satisfactory completion of the core subjects noted below.	
CONTENT OF THE COURSE OF STUDY	CREDIT POINTS

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CORE SUBJECTS	SSC400 Foundations in Social Research, Writing, and Methods THE401 Christian Worldview SSC410 Psychology of Emotion and Wellbeing SSC412 Counselling Practice I SSC510 Human Lifespan Development SSC514 Counselling Practice II SSC516 Mental Health SSC517 Applied Counselling Theories SSC519 Professional Accountability SSC520 Professional Considerations SSC535 Culturally and Socially Diverse Practice SSC500 Professional Placement	12 x 10
SPECIALISATIONS	Professional Practice Specialisation 10cp Counselling Theory and Therapies*, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSC531 Solution Focussed Therapy and Positive Psychology • SSC532 Narrative Therapy • SSC533 Creative Therapies • SSC536 Cognitive Behaviour Theories and Therapies 20cp SSC 400 level or above	3 x 10
CAPSTONE	RES500 Independent Guided Research RES503 Specialised Stream Research	1 x 10
RULES OF PROGRESSION	120 cp core, 30 cp specialisation, and 10 cp capstone subject	
OTHER PROTOCOLS OF THE COURSE	<p>This course involves minimum 166 hours of face-to-face learning, including at least 40 hours of face-to-face counselling and 39 hours of face-to-face group supervision. SSC500 Professional Placement involves an additional 100 hours of work-integrated learning, including at least 6 hours of individual supervision.</p> <p>Students must have the appropriate police checks and/or approvals for working with children before they may undertake professional placement subjects.</p>	
PRE-REQUISITES FOR SPECIFIC SUBJECTS	Pre-requisites are noted on the subject outline. Students must have completed the pre-requisite to enrol in the subject.	

Graduate Study Pathways

Graduates of the Master of Counselling may progress into one of AC's higher degree by research courses. Students interested in this pathway should notify the Program Director prior to their final semester.

Career Opportunities

Graduates of the Master of Counselling may find employment in a range of counselling and care professions, or positions in industries such as:

- Community service-orientated positions
- Ministry or church-based organisations
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Missions-focussed organisations
- Educational institutions
- Positions that require research skills and critical thinking

Professional Recognition

Graduates of the Master of Counselling are eligible to apply for the following professional registrations:

- [Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia \(PACFA\)](#)
- [Australian Counselling Association \(ACA\)](#)
- [Christian Counsellors Association of Australia \(CCAA\)](#)

Work-Integrated Learning

Work-Integrated Learning may be undertaken through various Professional Practice and Professional Experience subjects at AC. These subjects seek to create a direct linkage between the learning, skills and values engaged in lectures, and the reflection which occurs when these are applied in real-life settings. These work-based training subjects comprise of instruction, academic assessment and a placement in a workplace for each subject.

To qualify for the award of the Master of Counselling, a candidate will complete 100 hours of professional placement completed, usually completed as approx. 1-day per week for 13 weeks. Students are usually required to find their own workplace/ employer/ mentor to be approved by AC. In some cases, a new aspect within a student's current paid employment may be suitable as a work placement.

For further information related to Work-Integrated Learning please see the Professional Practice Handbook on Moodle or contact our [Student Support](#) team.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

Academic Entry Requirements

Applicants with Recent Secondary Education

This course requires the completion of an AQF Level 7 or above higher education qualification (or overseas equivalent) in a related discipline. Applicants whose highest academic study is their recent secondary education are not eligible for direct admission into this course.

Applicants with Vocational Education and Training Study

This course requires the completion of an AQF Level 7 or above higher education qualification (or overseas equivalent) in a related discipline. Applicants whose highest academic study is a VET qualification are not eligible for direct admission into this course.

Applicants with Higher Education Study

Applicants whose highest level of study enrolment since leaving secondary education is a complete or partially complete *higher education* qualification must demonstrate the completion of an AQF Level 7 Bachelor degree (or higher) in a related discipline, as determined by the Program Director.

Applicants with Work and Life Experience

This course requires the completion of an AQF Level 7 or above higher education qualification (or overseas equivalent) in a related discipline. Applicants with no academic qualifications are not eligible for direct admission into this course.

For further information about AC's provisional entry criteria, please see:

- [AC's Admissions Requirements](#)
- [Higher Education Provisional Entry Policy](#)
- [Admissions Policy](#)

English Language Proficiency

Overseas students are required to demonstrate their English proficiency skills. Such students admitted into our programs must attain an overall IELTS (or equivalent) score of 6.5 (with no score below 6.0 in any of the four skills areas). IELTS (or equivalent) is not required for applicants who have undertaken five years of required higher education study (or equivalent) in English from an approved country or who have completed a Certificate IV or higher qualification awarded in English under the Australian Qualification Framework by an authorised institution or registered training organisation.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the [International Student Office](#) if they are unsure of the equivalence of their English language proficiency test scores.

Essential Requirements

All applicants must submit a Statement of Intention as part of their application for admission into this course. This should include the email and phone contact details for at least one professional referee.

The Program Director or delegated representative may conduct a pre-admission interview for applicants as part of their application for admission into this course. As part of this interview, applicants will be assessed on the presence of some fundamental human capacities, their self-awareness and relational capacity, capacity to understand and practice ethical behaviour and willingness to follow the PACFA Code of Ethics, capacity to reflect on and learn from experience, and willingness to participate in a planned and structured client contact setting.

All students are required to complete the new Working with Children Check online before they will be allowed to participate in professional practice subjects. Students will be classified as a 'volunteer'.

Special Admissions Pathways

AC's [Admissions Policy](#) details the special admission pathways for our courses of study. The Special Admission Pathways are evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Program Director. A student's admission requirements may be reconsidered on educational disadvantage grounds, including but not limited to:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, where the normal HSC entry path has not been followed;
- learning or language difficulties;
- physical disability;
- serious family illness or excessive family responsibility;
- completion of a prescribed program of non-award study (four subjects or 40 credit points) with an overall GPA of 1.8 or better.

For a full list of educational disadvantage grounds, please see AC's [Admissions Policy](#).

Special or alternative admission applicants may be required to provide a personal statement outlining their interest, motivation and reasons for selecting the course including details of educational and any employment background.

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

AC is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from discrimination on the basis of income, age, disability, social and ethnic background, location or gender. AC endeavours to increase opportunities for people of all backgrounds to participate in training programs, and implement programs that take into account the specific needs of participants. AC encourages students to inform AC of any disability, medical condition or learning need that may impact on your studies to arrange a study plan that best suits your needs.

HOW TO APPLY

Once you have chosen your course of study, you will need to apply direct to AC. Applications typically close 3 weeks before semester commences.

All AC application forms are completed online. There are different forms depending on the level of study you are applying for and the location of your course.

Further information on How to Apply and access to AC's Application Forms is available on our [website](#).

Credit transfers and recognised prior learning (RPL)

You may be entitled to credit for prior learning, whether formal or informal. Formal learning can include previous study in higher education, vocational education, or adult and community education. Informal learning can include on the job learning or various kinds of work and life experience. Credit can reduce the amount of study needed to complete a degree.

For further information about credit and recognition of prior learning please see AC's [Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) or contact our [Student Support](#) team.

HOW TO ENROL

Once you have returned a signed copy of your Letter of Offer to accept your place at AC, you will be invited to enrol in your specific subjects in the next academic period. Students are required to consult their timetable (can be found [here](#)), and contact the [Student Support Team](#) for tailored academic advice before completing the enrolment form.

Applications for credit transfers or recognised prior learning will be communicated to you once they have been processed.

STUDENT SERVICES

Student Support Team

AC's Student Support Team exists to ensure you get from Orientation Day to Graduation Day with a smile on your face!

Academic Support

- Tailored academic guidance
- Assessment variation to accommodate disabilities, medical conditions and/or learning needs
- Exam reader/writers
- One-on-one tutoring and small group workshops for face-to-face and distances students
- Physical libraries
- Access to online journal databases
- Access to eBook resources
- Resources are also provided online for self-development

Non-Academic Support

- Pastoral Care
- Chaplains
- Professional counselling
- Careers guidance
- On-campus childcare*
- Extra-curricular and community services
- SRC – The Student Representative Council
- Recreation areas

Student Life

All students can take part in:

- mission trips and community service projects
- weekly chapel services
- lunches and gatherings on campus
- opportunities to hear or present research
- masterclasses to take your skills and knowledge to the next level
- social events both on and away from campus
- exchange programs with other colleges and universities around the world

...and much, much more! To find out what is happening near you or to get specific details just contact the Student Support Team:

Email: studentsupport@ac.edu.au

Phone: (02) 8893 9005

<https://www.ac.edu.au/current-students/student-support/>

**Not available at all campuses*

STUDENT PROFILE

The table below gives an indication of the likely peer cohort for new students at AC. It provides data on students that commenced study and passed the census date in the most relevant recent intake period for which data are available, including those admitted through all offer rounds and international students studying in Australia.

Applicant background	Reporting Year: 2024	
	Number of students	Percentage of all students
(A) Past higher education study (includes a bridging or enabling course)	N/A	N/A
(B) Past vocational education and training (VET) study	N/A	N/A
(C) Work and life experience (Admitted on the basis of previous achievement other than the above)	N/A	N/A
(D) Recent secondary education:		
• Admitted solely on the basis of ATAR (regardless of whether this includes the impact of adjustment factors such as equity or subject bonus points)	N/A	N/A
• Admitted where both ATAR and additional criteria were considered (e.g. portfolio, audition, extra test, early offer conditional on minimum ATAR)	N/A	N/A
• Admitted on the basis of other criteria only and ATAR was not a factor (e.g. special consideration, audition alone, schools recommendation scheme with no minimum ATAR requirement)	N/A	N/A
International students	N/A	N/A
All students	N/A	N/A

Note: "<5" – the number of students is less than 5.

N/A – Students not accepted in this category.

N/P – Not published: the number is hidden to prevent calculation of numbers in cells with less than 5 students.

ATAR-based offers only	ATAR
Highest rank to receive an offer	N/A
Median rank to receive an offer	N/A
Lowest rank to receive an offer	N/A

Note: "<5" – the number of students is less than 5.

Note: This table relates to all students made an offer on the basis of ATAR alone or ATAR in combination with other factors. Students admitted into a course of study based on a Special Admission Pathway or otherwise not based on their ATAR are not included in this table.

WHERE TO GET FURTHER INFORMATION

ac.edu.au

AC's [website](#) is the best place to discover what's happening at AC and explore our courses, campuses and support services. If you are not yet an AC student, our [Future Students](#) team are here to help find the right course for you!

Moodle

Once you begin your studies at AC, you will use [Moodle](#) as your Learning Management System (LMS) to access all your subject content, the AC Academic Handbook, Study Skills and Textbook Information. New Students can also use Moodle to view our Induction Videos.

International Students

Nothing beats the experience of being part of our community and participating in our class discussions! Wherever you are in the world, AC brings education to you by offering many subjects and degrees by distance education. Information about International Students, including the application process, international recognition of AC courses of study and FAQ's, is available on our [website](#). Alternatively, our [International Student Office](#) is available to answer any questions you may have about your requirements as an onshore or offshore International Students at AC.

Professional Recognition

The Master of Counselling is accredited by the Australian Counselling Association (ACA). Professional registration may require an application to the professional body and may have additional or ongoing requirements beyond the completion of the qualification. Please speak with the Program Director or contact ACA directly for further details.



QILT

Thinking about higher education institutions and study areas? Wish you could ask someone about their experience? The [QILT website](#) helps you compare official study experience and employment outcomes data from Australian higher education institutions.

TEQSA National Register

The purpose of the [TEQSA National Register](#) is to be the authoritative source of information on the status of registered higher education providers in Australia.

Complaints and Grievances

If you are unsatisfied with the outcome of your application, AC's [Complaint and Grievance Resolution Policy](#) outlines the procedure for resolving a complaint or grievance.