



## POSITION STATEMENT

### Integration of Faith, Practice and Vocation at Redlands College

#### Preamble

Redlands College exists to provide a Christ-centred education that will prepare young people to serve God and influence the world. The College's mission is to foster a Christ-centred community which, through the co-operation of staff, students and their families, provides for students from across the community spectrum, a quality education which values respect for the individual, a commitment to excellence in all endeavours and the desire to develop one's God-given abilities.

In order to achieve this mission, the College intentionally fosters a culture where all staff draw from a common affirmation of the Christian faith to inform their view of the world and guide their beliefs, words and actions, as they educate the students entrusted into the care of the College community.

This document is designed to articulate the significance of the integration of faith, practice and vocation for all staff employed at Redlands College. Whilst the College endorses the absolute truths of scripture, there is an acknowledgement that the study of scripture results in questions on which there will never be consensus. These questions lead to a range of traditions and expressions of the Christian faith, where followers of Christ continue to seek insights into, and a greater understanding of, God's timeless word. This document is designed to unify staff around common Christian doctrines, beliefs and life application.

#### Faith Basis of the College

- (a) Without limiting the *Redlands Combined Independent College Inc Constitution, Redlands College Enterprise Agreement* or related documents, which may provide more specific information, the College is an institution established for religious and educational purposes, conducted in accordance with the doctrines, beliefs, tenets and teachings of the evangelical protestant stream of the Christian religion.
- (b) Collectively, these documents inform the College's understanding of the lifestyle, conduct and values which all staff members of the College, regardless of their role, are required to respect and maintain at all times and are to be understood as source documents.
- (c) All staff are required to be genuine adherents in belief and practice to the Christian faith and play a significant part in the ministry of the Christian church and Gospel. This includes teaching and modelling the Christian faith to students, adopting personal conduct and lifestyle consistent with this faith and representing the faith basis of the College to those inside and outside of the College community.

#### Faith Heritage of the College

Redlands College was founded in 1988 by members of the Churches of Christ. These Churches of Christ are autonomous congregations which have their origin in the Restoration Movement and are associated by common core beliefs. The College's governing body is elected from an Association comprised of active members of Churches of Christ. The College has an intentional focus on employing active Christian staff from a broad range of evangelical, Protestant traditions. The College also recognises within its community, staff from non-evangelical and Catholic traditions.

The College draws its spiritual and governance oversight from the doctrines, beliefs, tenets and teachings of the Churches of Christ. These include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Desire for Christian Unity: The wider Christian community is united by faith in Jesus as the son of God, Lord and Saviour.
- (b) Commitment to Evangelism and Mission: Active participation in God's mission of redemption.
- (c) Emphasis on the centrality of scripture: The inspired Word of God is entirely trustworthy for the purposes for which God inspired it.
- (d) Believers' Baptism: A one-time faith response to acceptance of Christ as Saviour and a pledge of devotion to God.
- (e) Weekly Communion: The bread and cup are a weekly reminder of Christ's complete love, His sacrifice on the cross, His victory over death and His imminent return when all will be resurrected and judged.
- (f) Congregational autonomy: Each local congregation is responsible for their own teaching and leadership.
- (g) Lay Leadership: The belief in the priesthood of all believers encourages members to participate in all aspects of the church life and leadership.
- (h) Discipleship: Jesus calls his followers to be transformed into His image and likeness.
- (i) Holy Spirit: The living indwelling presence in believers with a primary role of spiritual transformation and intercession.
- (j) Acapella worship: An appreciation of the heritage of non-instrumental worship.

All staff are encouraged to develop an awareness of the traditions which form the faith heritage of Redlands College, however staff are not required to subscribe to these traditions. The "Affirmation of Faith" outlines the key tenets and beliefs which all staff are required to endorse and subscribe to.

#### **Affirmation of Faith**

- (a) God: We believe in the existence of one loving God who is the source of all creation, in whom there are three equal divine persons, existing in an intimacy of unity, revealed as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God has created us to find our eternal destiny in relationship with Him.
- (b) Jesus: We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternally existing, only begotten son of the Father, who became flesh and dwelt among us.
- (c) Holy Spirit: We believe the Holy Spirit convicts humanity of sin, creating faith within them to confess Christ as Lord, leading to repentance and baptism into Christ. It is the indwelling Spirit who bestows the Gifts of the Spirit and manifests the Fruit of the Spirit in the believer.
- (d) The Bible: We believe that the Bible is our inspired source for learning both about God and godly living. As God's servants, our role is to communicate the principles of Scripture to a fallen world in a relevant way.
- (e) Humanity: We believe that human sin is rebellion against God that separates us from Him. As a result, man is incapable of regaining a right relationship with God through his own effort.
- (f) Salvation: We believe that salvation is the free gift of God that has been made available to all as a result of Jesus' death on the cross. Salvation is available to all who put their trust in Christ as Saviour.
- (g) Communion: We believe the Bread and the Cup remind us of Christ's complete love for us, His sacrifice on the cross and is a memorial and proclamation of the Lord's death until He returns.
- (h) Worship: We believe God's desire is that worship be our genuine, passionate, and Spirit-filled response to Him.
- (i) Prayer: We believe prayer is essential to our spiritual and physical strength, both as individuals and as the Church. We believe nothing is impossible with God and He wants us to ask all things in faith and trust.

- (j) The Kingdom: We believe the Kingdom is made up of all who believe in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and accept Him as Lord and King, regardless of traditions. We will be supportive and work together in unity with everyone in our community for the cause of Christ.
- (k) The Church: We believe that the Church as Christ's body is designed to be a visible manifestation of God on this earth. The Church continues the work of Jesus through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit by ministering to those who are hurting and by calling people to godly living.

**Integrating Faith, Practice and Vocation**

- (a) The provisions in this section are included in good faith to avoid injury to the religious susceptibilities of adherents of the protestant stream of the Christian faith and damage to the reputation of the College.
- (b) It is an inherent genuine occupational requirement (subject to the provisions of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991) and essential condition of employment and continuing employment, that a staff member possesses and maintains a firm personal belief consistent with the *Affirmation of Faith* of Redlands College, together with an active commitment to a Christian church holding a doctrinal position consistent with the *Affirmation of Faith*.
- (c) At the least, such an active commitment requires regular attendance at their church's worship services and active involvement in devotions and worship services at Redlands College.
- (d) All staff members of the College must:
  - (i) Conduct themselves in a manner consistent with these beliefs, and in accordance with the Christian ethos and aims of the College, thus providing a specifically Christian role model and example to all students, families and others associated with the College.
  - (ii) Not deliberately act in a way that they know, or ought reasonably to know, is contrary to the beliefs, ethos and aims of the College.
  - (iii) Without limiting subsection (i) and (ii) above, avoid, whether by word, action or lifestyle, any influence upon students (and in particular must not teach, encourage or model anything) contrary to the *Affirmation of Faith*, beliefs, ethos and aims of the College.
- (e) Acting contrary to the requirements above is likely to cause injury to the religious susceptibilities of members of the College community who adhere to the College's beliefs, and may damage the College's reputation.
- (f) If a staff member acts contrary to the requirements above, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the normal College procedures in relation to conduct and performance management and may include restoration, counsel, discipline or dismissal of the employee.
- (g) If a dispute arises in connection with this section it shall be dealt with in accordance with the College's *Complaint Handling Policy*, available on the College network.

*I hereby affirm my understanding of, and acceptance of, the Position Statement on the Integration of Faith, Practice and Vocation at Redlands College. I understand that my employment at Redlands College implies my ongoing adherence to these principles and the Christian philosophy of Redlands College.*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date :** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_