



Anglican Church of Australia

General Synod

Appointments to General Synod Bodies - Policy and Protocol

Approved by Standing Committee on 12-13 April 2024 (SC2024/1/51)

Amended by Standing Committee on 11-12 April 2025 (SC2025/1/19)

The Standing Committee has the authority to appoint persons to General Synod bodies or recommend appointments to be made by the Primate.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee (NAC) is a committee of the Standing Committee with responsibility for identifying and recommending nominees for the Standing Committee to consider for appointment or to recommend to the Primate for appointment.

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Appointments Policy and Protocol is to ensure a diverse and effective range of appointments are made in a fair and transparent process when identifying and recommending individuals for appointment or reappointment by the Standing Committee and Primate to General Synod bodies.
2. This policy addresses:
 - a) Supporting documentation and checks required of nominees
 - b) Protocols to guide the appointment process
 - c) Criteria to be applied by the NAC
 - d) Targets for gender balance in membership of General Synod bodies
 - e) Standing Committee representation on Reference Commissions
 - f) Terms of appointment
 - g) Advising nominees of the outcome of Standing Committee's consideration
 - h) Reporting

Scope

3. This policy applies to membership of all General Synod bodies, whether members are appointed by Standing Committee or by the Primate on the recommendation of the Standing Committee. This policy outlines the default approach to be followed where there are no specific guidelines on a particular appointment governed by a Rule or Canon of the ACA which must be followed.
4. This policy does not apply to:
 - a. the election or appointment of General Synod representatives by diocesan synods
 - b. elections conducted at sessions of General Synod in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the ACA
 - c. the appointment of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council (NATSIA) representatives by diocesan bishops
 - d. the appointment of members to General Synod bodies by the House of Bishops or diocesan bishops
 - e. a request to the Primate from the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion (or delegate) to endorse an invitation to a bishop of the ACA to become a member of an Anglican Communion body.

Nominations and Appointments Committee (NAC)

5. The NAC is a permanent committee of Standing Committee which was established in 2019 to identify suitable nominees for appointment to General Synod bodies in accordance with the gender balance targets established in the *Gender Balance in Membership of General Synod Bodies Policy*, the provisions of which are now incorporated into this policy.
6. The NAC's broader function is to identify suitable nominees for the Standing Committee to appoint or recommend to the Primate for appointment.
7. The NAC shall have three members, to be drawn from Standing Committee membership.
8. The General Synod Office will refer all vacancies to be filled in accordance with this policy to the NAC.
9. The NAC will operate in accordance with this policy and protocol.

Criteria to be applied by the NAC

10. The NAC will give consideration to the skills and experience profile required on each body.
11. The NAC will take into account diversity considerations, including gender, age, ethnicity, cultural background and regional participation.
12. The NAC is responsible for the application of the target for gender balance in membership of General Synod bodies when identifying nominees for recommendation.

Co-Opting Members to Reference Commissions

13. Section 15 of the Strategic Issues, Commissions, Task Forces and Networks Canon 1998 provides that a Reference Commission may co-opt additional members according to conditions laid down by the Standing Committee. This policy provides that additional members may be co-opted for a determined period of time, to assist in furthering specific projects, with the approval of the Executive Committee or the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee may delegate its authority to agree the appointment of co-opted members by a Reference Commission.

Targets for gender balance in membership of General Synod bodies

14. A target toward gender balance in membership of General Synod bodies was established by the Standing Committee in response to the General Synod resolutions GS85/07 and GS25/17. (See Appendix A). The target was confirmed by Standing Committee resolution SC2019/01/08.
15. This policy notes that the General Synod resolutions GS85/07 and GS25/17 support the principle of equal representation of women. This policy recognises that equal representation does not necessarily require a strict 50:50 balance on everybody, as this is not possible for a body with an odd number of committee members. Most General Synod bodies have less than 10 members, so the difference of a single member either way can exaggerate the statistical difference.

16. To pursue the principle of equal representation on General Synod bodies, this policy applies a target of 40:40:20 gender representation: 40 per cent women, 40 per cent men, and 20 per cent discretionary, with a commitment to achieving a gender balance overall.
17. The NAC is required to nominate a woman for appointment to a vacancy on a General Synod body if women comprise less than 40 percent of the current membership. Where the committee is unable to confirm the nomination of a woman willing to serve in the role, the NAC can nominate a man to fill the vacancy and advise the Standing Committee of the non compliance with this policy.
18. The committee will develop and implement a process to identify and encourage women to stand for elected positions at General Synod.
19. The General Secretary will report to Standing Committee at least once a year on progress against the gender balance target in two categories:
 - a. General Synod bodies elected by General Synod
 - b. General Synod bodies appointed by Standing Committee.
20. At each General Synod session, the Standing Committee will report on the application of this policy and progress against the gender balance target in two categories:
 - a. General Synod bodies elected by General Synod
 - b. General Synod bodies appointed by Standing Committee.

Standing Committee Representation on General Synod Reference Commissions

21. Following each General Synod, the Standing Committee will appoint to each Reference Commission six members, at least one of whom is a member of the Standing Committee. The General Secretary will invite the newly elected Standing Committee members to express interest in serving on a Reference Commission and provide this information to the NAC.
22. Additional members may be appointed by the Standing Committee, either at the time of making the appointments following each General Synod or subsequently, either temporarily or for the whole period until the next General Synod, to enable the Reference Commission to undertake the work required of it by the General Synod or the Standing Committee.

Supporting documentation and checks required by NAC before recommending nominees to the Standing Committee

23. The General Synod office is to review the Rule or Canon under which the appointment is made and advise the NAC of particular requirements or conditions relating to that appointment that need to be satisfied.
24. Before being recommended for appointment or reappointment, all nominees are to be screened against the National Register and the result of that check is to be reported to Standing Committee as required by the *Standing Committee Procedure - National Register Screening*.
25. Nominees for appointment to bodies which meet the definition of a safe ministry role or a professional standards role are required to comply with screening and training requirements in accordance with the safe ministry standards in the *Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017*.

26. Nominees for appointment to the position of director of an incorporated body require a nominee to hold a Directors Identification Number (DIN) before an appointment can be confirmed.
27. The General Synod Office will advise the NAC of any other relevant regulatory or compliance requirements relating to appointment to a vacant position.
28. NAC is to obtain resumes from all nominees recommended for appointment to General Synod bodies.
29. A resume is not required from nominees who are being recommended for reappointment. Resumes are not provided to the Standing Committee but are held on record by the General Synod office. A nominee's resume will be made available to any Standing Committee member on request.

The Appointment Process

30. The General Synod Office will refer vacancies to be filled to the NAC and provide advice on the membership composition of the General Synod body which has the vacancy and any conditions that need to be satisfied to confirm an appointment under a Rule or Canon of the ACA and any other regulatory compliance requirements.

Where a vacancy has arisen due to the term of a member expiring

31. The NAC will request advice from the Chair/Convenor of the body on whether a member whose term is expiring wishes to be considered for reappointment. If it is the Chair whose term is expiring, they will be asked to confirm that they are willing to continue to serve, either in the role of Chair or as a continuing member.
32. If the member whose term is expiring wishes to be considered for reappointment, the Chair/Convenor is requested to confirm support or not for the reappointment. The Chair/Convenor will be asked to consider the contribution the member has made to the body, the mix of skills and diversity currently serving on the body and the length of time the member seeking reappointment has served on the body.
33. The NAC will determine whether the member should be nominated for reappointment based on the advice it receives and confirmation that the nominee satisfies all conditions of appointment.
34. If NAC resolves to recommend a member for reappointment it will advise the member and the Chair/Convenor that they have been nominated for reappointment subject to confirmation by the Standing Committee.
35. If the NAC resolves not to recommend the member for reappointment it will advise the member and the Chair/Convenor that the appointment has not been recommended to the Standing Committee.

Vacancies where an individual is not seeking reappointment

36. The NAC is to invite the Chair/Convenor of the body that has a vacancy to consult with the members of that body to identify possible nominees for appointment and provide the NAC with any potential nominee's resume.

37. If the NAC identifies additional nominees for consideration it is required to consult with the Chair/Convenor of the body on the suitability of their appointment.
38. The NAC must receive confirmation that all nominees under consideration have consented to their name being presented to the Standing Committee for appointment.
39. The NAC will determine whether a person should be nominated for appointment based on an assessment of the mix of skills and diversity currently serving on the body and confirmation that the nominee satisfies all conditions of appointment.
40. When the NAC resolves to recommend a person for appointment it will advise the person that they have been nominated subject to confirmation by the Standing Committee.
41. If the NAC resolves not to recommend a person for appointment, who has consented to being nominated, it will advise the person that their appointment has not been recommended to the Standing Committee on this occasion.

Terms of Appointment

42. The NAC may make a recommendation to Standing Committee on the term of an appointment, subject to any conditions contained in the Rule or Canon governing that appointment which may limit the length of the term to be served or require the member to resign at a certain age.
43. This policy does not determine a limit on the number of terms of appointment which can be served by an individual member. When considering filling vacancies on General synod bodies the NAC will take into account the value of refreshing the membership of the body in consultation with the current Chair/Convenor.

Appointment and Election Processes at Standing Committee

44. The Standing Committee will consider the recommendations of the NAC and will confirm appointments, or recommendations on appointments by the Primate, by resolution.
45. The Standing Committee may resolve to confirm an appointment by election when more than one nominee is submitted for appointment to a General Synod body if the decision to appoint cannot be resolved following discussion.

Advising Nominees of Standing Committee's Decision

If a Person is Appointed/Reappointed

46. If the appointment is made by the Primate, the General Synod Office will arrange for a letter of appointment from the Primate. If the appointment is made by the Standing Committee a letter of appointment will be provided by the General Secretary.
47. The new member will be advised of:
 - a) details of their appointment and the body on which they will serve
 - b) the Rule or Canon under which they have been appointed,
 - c) the name of the Chair/Convenor and other members of the body
 - d) the term of their appointment.
48. A copy of the appointment letter sent to the person appointed is to be provided to the Chair/Convenor of the body for their information.

If a Person is not Appointed/Reappointed

49. Where the Standing Committee resolves not to accept the recommendation of the NAC, the General Secretary is to write to unsuccessful nominee advising them of the decision.
50. The General Secretary is also to advise the Chair/Convenor of the relevant body
51. The General Secretary will inform the NAC of the Standing Committee's resolution in response to their report.

Resolution of Dispute

52. Any issues raised about the implementation of this policy should be referred in the first instance to the General Secretary.

APPENDIX A

- **Resolution of the Fourteenth Session of General Synod (GS85/07)**
That this General Synod in responding to ACC Resolution 13.31 requesting member churches to work towards the goal of equal representation of women in decision making at all levels:
 - a) *recognises and celebrates the giftedness of women and the multitude of ministries in which they participate;*
 - b) *requests Standing Committee of General Synod to apply the principle of equal representation of women in its appointments to Commissions, Task Forces, and Working Groups wherever legislatively and practically possible and to report progress to ACC14 in 2009; and*
 - c) *encourages each diocese to adopt this principle in elections and appointments and report progress to General Synod Standing Committee by the end of 2008.*

- **Resolution of the Seventeenth Session of General Synod (GS25/17)**
 - 1. *Notes with disappointment that the resolution of the 2007 fourteenth Session of General Synod in regard to the equal representation of Women on General Synod Bodies (GS85/07) has not been effectively implemented, with equal representation of women on only three of the General Synod's current 27 Bodies.*
 - 2. *Requests the next General Synod Standing Committee to*
 - a) *Re-commit to the principle of equal representation of women in membership of its bodies and to ensure that this goal is met the Standing Committee agree to a target that all General Synod bodies (General Synod commissions, task forces and working groups) have 50% equal representation of women in their membership by 1st December 2019 wherever legislatively and practically possible.*
 - b) *Apply the principle of equal representation of women in membership of organisations where Standing Committee make appointments to other bodies wherever this is legislatively and practically possible.*
 - c) *Review annually the progress of this target.*
 - 3. *Encourages each diocese to adopt the target of 50% equal representation of women in elections and appointments wherever legislatively and practically possible and to report back to the next General Synod.*
 - 4. *Requests Standing Committee to report progress on this matter to the 18th Session of General Synod.*