

Doctor of Ministry in Leadership

DMin Academic Expectations

What level and quality of study is expected for our DMin? This question may be answered in two parts.

A. Generic expectations

As a doctorate, our DMin is an advanced degree which will be recognised internationally. The academic expectations are close to those for our AGST Alliance PhD, except that whereas the PhD tends to have universal application (i.e. it contributes to the theory of the field), the DMin tends to have local application (i.e. it addresses concerns in a specific, local setting).

Think of the expectations as "becoming a full professional in your field". In practice this means:

- You have something to say your peers want to listen to.
- You have a command of what is happening in your subject so that you can evaluate the worth of what others are doing.
- You have the astuteness to discover where you can make a useful contribution.
- You have mastery of appropriate techniques that are currently being used, and also be aware of their limitations.
- You are able to communicate your results effectively in the professional arena.
- All this is carried out in an international context your professional peer group is world-wide.

(adapted from Phillips and Pugh, *How to get a Ph.D.*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1987, pp. 18-19)

B. Expectations in an evangelical Christian institution

The above guidelines are generic. But there is another essential dimension to bear in mind in your doctoral study through AGST Alliance, BCM or MBS.

Doctoral study within an evangelical Christian institution is founded on an understanding of

knowledge that is more than academic. In the Bible, acquiring and exercising wisdom involves a combination of faith, reason and action. It requires

- right belief and committed trust in the living God ("the fear of the LORD is the first principle of wisdom"),
- creative and humble use of the rationality God has granted to humans made in his own image, and
- appropriate living in the world to reflect God's calling and participate in God's mission.

Doctoral study, therefore, pursued on such a foundation, will be *confessional, rational* and *missional*

For a Christian, doctoral study is one dimension of what it means to "love the LORD your God with all your heart and mind and soul and strength."

Within such a framework of Christian identity and commitment, it is assumed that our doctoral students will be recognised as Christians maturing in faithful discipleship and having leadership skills as experienced practitioners in aspects of ministry. The following qualities of their doctoral work will be demonstrated through appropriate examination:

1. **Comprehensive understanding**, having demonstrated a breadth of systematic understanding of a field of study relevant to an aspect of Christian ministry, and mastery of the skills and methods of research and applied reflective practice appropriate to that field and ministry context.
2. **Critical skills, faithfully exercised**, having demonstrated their capacity for critical analysis, independent evaluation of primary and secondary source materials, ability to integrate academic insights and professional practice in their ministry context, and their commitment to exercise such skills on the foundation of biblical faithfulness to Jesus Christ and his church.
3. **Serious inquiry with integrity**, having demonstrated the ability to conceive, design and implement a substantial project of inquiry into professional practice, and to do so with Christian and scholarly integrity.
4. **Creative and original contribution**, having produced, as a result of such disciplined inquiry, a creative and original contribution that extends the frontiers of knowledge, or develops fresh insights and generates new perspectives on professional practice, some of which merit national or international refereed publication.
5. **Contextual relevance**, having shown their capacity, in the course of their doctoral program and in their expectation of its future potential, for biblically-informed critical engagement with the realities of their professional ministry contexts.

6. **Ability to communicate**, having shown an ability in communicating about their area of expertise to peer-level academic and professional audiences, and, where appropriate, to non-specialists in local Christian communities and the wider society in culturally relevant ways, including their mother tongue, for example through teaching, preaching or writing.

7. **Missional impact**, having demonstrated that the doctoral work produced promotes the kingdom of God and advances the mission of the church (both local and global), especially through significant enhancement of professional practice and leadership for transformational service.

All these seven elements are expressed to the glory of God.

(The section above has been adapted from *The Beirut Benchmarks for Professional Doctorates*, developed by ICETE, 2010/2011.)

If this seems daunting, don't despair! We will help you acquire and sharpen your ability in this areas, as you bring diligence and discipline to the learning process.

Don't hesitate to seek help early to cope with the expectations.