

Self Study Requirements for Membership & Application

Please read carefully to determine if a new applicant qualifies for membership in the FCA. Included in this document are the details required in the letters submitted by the applicant and endorser(s).

Application Requirements as defined in Handbook Section 6.2.5.3.2

For self-study, both the church and the minister shall submit a letter with the necessary information.

The letter from the church shall indicate that they have:

- Verified that the candidate has met the requirements for self-study as indicated in the handbook
- Officially assessed the candidate to verify they demonstrate a (solid and) coherent theology, using the definition in the Handbook (License: Section 6.2.3.2.b; Ordination: Section 6.2.4.2.b)
- Discussed intentions for ongoing learning

The letter from the candidate shall indicate a summary of the portfolio that makes up the qualifications for self-study including:

- Any participation in Bible training programs that would not be considered formal
- Content and description of materials, structure, and components of any self-study
- Books read/studied
- Bible studies led or a listing of sermons preached (or similar ministry involvement)
- Indication of any other elements of self-study, such as research papers, presentations, etc. (see above) that form the portfolio of self-study

Membership Requirements as defined in Handbook Section 6.2.5

Licensing

Have completed a minimum of one year of formal Bible training through a biblical training institution approved by the local church, or a minimum of two years of biblical self-study resulting in the candidate demonstrating a coherent theology and the capacity and desire for ongoing growing knowledge of spiritual truth.

Key elements:

1. One Year. In a normal formal program, this means full-time for about 8 months of the year. So that's what would be expected, or the equivalent.
2. Formal Bible training. Formal training would mean a structured and defined curriculum through a recognized program that is centred around Biblical and theological training. While other topics may be included from a Christian perspective (e.g. Christian counselling), Bible and theology must form a key component of this training.
3. Biblical training institution. This would normally be termed a Bible College. It does not require that the institution be accredited, but it must be a broadly recognized institution (in-person or online) that carries adequate credibility as a Bible training institution.
4. Approved by the Local Church. The endorsing church makes the determination to recognize the institution and the program as providing appropriate Bible training for the equivalent of one year.
5. Two Years. This would be the equivalent of twice the amount included in a One Year formal program (see definition of One Year above).
6. Biblical self-study. The focus must be on biblical and theological studies. Again, while there may be other Christian elements involved, the core is Bible and theology. While reading is a key/core component of this as well, self-study

involves more than only reading. Papers, studies, presentations, sermons, teachings, notes, articles, and/or other similar elements should also form part of the individual's portfolio.

7. Resulting in.... There are two parts to this qualification. First, there is the study part; the element of actually having gone through the motions. Second, there need to be certain outcomes from that study. See below for definitions.
8. Demonstrate a coherent theology. There must be an ability to articulate the fundamental elements of our faith, along with a basic understanding and coherent articulation of core biblical doctrine.
9. Desire for ongoing growing and knowledge of spiritual truth. There must also be an intentional desire to continue to grow and learn. The endorsing church should ask that candidate what their plans are to continue to grow in their understanding of God's Word.

Ordination

Have completed a minimum of three years of formal Bible training through a biblical training institution approved by the local church, or a minimum of five years of biblical self-study resulting in the candidate demonstrating a solid and coherent theology and the capacity and desire for ongoing growing knowledge of spiritual truth.

10. Timeframe. The timeframe is different but should utilize the same understanding as above.
11. Demonstrating a solid and coherent theology. In addition to articulating fundamental elements and core biblical doctrine, those being ordained must have an increased depth of their Biblical understanding. We must be well equipped to "contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people." While no one has all the answers to theological concepts, there should be a broad and deep understanding of the Scriptures, particularly in the areas of core doctrine.

Verification

It is necessary that there is verification that these standards are met in order for the local church to license and/or ordain. The primary verification lies with the local church; they must ensure that these requirements are met prior to licensing or ordaining. Upon verification, they need to submit the appropriate paperwork to the FCA office so the verification is on file.

Formal study

For formal study, a copy of the certificate/diploma/degree and a copy of the transcript (can be photocopied; it does not need to be an official copy) from the biblical training institution should be included along with an indication of the number of years of study if not already indicated on the certificate.

Self-study

For self-study, both the church and the minister shall submit a letter with the necessary information.

The letter from the church shall indicate that they have:

- Verified that the candidate has met the requirements for self-study as indicated in the handbook,
- Officially assessed the candidate to verify that they demonstrate a (solid and) coherent theology, using the document's definition,
- Discussed intentions for ongoing learning.

The letter from the candidate shall indicate a summary of the portfolio that makes up the qualifications for self-study including:

- Any participation in Bible training programs that would not be considered formal,
- Content and description of materials, structure, and components of any self-study,
- Books read/studied,
- Bible studies led or a listing of sermons preached (or similar ministry involvement),
- Indication of any other elements of self-study, such as research papers, presentations, etc. (see above) that form the portfolio of self-study.