

POSITION DESCRIPTION

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

POSITION TITLE	: Research Assistant, National Centre for Pastoral
REMUNERATION SCALE	: Grade 4
REPORTS TO	: Director, National Centre for Pastoral Research
FULL TIME EQUIVALENT	: 0.4 FTE Maximum Term
HOURS PER WEEK	: Fifteen (15)
LOCATION	: Melbourne or Canberra
AUTHORISED BY	: General Secretary
DATE	: 2 August 2022

Primary Objectives

The primary objective of the Research Assistant is to provide support for the successful completion of quantitative and qualitative research projects carried out by the National Centre for Pastoral Research (NCPR).

Major Accountabilities

Assist NCPR researchers in the implementation, data collection, analysis and reporting stages of all research projects to ensure their timely completion.

Use Tablebuilder and Excel to prepare data for inclusion in parish, diocesan and national Census Profiles.

Review data for deficiencies or errors, correct any incompatibilities and check output.

Assist with other data cleaning, manipulation and calculation tasks as required.

Assist with the preparation and implementation of workshops, seminars and other educational programs arising from NCPR research.

Communicate with internal and external stakeholders on the status of research projects.

Manage material for and assist in the production of research reports and print and online publications.

Manage the records and publications of NCPR, including filing, archiving and retrieval of records and publications.

Organisational Environment

The National Centre for Pastoral Research is an agency of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) under an advisory body, the Australian Catholic Council for Pastoral Research that reports to the Permanent Committee. The mission of the National Centre for Pastoral Research is to assist the Catholic Church in Australia at all levels in understanding the cultural, social and personal dimensions of religion in the changing contemporary context.

The National Centre for Pastoral Research is primarily responsible for:

- coordinating the National Catholic Census Project;
- conducting the National Count of Attendance;
- undertaking other research projects for the Australian Catholic Bishops;
- providing assistance to dioceses, Catholic Education Offices and other Catholic agencies in the understanding and use of social science data; and
- providing research and pastoral planning consultancy services to dioceses and Catholic organisations.

The Research Assistant is accountable to the Director for the key accountabilities of this position.

Risk and Work Health and Safety

Observe safe work practices in accordance with training and instruction given and report any risk to your immediate supervisor. Risks arising in the workplace may be financial, site, task or person specific or related to safety.

Comply with ACBC corporate occupational health and safety practices.

Identify, report and where appropriate, action risks/hazards in order to eliminate or mitigate against the risk recurring.

Participate in the consultative processes provided by the organisation.

Safeguarding

To the extent that it applies to this position:

Comply with best practice for safeguarding of children and vulnerable people in accordance with established laws, standards and organisation procedures.

Promote and implement safeguarding training (including induction and ongoing training), safeguarding practices and record-keeping within the agency.

Key Communications

Staff of the National Centre for Pastoral Research: For day-to-day operation.

General Secretariat: for administrative and day-to-day operational matters.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference agencies: as required, to form good working relationships.

External organisations: research and other staff of organisations, such as the Christian Research Association (CRA) and Australian Catholic University (ACU).

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Other stakeholders: Diocesan contact persons and other diocesan personnel and staff of other Catholic agencies, and members of the public seeking information about the Catholic Church in Australia.

Accountability (Independence and Influence)

The Research Assistant will make all decisions that fall within the defined outcomes and instructions of the position.

The Research Assistant will consult with the Director or the supervising Research Officer before making decisions that fall outside established policies and procedures.

The Research Assistant will refer all decisions to the Director that are outside established policies and procedures and beyond the scope of this position.

Job Environment

The Research Assistant is expected to apply professional standards and work in accordance with established procedures.

Reasoning

The Research Assistant is required to recognise that work situations are governed by precedents, guidelines and operating processes which need to be understood in order to be able to discriminate between alternative courses of action. Guidance is available within the time constraints needed to make a decision.

Challenges

The position's primary challenge is to provide research support to NCPR researchers in order to assist the National Centre for Pastoral Research to meet the needs of ACBC agencies, individual dioceses and other Catholic agencies.

This support will include a variety of research-related tasks, and the learning of new technologies and procedures within the professional and collaborative research environment of the office.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Church and its organisational structures in Australia.

An understanding of and willingness to work within the mission and identity of the Catholic Church.

Tertiary qualifications, preferably in social sciences or a related discipline.

A sound understanding of social research. Basic knowledge of quantitative or qualitative research analytical software (SPSS or NVivo) will be an added advantage.

Demonstrated sound experience in Microsoft Office applications software, with medium to advanced MS Excel skills.

Sound understanding and experience of working with confidential data and maintaining confidentiality, privacy and integrity in professional interactions.

High level organisational skills, including demonstrated attention to detail and accuracy.

Ability to communicate effectively at all levels.

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Being adaptable and flexible, with the ability to multitask.

A capacity and desire to work as part of a small, flexible, professional research team.

Position Impact

The Research Assistant is expected to work as part of a research team.

The Research Assistant does not supervise another position and does not administer a budget.