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# Accreditation of Theological Schools

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THE ROLE OF THE STATE  
&  
POTENTIAL ISSUES

Shirley A Stokes

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## Role of States & Commonwealth

- **States**
  - Constitutional power in regards to education
  - Approves higher education institutions
- **Commonwealth**
  - Has power through financing
- **Ministerial Council**
  - Collective national decisions
    - ✦ National Guidelines
    - ✦ AUQA

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## Issues for Theological Colleges

- **Being a higher education institution**
- **Governance & organisation arrangements**
- **Change**
- **Finances**
- **Academic integrity**
- **Students**

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### Being a higher education institution

- Status as a theological college not a registration factor
- Theological quality relevant for courses in theology, ministry etc

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### Governance & Organisation

- Legal basis for the organisation
- Governance structure
- Organisation structure esp. principal-agent relationships
  - Need policies/procedures and contracts, but also need to quality assure

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### Recognise need for Change

- Theological institutions are experienced in higher education
- Have a strong tradition in the field
- Must change in response to:
  - contemporary expectations
  - changing regulatory requirements
  - competition

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## Intellectual Integrity

- **How to manage a stated religious ethos and religious conviction with the requirement for free intellectual inquiry and academic integrity**

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## Finances

- **Need to finance change and development**
- **Avoid focusing on theological and educational goals to detriment of bottom line**
- **Consider staff workload (do you trade on their religious commitment?)**
  - **May affect quality (burn-out)**
- **Recruit females**
- **Competitive staff salaries and professional opportunities**
- **Sufficient finances to upgrade resources and facilities (Some operation out of make-do church facilities)**
  - **Avoid operating on a shoestring**

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## Finance (cont.)

- **Need capital to fund course development, research, new delivery modes i.e. online delivery, prepare for self-accrediting or university authority**
- **Become independent of church finances.**

## Student Experience



- **Manage needs of those studying for career purposes vis a vis those who seek personal development and knowledge**
- **Some units may attempt too much (components of multiple courses/multistreaming)**