

# SIMPLE STEPS TO INITIATION IN MELBOURNE

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## INTRODUCTION

Your steps to initiation are laid out in the order they are to be completed.

Our administration team follows the same steps when we process your application.

We'll assist your individual application within the framework of

1. ISKCON's Governing Body Commission (GBC) directives (ISKCON Law)
2. Melbourne-yatra requirements.
3. Your spiritual master's requirements.

No application will be considered until you complete all current requirements of ISKCON GBC, ISKCON Melbourne, and your spiritual master. You must be able to provide written evidence of all exam/course passes. Regardless of when you began your application - all current requirements apply to you at the time you attend your interview. You must complete lower-level requirements that you have missed.

You'll personally drive your application throughout. So, responsibility for complying with these requirements rests with you. Ensure that you read *How Do I Qualify for Initiation* at <http://www.harekrishnamelbourne.com.au/members.html> for the relevant ISKCON laws, and more details on your level of application.

## TIMING YOUR APPLICATION

Your online application forms will be received and noted by your initiation administrator. They'll be tracked and processed according to your place in the candidates' queue.

Due to exponentially increased demand, applications to qualify can no longer be processed within a time frame of your choice. An exception will be made when your spiritual master is terminally ill.

To avoid disappointment, ensure that you complete your requirements *several months* in advance of any potential shelter or initiation date. Detailed information on waiting times is available from your initiation admin. at [rasanandin@iskcon.net.au](mailto:rasanandin@iskcon.net.au).

# QUICK GUIDES

## 1. REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY TO QUALIFY FOR SHELTER

1. Take shelter of Srila Prabhupada, chant his pranamas daily: 6 months
2. Chant 16 rounds: 6 months
3. Strictly follow 4 regulative principles: 6 months
4. Demonstrate regular, ongoing, verifiable service to the Temple & mission: 6 months
5. Read Srila Prabhupada-lilamrta unabridged edition
6. Read Bhagavad-gita with purports
7. Begin required reading
8. Pass Srila Prabhupada-lilamrta exam
9. Pass Founder-Acarya Course
10. Pass ISKCON Disciple course (in Melbourne when applying through Melbourne)

## 2. REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY TO QUALIFY FOR INITIATION

1. Chant your guru's & Srila Prabhupada pranamas daily: 12 months total
2. Chant 16 rounds: 12 months total
3. Strictly follow 4 regulative principles: 12 months total
4. Demonstrate regular, ongoing, verifiable service to the Temple & mission: 12 months total
5. Read Srila Prabhupada-lilamrta unabridged edition if yet to do
6. Read Bhagavad-gita with purports if yet to do
7. Read Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1 with purports
8. Read Nectar of Devotion Chapters 1-19
9. Agree to complete recommended reading in your own time
10. Pass Srila Prabhupada-lilamrta exam if yet to do
11. Pass Founder-Acarya Course if yet to do
12. Pass ISKCON Disciple course (in Melbourne when applying through Melbourne) if yet to do
13. Have passed 16 Question GBC exam

## 3. REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY TO BE CONSIDERED FOR 2<sup>ND</sup> INITIATION

1. Chant your guru's & Srila Prabhupada pranamas daily: 2 years total
2. Chant 16 rounds: 2 years total
3. Strictly follow 4 regulative principles: 2 years total
4. Demonstrate substantial, regular, ongoing, verifiable service to the Temple Deities or Their kitchen: 2 years total
5. Enquire, confirm with your Department Manager that there is a need for your service at brahminical level. Supply contact info for your Manager.
6. Read Srila Prabhupada-lilamrta unabridged edition if yet to do
7. Read Bhagavad-gita with purports if yet to do
8. Read Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1 with purports if yet to do
9. Read Nectar of Devotion Chapters 1-19 if yet to do
10. Show progress in completing recommended reading; agree to complete in your own time
11. Pass Srila Prabhupada-lilamrta exam if yet to do
12. Pass Founder-Acarya Course if yet to do
13. Pass ISKCON Disciple course (in Melbourne when applying through Melbourne) if yet to do
14. Have passed 16 Question GBC exam if yet to do
15. Have passed Australian Initiation exam (or equivalent if former overseas resident) if yet to do

# COMPLETE GUIDES

## 1. FIRST SIX MONTHS: SHELTER LEVEL

1. Take shelter of Srila Prabhupada as your instructing spiritual master and chant his *praṇāms* (6 months minimum).
2. Chant 16 rounds daily and strictly follow the 4 regulative principles (6 months minimum).
3. Maintain steady *sādhana*. Develop a steady service relationship with Srila Prabhupada by offering rostered service at the Temple, and to Hare Krishna Melbourne's preaching mission. If you are unable to offer these services, you are expected to participate in Harinama and book distribution. Your service should be regular and ongoing over the 6-month period leading up to your application and be verifiable with senior devotees.
4. Complete the reading of *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta* unabridged edition (by Satsvarupa Dasa Goswami). This reading is mandatory.
5. Sit & pass the open-book exam on *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta* (mandatory).
6. Attend and pass the *Founder-Acarya Course* and the *ISKCON Disciples' Course* (both are mandatory).
7. Complete the reading of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (with purports). This reading is mandatory.
8. Begin the required reading for initiates if you have yet to do so (this includes Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1 and Nectar of Devotion to Ch. 19).
9. At the end of six months, complete the *Service Record Form for Shelter Candidates* and the *Application To Qualify For Shelter* forms at <http://www.harekrishnamelbourne.com.au/members.html>, and receive automatic responses that your forms have been lodged successfully.
10. Your administrator will receive your forms and log your position in the applicant's queue. They will enter your data into your records, then arrange for you to sit your shelter interview and exam according to your place in the queue.
11. Sit and pass your *sādhana* interview. This includes being able to supply positive 6-month *sādhana* references from senior local devotees outside your immediate family. Your examiner will contact your referees.
12. Sit and pass the GBC 16 Question exam. Bhakti Sastri graduates are no longer exempt from questions 1-13. The Bhakti Sastri degree is prescribed for second initiation candidates.
13. When you have successfully completed steps 1-12 your administrator will email you written confirmation of your passing the GBC and Melbourne Yatra shelter requirements. At this point you are qualified to choose a spiritual master.
14. Develop a service relationship with the initiating spiritual master of your choice. Meet any extra requirements he/she sets. Ask him/her for shelter and provide written evidence.
15. Arrange for his/her written confirmation of giving you shelter to be sent to your administrator. Your minimum 6 months as a sheltered disciple (per ISKCON law) begins from our receipt of your *guru's* written confirmation.

## 2. SECOND SIX MONTHS: INITIATION LEVEL

1. Regardless of when you began your application, the current requirements apply to you at the time you attend your interview. You will need to complete lower-level requirements that you missed. You can check using Quick Guides on p.2.
2. Chant your initiating spiritual master's along with Srila Prabhupada's *praṇāmas*.
3. Chant 16 rounds daily and strictly follow the 4 regulative principles.
4. Increase your steady *sādhana*. Develop an ongoing service relationship with your initiating spiritual master and Srila Prabhupada by offering rostered service at the Temple, and to Hare Krishna Melbourne's preaching mission. If you are unable to offer these services, you are expected to participate in Harinama and book distribution. Your service should be regular and ongoing over the 12-month period leading up to your application and be verifiable with senior devotees.
5. Attend and pass the *Prabhupāda-līlāmīṛta exam*, *Founder-Acarya Course* and the *ISKCON Disciples' Course* if you have yet to do so (mandatory).
6. Complete reading of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Canto 1 (with purports) and *Nectar of Devotion* (to chapter 19, minimum). This reading - plus the compulsory reading for Shelter candidates (above) – is mandatory.
7. Complete the recommended reading for initiates (*How Do I Qualify for Initiation*).
8. Sit and pass the GBC 16 Question exam (taken at shelter level in Melbourne) if you have yet to do so.
9. Learn the *Guru-pūjā* prayers (*Śrī Guru-vandanā* by Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura), to be recited in interview. This is mandatory.
10. Complete the *Service Record Form for First Initiation Candidates* and the *Application to Qualify for First Initiation* forms at <http://www.harekrishnamelbourne.com.au/members.html> and receive an automatic response.
11. Your administrator will log your position in the applicant's queue and upload your data to our database according to your place in the queue.
12. When your admin. shares your application summary with our Temple President, you'll be invited to meet him to discuss your ongoing service to ISKCON and to seek permission to attend your first initiation interviews and exam. He will refer to your record of regular, ongoing Temple service (minimum 12 months) and plans to increase your service.
13. Sit and pass your interviews on *sādhana*, personal behaviour and required reading. This includes being able to supply positive 12-month *sādhana* references from referees: senior local devotees outside your immediate family. Your examiner will contact your referees.
14. Sit and pass your exam. You can only sit once every 12 months. Bhakti Sastri graduates are no longer exempt from this exam. The Bhakti Sastri degree is prescribed for second initiation candidates.
15. Your admin. will summarise your completed application to our Temple President for approval.
16. Receive your Temple President's recommendation for your initiation.
17. Meet any extra requirements your initiating spiritual master sets. Request first initiation and, with his/her permission, receive first initiation.

### 3. SECOND 12 MONTHS: SECOND INITIATION LEVEL

1. Regardless of when you began your application, the current requirements apply to you at the time you attend your interview. You will need to complete lower-level requirements that you missed. You can check using Quick Guides on p.2.
2. *Brahminical* initiation is not an automatic outcome of the time you've spent in devotional service. You must apply to be considered for second initiation. Approval will come from your Temple President.
3. First, you must check with your Temple Authorities or Managers whether there is a need for your existing, ongoing service at brahminical level. You'll supply evidence of this in your application form.
4. You must demonstrate a record of substantial service to the Deities - either in Their worship or in Their kitchen - or to Srila Prabhupada's preaching mission (for example, in management). If you are unable to offer substantial service in these fields, you are expected to demonstrate it in Harinama and/or book distribution. Your service should be substantial, regular, and ongoing over the 2-year period leading up to your application (minimum). It must be verifiable with your Manager/Department Head or Temple Authority.
5. Your Temple President will explore your service record to see what substantial service you are performing over time. He'll discuss what opportunities exist to move to this next level with you and your mentors.
6. If your application is to be considered, you'll be invited to complete the registration and service record forms. If not, you may re-apply after 2 years.

#### Sadhana requirements and steps to follow:

1. Chant 16 rounds daily and strictly follow the 4 regulative principles.
2. Demonstrate increased steadiness in your *sādhana* and service to the Deities.
3. Increase your steadiness in your service relationship with your initiating spiritual master and Srila Prabhupada.
4. Attend and pass the *Prabhupāda-līlāmīṛta exam*, *Founder-Acarya Course*, and the *ISKCON Disciples' Course* if you have yet to do so (mandatory).
5. Complete the required reading for Shelter and 1st Initiation candidates (above) if you have yet to do so (mandatory).
6. Complete the recommended reading for second initiation (see *How Do I Qualify for Initiation*)
7. Sit and pass the GBC 16 Question exam (taken at shelter level in Melbourne) if you have yet to do so.
8. Sit and pass the Australian Initiation exam (or equivalent if former overseas resident) if yet to do so.
9. Learn the Guru-pūjā prayers (Śrī Guru-vandanā by Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura), to be recited in interview if you have yet to do so (mandatory).
10. Apply to be considered for second initiation at <http://www.harekrishnamelbourne.com.au/members.html> and receive an automatic response.
11. Your administrator will log your position in the applicant's queue and upload your data to our database according to your place in the queue.
12. When your admin. shares your application summary with your Temple President, you may be invited to meet him to discuss what opportunities exist to move to this next level.
13. If your application is to be considered, you'll be invited to complete the registration and service record forms. (If not, you may re-apply after 2 years.)
14. You'll be invited to attend your interviews on *sādhana*, personal behaviour and required reading. This includes being able to supply positive 2-year *sādhana* references from referees: senior local devotees outside your immediate family. Your examiner will contact your referees.
15. Sit and pass your exam. Bhakti Sastri graduates are exempt from exam on presentation of Pass Certificates.
16. Receive your Temple President's recommendation for second initiation.
17. Meet any extra requirements your initiating spiritual master sets. Request second initiation from your spiritual master and, with his/her permission, receive second initiation.