

**Nina Rachelle Atcheson**  
Honorary Doctor of Pedagogy  
May 8, 2022



Nina Rachelle Atcheson (nee Koolik) was born in Australia. She attended Adventist schools until her family moved to Russia as missionaries in 1992. After returning to Australia in grade 11 and completing high school, Atcheson received a scholarship to attend Avondale College where she earned her BA in teaching with a major in English and a minor in religion. In 2003 she married Matthew Atcheson. Later, she earned a Master of Religious Education from Australian Catholic University.

From 2001–2004, Atcheson worked at Sydney Adventist College. It was during this time that she began to write new teaching programs to engage students in Bible classes. She also served at Northpine Christian College from 2005–2006.

In 2006 Atcheson resigned from teaching to be a stay-at-home mom. She balanced caretaking with a project from Adventist Schools Australia—writing the high school component of a new Bible course of study called the Adventist Encounter Curriculum. In 2007, she launched the Encounter Curriculum in the United Kingdom with Lanelle Cobbin, colleague and primary author of the Elementary Encounter Curriculum. For the next eight years, Atcheson worked as secondary curriculum officer, writing and editing teaching units, managing the production and distribution of the curriculum, and training teachers in the Australian Union with her colleagues.

Atcheson then served for three years as the associate director of education and curriculum for the North American Division. As author of the Adventist Encounter Bible Curriculum for grades 9–12, she managed its production, training, rollout and implementation for secondary schools.

The implementation of the Encounter Bible Curriculum has shifted how the Bible is taught in Adventist schools in North America and countries around the world. The goal of the curriculum is to facilitate Bible classes where every student’s relationship with Jesus is nurtured through countless connection opportunities with Him and a growing, confident knowledge of Scripture—using the Bible as the textbook—so that students may be challenged to make an eternal difference in our world. Teachers use 21st-century teaching and learning strategies for maximum engagement and lifelong learning.

Before her departure from the North American Division in 2017, Atcheson received the Journey of Excellence Award from the North American Division Office of Education. In 2018, she returned to the Australian Union in a new role: Adventist identity officer, where she created resources and provided support for school principals and teachers. The Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists called her to serve as curriculum manager and senior editor in 2020. She is currently overseeing the development of the new Sabbath School curriculum, “Alive in Jesus,” for the world church.

For her commitment to lifelong learning and her innovative development of K–12 curriculum that focuses on the Bible as the textbook, Andrews University takes great pleasure in honoring Nina Rachelle Atcheson with the degree Doctor of Pedagogy, *honoris causa*.