GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

TAFE WA

TAFE College Governing Council

Handbook

TWD/D26/0099610

About this Handbook

This Handbook details the processes, operational requirements and legal responsibilities for TAFE College Governing Councils.

The Handbook is intended to be used as a guide and in conjunction with applicable legislative requirements.

Version control

Version	Date	CM reference	Description
1.0	21.09.2026	TWD/D26/0099610	Handbook significantly updated

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Training and Workforce Development acknowledges Aboriginal peoples as the First Nations of Western Australia. The Department respects the ancestral ties and ongoing relationships with the lands, waters, communities and spiritual connections to Country. The Department honours Elders, both past and present, and recognises the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals within the organisation. Together, we work in partnership towards a more inclusive and shared future for all Australians.

© Department of Training and Workforce Development
September 2026

Contents

Overview 6
Understanding the Governance Environment 6
Governance and Accountability 8
Statutory Governance responsibilities 9
Section 1: Governance for public sector boards and committees 10
1.1 State Government boards and committees 10
1.2 Good corporate governance practices 10
Section 2: Governing Council 11
2.1 Functions of the Governing Council 11
2.2 Appointments 11
2.2.1 Term of Appointment 11
2.2.2 Appointment to Governing Council 12
2.2.3 Vacation of office 12
2.2.4 Interim vacancies 12
2.3 Formal Governing Council meetings 12
2.3.1 Meetings and quorum 12
2.3.2 Meeting agenda and minutes 13
2.4 Roles and Responsibilities 13
2.4.1 Chairperson 13
2.4.2 Governing Council members 14
2.4.3 Statement of expectations 14
2.5 Standing committees 14
2.5.1 Independent audit committee 15
2.5.2 Nomination committee 15
2.6 Confidentiality and professional behaviour 15
2.7 Representing the governing council 15
2.8 Leave of absences by Governing Council members 16
Section 3: Operational requirements 16
3.1 Governance 16
3.2 Annual Governance Attestation Statement 16
3.3 Reporting and continuous improvement 16
3.4 Terms of reference 17
3.5 Policies and processes 17
3.6 By-laws 18
3.7 Risk management 18

3.8 Fraud prevention 18
3.9 Governing Council evaluation 19
3.10 Code of Conduct 19
3.11 Conflict of interest and pecuniary interest 20
3.11.1 Disclosure 20
3.11.2 Lobbyists 20
3.11.3 Fines 20
3.12 Gifts and hospitality 21
3.13 Sponsorship 21
3.14 Induction and training 22
3.14.1 Accountable and ethical decision making training 22
3.15 Professional development 22
3.16 Remuneration 22
3.15.1 Payment arrangements 24
3.15.2 Payment of remuneration fees to a charity 24
Section 4: Governing Council Operations 24
4.1 Delegations and Authorisations 24
4.2 Strategic plan and annual business plan 25
4.3 Operational plan 25
4.4 Managing Director's CEO Delivery and Performance agreement 25
4.5 TAFE Delivery and performance agreement 26
4.6 Commercial activities 26
Section 5: Evaluation of TAFE college performance 27
5.1 Internal audits 27
5.1.1 Financial responsibility and accountability 27
5.2 TAFE college Annual Report 28
5.3 Office of the Auditor General 28
5.4 The Corruption and Crime Commission 28
Section 6: Legal responsibilities 28
6.1 Governing Council by-laws 29
6.2 Legislation 29
6.3 Ministerial instruments and guidelines 30
7.1 Vocational Education and Training Act 1996 31
7.2 Fundamental elements of the VET system 31
7.2.1 Quality frameworks 31
7.2.2 Registered training organisations 32
7.3 Key VET stakeholders 32

7.3.1 Minister 32
7.3.2 Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD) 32
7.3.3 State Training Board 33
7.3.4 TAFE colleges 33
7.3.5 Australian Skills Quality Authority 34
7.3.6 Western Australia Training Accreditation Council 34
Section 8: Annual Governance Cycle 35
Appendix 1: Glossary of terms 37

Overview

Introduction

TAFE colleges are integral to the Western Australian public training system to support the development of a skilled and capable workforce for a growing, sustainable, and thriving economy. It is essential that TAFE colleges have the highest standards of governance and accountability to enable the provision of contemporary and agile learning experiences for students to realise their aspirations.

The *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (VET Act) places Governing Councils at the highest level of decision making for a TAFE college. Governing Councils lead their college's strategic direction and responses to Government policy. It is critical that the governing council is effective and efficient and ensures that quality systems and processes are in place to underpin decision making that will support growth in the supply of skilled workers to sustain our economy and new and emerging industries.

This handbook is designed to provide TAFE Governing Council members with information to assist with meeting their legislative and governance responsibilities and accountabilities.

It also provides information on the State's VET system and details the role of key stakeholders who are involved in achieving high quality training and workforce development outcomes for Western Australia.

Understanding the Governance Environment

TAFE Colleges are established as statutory authorities under Part 5 of the VET Act.

Section 36(2)(b) of the VET Act provides that a college is a body corporate with power to take and defend proceedings in its corporate name.

Section 36(1) of the VET Act provides that a college consists of the governing council, the staff and the enrolled students of that college.

The State's five TAFE colleges are established under the *Vocational and Training (Colleges Closure and Establishment) Order 2016.*

Each TAFE college has a Governing Council which governs its operations and affairs. TAFE college governing councils are delegated authority to govern under section 42 of the VET Act. The Minister appoints governing council members, including a chairperson, deputy chairperson and members under section 39 of the VET Act.

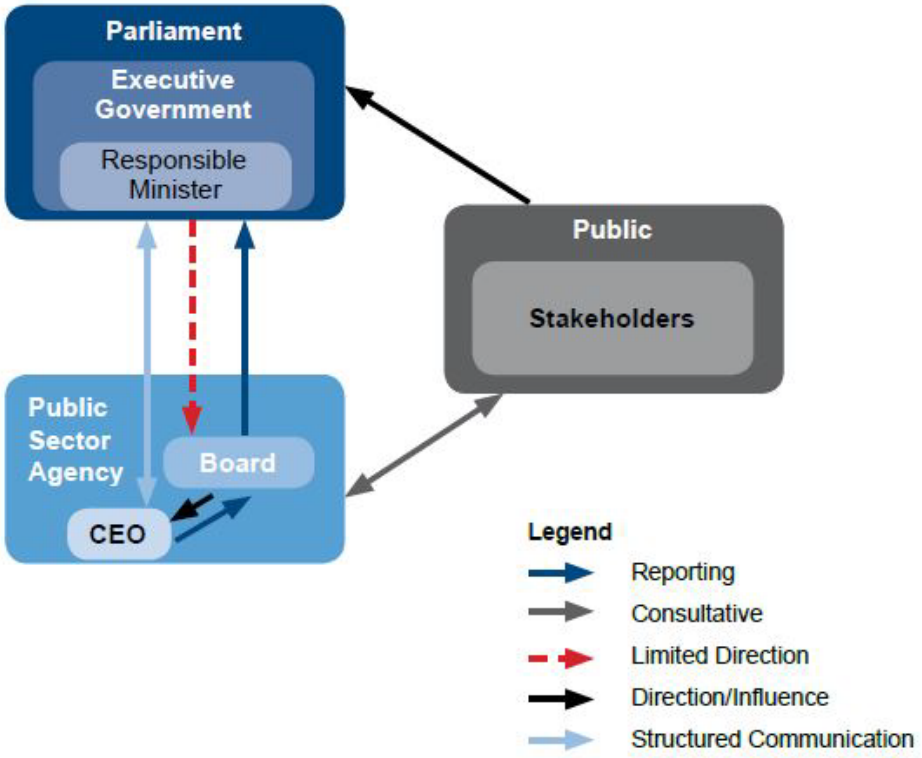
A TAFE College's Governing Council is the Responsible Authority. Governing Councils, through Governing Council Chairs, report to the Minister for Skills and TAFE.

Governing Councils are responsible for:

- Governance and oversight of the TAFE college;
- Managing Director delivery and performance (through the Governing Council Chair);
- Strategic and Annual Business Plans; and
- Delivery, performance and compliance of the TAFE college.

Governing Council Chairs are responsible for performance of Managing Directors, in partnership with the Minister and Public Sector Commissioner through the CEO Delivery and Performance Agreement process.

A governance map developed by the Office of the Auditor General outlines relationships for Government boards.[1]



Source: Adapted from Australian National Audit Office Better Practice Guide: Public Sector Governance, July 2003, Volume 2, Appendix 2.

Figure 1: Governance map

Governing Council members operate in a legislative and public policy environment of frameworks for accountability, governance, management, policy development and service delivery.

Section 37 of the VET Act provides the functions of a TAFE college, which must be performed in accordance with its strategic plan and annual business plan (s37(2)) approved by the Minister.

The VET Act enables the Minister to delegate Functions of the Minister (section 8) and Powers of the Minister (section 9) to a governing council or Managing Director (s10), give directions to colleges (s11) and issue guidelines to a college (s13) in connection with the performance of functions conferred on the Minister by the VET Act.

[1] Background & Types of Boards - Office of the Auditor General

The Minister issues statements of expectation, instruments of delegation and authorisation, Ministerial Guidelines and other requirements from time to time, providing an authorising framework for TAFE colleges to operate in accordance with Government priorities and expectations.

The Department of Training and Workforce Development (Department) assists the Minister to administer the VET Act.

As Sector Steward, the Department leads the Western Australian skills, training and workforce development sector and drives the State's training and workforce development agenda.

As System Manager, the Department partners with TAFE colleges to coordinate the TAFE system to ensure a flexible, responsive, innovative and quality System that meets student, community, industry and Government needs.

TAFE System Executive has been established to support collaboration and shared stewardship across the TAFE system. It brings together the Department and TAFE colleges to coordinate priorities, drive system-wide improvements and supports the delivery of a flexible, responsive, innovative and high-quality training system that meets the needs of students, industry and communities and Government.

Governance and Accountability

A fundamental principle of good governance is maintaining a clear distinction between governing the organisation and managing the organisation.

The Governing Council is responsible for governing the college, which includes:

- providing strategic direction;
- overseeing performance;
- monitoring financial sustainability;
- ensuring appropriate systems of risk management and internal control are in place; and
- being satisfied that the college is meeting its legislative obligations.

The Managing Director is responsible for managing the college, which includes:

- leading day-to-day operations;
- implementing strategic priorities;
- managing resources and employees;
- delivering training services; and
- ensuring the efficient operation of the organisation.

While these responsibilities are distinct, they are complementary. Effective governance relies on a constructive relationship between the Governing Council and

Managing Director, characterised by mutual respect, trust, transparency and a shared commitment to achieving the college's strategic objectives.

Statutory Governance responsibilities

As public statutory authorities, TAFE colleges are expected to maintain sound governance frameworks that support effective oversight, accountability and decision-making.

These arrangements include:

- Strategic Plans and Annual Business Plans;
- governance policies, charters and committee arrangements;
- instruments of delegation and authorisation;
- financial management and reporting frameworks;
- risk management and internal control systems;
- audit and assurance arrangements;
- integrity and ethical conduct frameworks;
- recordkeeping and information management systems;
- fraud and corruption controls; and
- performance monitoring and compliance processes.

The Governing Council's role is to satisfy itself that appropriate arrangements and controls are in place and operating effectively.

Schedule 1 of the VET Act sets out provisions relating to Governing Councils, including for:

- vacation of office;
- leave of absence;
- meetings;
- disclosure of interests; and
- voting by interested members.

Schedule 1 clause 4 requires a Governing Council member who has a material personal interest in a matter being considered or about to be considered by the body of which he or she is a member must, as soon as possible after the relevant facts have come to the member’s knowledge, disclose the nature of the interest at a meeting of the body. The prescribed penalty is $10,000.

Disclosure under this clause must be recorded in the minutes of the Governing Council meeting.

A Governing Council must be familiar with Schedule 1 of the VET Act and is expected to have appropriate procedures in place.

TAFE System Governance Framework

The TAFE System Governance Framework outlines the authority, responsibilities, and operating arrangements for the Western Australian TAFE system (the System) to deliver a high quality publicly funded TAFE system that is student centred, supports economic growth and delivers positive social impacts for the community.

The System comprises:

- the Minister for Skills and TAFE;
- the Department of Training and Workforce Development (Department), as the public sector agency established to assist the Minister in the administration of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996;* and
- TAFE Colleges established under the VET Act.

Section 1: Governance for public sector boards and committees

1.1 State Government boards and committees

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet is responsible for maintaining a list of boards on the *State Government Boards and Committees Register.*

Governing Council members sit on a governing board which governs the operations of a TAFE college. Governing boards are statutory bodies that have their functions and powers set out in their enabling legislation.

1.2 Good corporate governance practices

By employing good corporate governance practices, Governing Councils are able to effectively perform their functions and comply with their obligations.

Good corporate governance practices include:

- building and adhering to a governance framework;
- demonstrating accountable and ethical behaviour at all times;
- maintaining effective stakeholder relationships;
- integrating transparency into processes and planning;
- meeting strategic and business planning obligations;
- reporting on and evaluating obligations; and
- preparing and reviewing key documents and policies.

For further information on State Government boards and committees, visit wa.gov.au

Section 2: Governing Council

2.1 Functions of the Governing Council

Each TAFE college has a Governing Council which:

- governs its operations and affairs; and
- ensures the college's courses, programmes and services are responsive to, and meet, the needs of students, industry and the community.

A college's Governing Council ensures the college delivers against:

- State Government priorities;
- The Minister's Statement of Expectations for TAFE Colleges;
- the State Training Plan; and

Section 45 of the VET Act provides that a Governing Council may delegate the performance of any or all its functions under the VET Act to the Managing Director. Any delegation of its functions to the Managing Director must be documented, approved by the Governing Council and reviewed periodically.

The Governing Council cannot delegate its accountability and must take steps necessary to ensure that the TAFE college meets all its obligations.

The functions of a college are outlined in section 37 of the VET Act. Governing Council responsibilities are outlined in Part 5, Division 2 and Schedule 1 of the VET Act.

The *TAFE college Governing Council membership: Frequently asked questions* provide additional information on the functions and responsibilities of Governing Councils.

2.2 Appointments

A TAFE college Governing Council consists of:

- a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson;
- the Managing Director of the TAFE college; and
- no less than six, or more than 10, other members.

Governing Council members, including Managing Directors, are voting members of the Governing Council as stipulated in section 39(2) of the VET Act.

Managing Directors, as government employees, must seek permission from the Minister regarding membership to an additional board, whether remunerated or not.

2.2.1 Term of Appointment

Members are appointed for a term of up to three years. At the end of the three-year term, members are eligible for re-appointment.

Members can serve a maximum of 10 years in total on a Governing Council.

2.2.2 Appointment to Governing Council

Members are appointed to the Governing Council by the Minister and endorsed by Cabinet. Recommendations are made by the Director General to the Minister following a Governing Council Nomination Committee shortlisting assessment process.

DTWD's TAFE Governance team coordinates the Governing Council appointments process on behalf of the Minister.

Probity checks are undertaken when appointing Governing Council members.

DTWD TAFE Governance: tafegovernance@dtwd.wa.gov.au

2.2.3 Vacation of office

A position on the Governing Council will be vacant if:

- the term of the member expires;
- the member resigns by written notice addressed to the Minister;
- the member is, according to the *Interpretation Act 1984*, a bankrupt or a person whose affairs are under insolvency laws;
- the member is convicted of an indictable offence; or
- the appointment of the member is terminated by the Minister.

The Minister may, at their discretion, terminate the appointment of a member at any time.

2.2.4 Interim vacancies

As specified under Section 14.5 of the Cabinet Handbook, if a Governing Council member resigns before the expiry of their term, the replacement member can only be appointed for the remainder of the original term.

2.3 Formal Governing Council meetings

The Governing Council must meet with sufficient frequency to discharge its responsibilities in accordance with the requirements of the VET Act. The Governing Council should determine the frequency of meetings in its council terms of reference.

2.3.1 Meetings and quorum

Schedule 1 Clause 3 of the VET Act requires:

- the chairperson to preside at any meeting at which the chairperson is present;
- if the chairperson and deputy chairperson are not present at a meeting, the members present are to elect one of their number to preside at the meeting.

A quorum for a meeting is at least one half of the number of members.

If a quorum cannot be present at a meeting because a member has declared a material personal interest in a matter, a quorum for that meeting is such number of members as the Minister may determine.

Any question arising at a meeting is to be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present. In the event of an equality of votes the chairperson, or the person presiding, is to have a casting as well as a deliberative vote.

Provisions for Governing Council meetings are provided in Schedule 1 of the VET Act, which is available on the Western Australian Legislation website .

2.3.2 Meeting agenda and minutes

An agenda acts as a general schedule of items that set out what needs to be accomplished during a meeting.

The Public Sector Commission has developed resources for boards and committees on how to use agendas effectively, and how to structure agendas and guidelines related to circulating an agenda. These resources can be accessed here .

Meeting minutes are important to maintain as official records, and must be kept in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 2000* .

2.4 Roles and Responsibilities

2.4.1 Chairperson

The Chairperson is the presiding officer of the Governing Council and is responsible for ensuring:

- members act in accordance with the VET Act and fulfil their roles as Governing Council members;
- the TAFE college adheres to the *Financial Management Act 2006*;
- the TAFE college adheres to the Public Sector Management Act 1994;
- the Governing Council meets with sufficient frequency to discharge its responsibilities in accordance with the requirements of the VET Act;
- the TAFE college performs is functions provided in section 37 of the VET Act in accordance with relevant legislation, government policy and acts in good faith;
- the TAFE college performs its functions in accordance with its strategic plan last approved under section 43 of the VET Act and its business plan last approved under section 44A of the VET Act;
- the Governing Council develops and maintains good relationships with the Minister, the Department of Training and Workforce Development and stakeholders including government agencies, employers, the community and students;
- compliance with instruments issued by the Minister under the VET Act, including delegations, authorisations, Ministerial Guidelines, Ministerial Directions and Statements of Expectation;
- the Managing Director's CEO Delivery and Performance Agreement incorporates the Governing Council Chair's priorities for the agreement period, and includes an assessment of achievement against the agreed delivery and performance requirements; and
- the Chairperson participates in formal Governing Council chair meetings with the Minister.

2.4.2 Governing Council members

Governing Council members have a duty to act in the best interests of the organisation, to comply with the governing council's rules and regulations, and to act honestly in the discharge of their duties.

Activities which Members are required to contribute to include:

- the formation and review of the TAFE college's strategic plan and the annual business plan;
- reviewing and approving the annual budget as well as the Delivery and performance agreement;
- participating in Governing Council meetings and sitting on standing committees of the governing council;
- representing the Governing Council at internal and external events, meetings and forums;
- reading reports and researching topics concerning the organisation; and
- providing strategic input and oversight into significant issues concerning the TAFE college;
- ensuring delivery, performance and compliance of the TAFE college.

For further information about the role and responsibilities of board and committee members, refer to the Public Sector Commission's information about governance of WA Government boards and committees .

2.4.3 Statement of expectations

The Minister issues a Ministerial Statement of Expectations to each TAFE college annually to clarify government policies and priorities relevant to the work of the Governing Council and the college.

2.5 Standing committees

The Governing Council can establish standing committees as required. Committees of the Governing Council can consider certain issues and functions in detail and then report back to the Governing Council with any recommendations.

The Governing Council approves the committee membership and appoints the chairperson of each committee, by considering the needs of the committee and the experience of the members.

Standing committees must be established with:

- a specific charter, with clear terms of reference;
- delegations and authorisation which do not contravene Ministerial or governing delegations and authorisations;
- procedures for making and recording agendas and minutes, and reporting to the Governing Council; and
- a clear expectation that Governing Council responsibilities are not to be compromised by the activities of any standing committee, and that significant issues will be reported to the Governing Council.

Remuneration for subcommittees is covered through the remuneration settings approved by the Public Sector Commission.

2.5.1 Independent audit committee

Audit committees assist Governing Councils to ensure that a Governing Council meets its legislative requirements for rigorous audit and risk frameworks.

Treasurer's Instruction 10 Internal Audit outlines requirements relating to audit committees, including the requirement that the audit committee is independently chaired by a suitably qualified person who is not employed within the agency. The Treasurer's Instruction confirms that an independent board member is permitted to be the audit committee chair. This includes suitably qualified appointed Governing Council members.

2.5.2 Nomination committee

TAFE colleges are to have a Nomination Committee established to consider Governing Council member composition and evaluation. The Nomination Committee will have regard to the expertise and experience mix of members when assessing candidates for governing council. The Nomination Committee should also take in to account the needs of the TAFE college, the environment in which they operate, as well as building on the existing strength of the Governing Council.

The *TAFE Governing Council Nomination Committee Guidelines* provide detail on the responsibilities of a Nomination Committee.

A DTWD senior officer will be nominated for each Nomination Committee. The DTWD officer will participate in the assessment and decision-making processes.

Premier's Circular 2025/15: State Government Boards and Committees includes broad policy in relation to diversity and the representation of women on government boards and committees.

2.6 Confidentiality and professional behaviour

A Governing Council member should:

- ensure confidentiality on Governing Council matters;
- never disclose any information about the TAFE college that is not already in the public domain without the proper authority to do so;
- maintain the privacy of Governing Council members and TAFE college employees and never release information to third parties outside of the Governing Council unless permission has been given; and
- only provide public comment on Governing Council issues when they are called upon and authorised to do so.

2.7 Representing the governing council

Governing Council members should be aware that, as members of the peak governing body for the TAFE college, they are required to act in a way that promotes and maintains the reputation of the TAFE college when representing the Governing Council of that TAFE college at events or functions.

2.8 Leave of absences by Governing Council members

The Minister has delegated to the Governing Council chair the power to grant leave of absence for a member for up to three months.

A record of the leave of absence must be sent to the Minister within two weeks of the leave approval. Requests for chair absences must be sent to the Minister for consideration.

The Minister's Instrument of Delegation (Governing councils) can be found on the Department's website in the TAFE college governance section at:
TAFE Governing councils: Resources, templates and guidelines .

Section 3: Operational requirements

3.1 Governance

Governing Councils are responsible for ensuring good governance of a public sector body. As such, the Governing Council must ensure effective systems and processes are in place to shape, enable and oversee the Governing Council's management.

The Public Sector Commission (PSC) has developed seven principles that guide good governance of government boards. A link to the PSC's *Governance of WA government boards and committees* is here .

3.2 Annual Governance Attestation Statement

TAFE college Governing Councils are required by the Minister to complete an Annual Governance Attestation Statement as part of good governance practice.

The Attestation Statement should be prepared by the Governing Council Chair and tabled at a Governing Council Meeting.

The *Annual Governance Attestation Statement Guidance for TAFE Colleges* can be accessed here .

3.3 Reporting and continuous improvement

All Western Australian public sector entities are required to comply with governance reporting requirements outlined under legislation, subsidiary instruments, instructions, codes and policies.

Reporting is a key aspect of good governance practice and serves as a tool to ensure financial and performance accountability. It also plays an important role in continuous improvement by providing standards by which to judge performance and prepare manageable recommendations for implementation.

Governing Councils share a range of specific reporting requirements with Western Australian government agencies, including other public sector boards and committees. These include:

- ensuring the annual report is compliant with the Public Sector Commission's annual reporting framework;
- overseeing strategic and business plans;
- providing audit outcomes;
- ensuring external audit recommendations are implemented (e.g.; Office of the Auditor General);
- overseeing risk management and fraud prevention (via standing committees of the governing council);
- providing section 40 financial estimates;
- developing the Managing Director's performance agreement with the Managing Director and responsible Minister; and
- signing off on delivery and performance agreements on behalf of the TAFE college.

A link to the Public Sector Commissioner's Circulars is here .

3.4 Terms of reference

Governing Councils must have a terms of reference to identify the role, composition and processes related to key Governing Council activities.

A link to a sample Terms of Reference for a Governing Council is here .

3.5 Policies and processes

Governing Council policies and processes should be defined and regularly reviewed.

These may include policies/processes for:

1. How to raise a grievance regarding Governing Council matters, including an alternative to raising the matter with the chairperson in the event the matter relates to the chairperson.
2. Reporting misconduct.
3. Policies for conflicts of interest and 'related party' transactions should be developed. Registers of standing conflicts of interest and 'related party' transactions should be maintained; processes for declaring and minuting disclosures, recording standing conflicts of interest and quarantining papers are established.
4. Expectations to attend and prepare for Governing Council meetings should be clearly articulated.
5. Appropriate insurance, including directors' and officers' liability Insurance for members.
6. Use of agency facilities and resources.

3.6 By-laws

Section 44 of the VET Act enables a Governing Council, with approval of the Minister, to make by-laws.

By-laws form part of a college's governance framework and provide rules that support the effective operation of the organisation. The by-laws must be consistent with the provisions of the VET Act and other applicable legislation and cannot override statutory requirements, Ministerial instruments or Government policy.

The Governing Council has oversight responsibility for the development, review and approval of college by-laws. College management supports this process through drafting, implementation, administration and ongoing maintenance.

By-laws should be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain current, compliant and fit for purpose.

3.7 Risk management

The Public Sector Commission has developed guidelines for boards to meet Treasurer Instruction requirements under the *Financial Management Act 2006*, and assist in the development of suitable risk management policies and practices.

Where appropriate, boards should also develop and update continuity plans to ensure recovery from business disruption. Risk management systems should use risk reporting, internal audits, codes of ethics and succession plan processes.

3.8 Fraud prevention

As State Government boards and committees use public resources and funds of the State, it is critically important that board members use these resources effectively, economically, and only for the purposes of board business.

A code of conduct assists in fraud management by defining:

- member conduct expectations related to fraudulent or corrupt behaviour;
- how to report suspected breaches; and
- the requirement of members to abide by risk management plans, corruption resistance policies and accountability requirements.

Well-designed risk management processes and rigorous codes of conduct are the most effective method of fraud control in public sector boards and committees.

3.9 Governing Council evaluation

The Governing Council, like all boards, should evaluate their own performance as outlined in Principle 7 of the Public Sector Commissions' governance framework.

At a minimum, a formal board evaluation should occur every second year, or in other situations where it may be appropriate to conduct an earlier evaluation, such as when a chairperson changes or a dysfunctional board dynamic emerges.

Evaluation of a Governing Council's performance can include:

- performance of the Governing Council and its committees;
- workload of the Governing Council and required positions; and
- contribution of individual members against predetermined criteria.

The Governing Council will then make appropriate revisions as agreed by the Governing Council.

Additionally, in consultation with colleges the Department has developed a TAFE college governance maturity self-assessment tool that has been contextualised for Governing Councils and colleges. A copy is available on the Department's website here.

An example Governing Council evaluation template is provided here.

3.10 Code of Conduct

An appointment to a board carries with it responsibilities and obligations. People chosen as committee members should understand their responsibilities. These responsibilities are set out in a code of conduct. The code of conduct sits beneath the code of ethics and translates the principles of the code of ethics into actions and commitments for individual board members.

The Governing Council should have a code of conduct in place that sets out its responsibilities and provides the parameters within which it can undertake its role as the highest decision making authority in the TAFE college.

The code of conduct should be based on the principles of the Western Australian Code of Ethics, which applies across government, and on the council's governance charter. Codes of conduct must address the seven conduct areas specified in *Commissioner's Instruction No.8 – Codes of conduct and integrity training*, as listed below.

1. Personal behaviour
2. Communication and official information
3. Fraudulent or corrupt behaviour
4. Use of public resources
5. Record keeping and use of information

6. Conflicts of interest and gifts and benefits
7. Reporting suspected breaches of code

A guide for developing a code of conduct is available on wa.gov.au .

3.11 Conflict of interest and pecuniary interest

All members must declare, in writing, all interests that they have in matters being considered by the Governing Council or a special committee. Interests may directly conflict, or be perceived to conflict, with the Governing Council member's public duty as a Governing Council member. Interests may include private investments, relationships with family and friends, voluntary work, other board positions and membership of other groups.

If a Governing Council member is present at a meeting and believes that they may have a conflict of interest in a matter, the member must immediately disclose the nature of the conflict of interest before the matter is considered or discussed.

It is equally as important that the Governing Council keep accurate records of direct or perceived conflicts of interest for transparency, alongside the management strategies that the Governing Council has put in place to manage the conflict of interest.

3.11.1 Disclosure

If there is either a pecuniary interest or a conflict of interest, the conflicted member must declare the interest and abstain from voting unless an exception relates to that interest. The member must remain outside the meeting room and outside visual or hearing distance, whilst any vote is taken.

3.11.2 Lobbyists

Where a Governing Council member is a registered lobbyist and there is potential for conflict of interest this matter must be declared. The obligations on government representatives when dealing with registrants and lobbyists must be in accordance with the *Integrity (Lobbyists) Act 2016*.

The Public Sector Commissioner's *Instruction No.16 Government representatives contact registrants and lobbyists* is available on wa.gov.au .

3.11.3 Fines

A Governing Council member who has a personal interest in a matter being considered or about to be considered by the Governing Council, but who does not disclose this interest, is liable for a fine of $10,000 (as per Schedule 1 of the VET Act).

Strategies to manage conflicts of interest checklist

Governing Councils can effectively manage conflicts of interest through a combination of strategies. The '6 Rs' developed by the Integrity Coordinating Group can assist in finding a practical solution that is compliant with legislative requirements and the council's operating environment.

- **Record/Register**: Recording a conflict of interest in a register is an important first step, but this does not necessarily resolve the conflict.
- **Restrict**: At times, it may be appropriate to restrict your involvement in the matter. For example, refrain from taking part in debate about a specific issue, abstain from voting on decisions, and/or restrict access to information relating to the conflict of interest.
- **Recruit**: If it is not practical to restrict your involvement, an independent third party may need to be engaged to participate in, oversee, or review the integrity of the decision making process.
- **Remove**: Removal from involvement in the matter altogether is the best option when ad hoc or recruitment strategies are not feasible or appropriate.
- **Relinquish**: Relinquishing the personal or private interests may be a valid strategy for ensuring there is no conflict with your public duty. This may refer to shares, or membership of a club or an association.
- **Resign**: Resignation may be an option if the conflict of interest cannot be resolved in any other way, particularly where conflicting private interests cannot be relinquished.

3.12 Gifts and hospitality

Governing Council members should adhere to Governing Council code of conduct policies and procedures related to the declaration and management of gifts and hospitality.

Governing Council members must declare gifts or other benefits such as fees, favours, rewards, gratuities or any form of remuneration which may place them under an actual, potential or perceived obligation to other organisations or individuals who have interests with those of the Governing Council.

In determining whether the gift, benefit or hospitality can be accepted, the Governing Council should consider both the financial value of the gift, the relationship between the giver and the receiver, and the context in which the gift, benefit or hospitality was offered to assess if acceptance implies preferential treatment in any current or future interaction. To ensure transparency, the value of any gift, benefit or hospitality should be recorded in a Governing Council gifts register.

3.13 Sponsorship

Sponsorship must comply with Department of Housing and Works procurement policies and the WA Public Sector Code of Ethics. Event sponsorship should be carefully considered to ensure it is related to business operations and that there is a direct benefit to training.

The Department of Finance has published Sponsorship in Government Guidelines: A handbook to assist public authorities. The sponsorship guidelines are here .

3.14 Induction and training

All new Governing Council members should complete an induction program coordinated by the Governing Council Chair and the Managing Director. The program should familiarise new members with the Governing Council's business, operations, finances and facilities.

The Director General DTWD will meet with newly appointed Governing Council Chairs to assist them prepare for their role.

Further information to assist in the induction of board members is provided in the *Governance Manual for Western Australian Government Boards and Committees* .

3.14.1 Accountable and ethical decision making training

Governing Council members will be required to abide by the policies and procedures of the Governing Council code of conduct. Induction programs should focus on the roles and responsibilities of Governing Council members and the terms of reference. They should also provide training related to the code of conduct and other relevant policies such as conflict of interest, gifts and hospitality, fraud and corruption, and complaints and misconduct.

3.15 Professional development

The Governing Council considers the training needs of all members annually and determines the appropriate professional development sessions required for each member. Training needs may also be identified through the process of continually evaluating Governing Council performance.

Members are expected to undertake professional development to keep up to date with changes in legislation, industry trends and financial requirements. The TAFE college will bear the cost of reasonable Governing Council approved professional development. The Governing Council Chairperson should ascertain funding requirements and make the Managing Director aware of funding needs.

DTWD provides an annual Governing Council Forum which may include an overview of the current Instruments of Delegation and Authorisation and the Ministerial Guidelines.

3.16 Remuneration

Section 63 of the VET Act includes provision for remuneration and allowances for Governing Council members. Premier's Circular 2025/15 confirms that fees may not be paid to full-time government officers sitting on government boards and committees.

As a guide, an individual should not receive sitting fees from more than two State Government boards or committees.

Governing Council members are remunerated for full attendance at formal Governing Council meetings. This does not include sub-committee meetings unless the sub-committee has been approved for remuneration by Cabinet.

Government board and committee members may be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred when travelling to and from meetings for business of the board, however, this does not include time taken in travel.

The term 'government officer' includes any person who is employed on the public payroll that is employed in a government (Commonwealth or state-funded) organisation. This includes:

- local government employees;
- current and retired judicial officers;
- current non-academic employees of public academic institutions; and
- both current Members of Parliament and former Members of Parliament for whom less than 12 months has passed since sitting in Parliament.

Part-time public servants elected local government councillors and university academics[2] are eligible for fees when sitting on State Government boards and committees. Part time public servants are eligible for remuneration for membership on State Government boards and committees if:

- it is clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the relevant Minister that the part time public servant's board or committee work will happen in their own time; and
- potential conflicts of interest will be appropriately managed.

Section 201 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* requires public sector employees to obtain the prior permission of their employing authority to engage in activities unconnected with their functions.

Remuneration rates for governing councils

As set out by the Public Sector Commissioner, the following rates apply for attendance by council members at formal council meetings.

Chairperson	*$26,147 per annum	
Deputy chairperson	*$784 full day	*$510 half day
Members	*$680 full day	*$442 half day

**Current as of 25 August 2026. 'Full day' is over four hours' duration. 'Half day' is under four hours duration.*

TAFE colleges have funds available to support the good functioning of the Governing Council and/or for the purposes specified under the VET Act.

[2] A university academic is defined as someone who is engaged primarily for the purpose of providing educational services and not administrative or other services.

3.15.1 Payment arrangements

Remuneration payments to Governing Council members are made by the TAFE college. The sitting fee is paid directly to the bank account of the Governing Council Chairperson on a fortnightly basis and following meetings for Governing Council members.

Governing Council members are required to complete the necessary payroll and employee commencement requirements to be paid.

Governing Council members are eligible to receive the appropriate amount of superannuation; however, they are not considered Department employees as they are appointed directly by the Minister.

3.15.2 Payment of remuneration fees to a charity

Governing Council members that elect to donate their remuneration to charity must first accept the entitlement, pay the relevant tax and then donate the money to a charity of their choosing. Individual tax advice should be sought.

3.16 Record keeping plan

In accordance with section 17 of the *State Records Act 2000*, TAFE colleges must develop a Record keeping plan that outlines how the college will identify, capture, manage, control, preserve and dispose of Government records. Governing Council members should comply with the Record keeping plan for their college.

Section 4: Governing Council operations

Section 40(1) of the VET Act requires a Governing Council to give effect to Schedule 1.

Section 40(2) of the VET Act provides that, subject to the Act, a Governing Council may determine its own procedures.

4.1 Delegations and Authorisations

Ministerial delegations and authorisations

The Minister has issued the following instruments to Governing Councils:

- Minister's Instrument of Delegation (Governing Councils)
- Minister's Instrument of Delegation (Colleges)
- Minister's Instrument of Authorisation (Colleges)

A Governing Council must ensure it discharges its duties in line with its delegations and authorisations, as amended from time to time.

Where a Governing Council sub-delegates to a Managing Director or other senior college officer, this sub-delegation must be made in writing and approved by the Minister.

Delegation by a Governing Council

Section 45 of the VET Act enables a Governing Council to delegate the performance of all or any of its functions, other than its power under section 44 to make by-laws, to the Managing Director of the college.

The college Managing Director may sub-delegate that function to a person employed by the college with the approval of the Governing Council but not otherwise.

Where functions are delegated and sub-delegated, a Governing Council must ensure those arrangements are made in writing, reviewed periodically and monitored.

4.2 Strategic plan and annual business plan

The Governing Council is required to ensure that the following plans are in place and are regularly reviewed and evaluated.

> Under sections 43 and 44A of the VET Act, TAFE colleges are required to provide the Minister with a draft strategic plan and the annual business plan by 1 September of each year unless otherwise notified by the Minister in writing.

The *Ministerial Guidelines for TAFE College Strategic Plans and Annual Business Plans* outlines requirements set out by the Minister.

Guidelines are available on the Department's TAFE governance website.

4.3 Operational plan

Operational planning translates the broad and overarching objectives and strategies into operational objectives and actions, with defined responsibilities and performance indicators. It is coordinated and integrated with other organisational processes including budget development and resource allocation.

The operational plan is linked to the TAFE college's strategic plan and annual business plans in that it helps to realise the goals and objectives identified in those plans.

Operational plans are developed annually by the directorates, branches and business units of TAFE colleges and are subject to regular revision throughout the year.

4.4 Managing Director's CEO Delivery and Performance agreement

The Managing Director is accountable to the Governing Council for the performance and operation of the TAFE College.

The Managing Director's CEO Delivery and Performance Agreement provides an opportunity for a Governing Council and the Governing Council Chair to:

- incorporate performance expectations and targets relating to reporting and administrative support; and
- capture the Governing Council's expectation that the Managing Director will:
  - strive to meet compliance obligations associated with effective and efficient management and administration of the TAFE college;

- strive to deliver positive outcomes for government, industry, community, employers and students; and
- contribute to the TAFE System and sector-wide initiatives.

The timing and procedures related to a Managing Director's performance agreement are detailed in the Public Sector Commission's publication *Approved Procedure 8 – Timing and assessment of CEO performance agreements.*

The Governing Council Chair is expected to lead performance discussions with the Managing Director, and advise the Minister and the Public Sector Commissioner in relation to a Managing Director's performance and whether the Managing Director has met the deliverables of their Performance Agreement.

4.5 TAFE Delivery and performance agreement

The TAFE Delivery and performance agreement (DPA) sets out contract conditions including training delivery targets and funding levels to enable delivery of publicly subsidised training by TAFE colleges.

The DPA consists of the following documents.

1. The Agreement
2. The general provisions for the purchase of training services from TAFE colleges.

The Department negotiates the DPA with the TAFE colleges on an annual basis prior to the start of the calendar year.

Outcomes are negotiated by variables relating to State Government initiatives, Commonwealth / State agreements, priorities established by the State Training Board in the State Training Plan, the Department's strategic plan, and also relating to meeting the strategic objectives of the TAFE colleges.

The TAFE colleges are provided with two opportunities in the calendar year (May and September) to review and modify the delivery targets.

Following conclusion of the calendar year, TAFE college's delivery achievements are measured against DPA delivery targets, and a funding reconciliation takes place in March to ensure accountability of public funding.

4.6 Commercial activities

The *Ministerial Guidelines for Commercial Activities of TAFE Colleges* authorises how a TAFE college can undertake commercial activity.

The Ministerial Guidelines for International Commercial Activities of TAFE Colleges authorises how a TAFE college can enter into contracts and arrangements with overseas organisations.

For more information on Ministerial guidelines visit the TAFE college governance section of the Department's TAFE college governance website.

Section 5: Evaluation of TAFE college performance

The operations of TAFE colleges are evaluated on an annual basis by a number of stakeholders including the Department, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) and students participating in training provided by the TAFE college.

5.1 Internal audits

5.1.1 Financial responsibility and accountability

The provisions of the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the *Auditor General Act 2006* regulate the financial administration, audit and reporting of TAFE colleges and their operations.

The Governing Council is responsible for establishing and maintaining an effective internal audit function. *Treasurer's Instruction 10 Internal Audit* outlines the requirements of internal audit functions.

Governing Councils must also ensure that the TAFE college's commitment under its Delivery and performance agreement and any other contractual arrangements are met.

The Governing Council will report the Auditor General's opinion in the TAFE college's annual report.

5.1.2 TAFE college annual budget estimates

Section 40 of the *Financial Management Act 2006* requires TAFE colleges to prepare and submit to the Minister annual estimates of their financial operations. Estimates are to be submitted for the following calendar year, plus three out-years. The annual budget estimates are more commonly referred to as 'Section 40s.' Actual results from the previous calendar year and an estimated actual result for the current calendar year are also to be submitted.

The Department provides analysis and recommendations to the Minister for consideration and works closely with the Department of Treasury and Finance, and TAFE colleges to align the Section 40s with information recorded in Treasury and Finance's Strategic Information Management System (SIMs).

Once approved, the estimates are then incorporated into the TAFE college's annual report which is to be tabled in Parliament by the Minister no later than 90 days from the end of the calendar year.

TAFE colleges are expected to operate in line with their approved annual estimates of their financial operations.

5.2 TAFE college Annual Report

In accordance with section 61 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*, TAFE colleges must submit annual reports for the 12 month period from 1 January to 31 December of each calendar year. The Annual Report provides an overview of training delivery, financial operations and outcomes against key performance indicators and legislative requirements. Annual reports must be endorsed by the Governing Council, and validated by the OAG, prior to being submitted to the Minister.

Annual reports are tabled in Parliament by the Minister no later than 90 days from the end of the calendar year.

5.3 Office of the Auditor General

The role of the OAG is to audit the finances and key performance indicators of the Western Australian public sector. In undertaking this task, the OAG will scrutinise the public sector for potential instances of wastage, inefficiency or ineffectiveness, and report its findings to Parliament.

OAG reports should be submitted to Governing Council for review.

For more information visit the Office of the Auditor General website at audit.wa.gov.au.

5.4 The Corruption and Crime Commission

The Corruption and Crime Commission (CCC) is focused on helping public sector agencies minimise and manage misconduct, and improving the integrity of the public sector. It does this by working collaboratively with public sector agencies to increase their ability to effectively deal with misconduct.

For more information, visit the CCC website at ccc.wa.gov.au .

Section 6: Legal responsibilities

Governing Councils and TAFE colleges have a legal and ethical relationship that requires trust on the part of the TAFE college and good faith, honesty and diligence on the part of the council members. Members owe legal and fiduciary duties to the TAFE college.

These duties include:

- acting with care and diligence;
- acting honestly and in good faith for the best interests of the TAFE college;
- acting for a proper purpose;
- appropriately managing conflicts of interest; and
- not making improper use of inside information, property or business opportunities.

In addition to the identified duties of a general nature, Governing Councils are responsible for ensuring that the TAFE college complies with public sector statutory requirements including Premier's Circulars and Treasurer's Instructions. These can be found in the Financial Administration Bookcase .

As per section 5 of the *Statutory Corporations (Liability of Directors) Act 1996*, Governing Council members are not personally liable for negligence or other civil actions as long as they have acted with loyalty and good faith in the performance of their functions.

6.1 Governing Council by-laws

With the approval of the Minister, section 44 of the VET Act allows the Governing Council to make by-laws for:

- the safe operation and efficient management of lands and facilities under the management or control of the TAFE college;
- regulating entry on to, use of and conduct on, those lands and facilities;
- providing disciplinary consequences and penalties not exceeding $1,000 for breach of those by-laws; and
- proscribing:
  - the classes of membership and the conditions or qualifications for membership of a student association; and
  - the functions of a student association and other matters that are necessary or convenient for the effective performance of those functions.

6.2 Legislation

Governing Councils, as the peak authorities, must adhere to the legislation governing TAFE colleges.

Relevant legislation includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- *Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*
- *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003*
- *Public Sector Management Act 1994*
- *Auditor General Act 2006*
- *Civil Liability Act 2002*
- *Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) Part 2D.1*
- *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*
- *Disability Services Act 1993*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*
- *Financial Management Act 2006*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*
- *Integrity (Lobbyists) Act 2016*
- *State Records Act 2000*
- *Procurement Act 2020*
- *Statutory Corporations (Liability of Directors) Act 1996*
- *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*

6.3 Ministerial instruments and guidelines

There are general ministerial guidelines that public sector organisations are required to follow. There are also specific ministerial guidelines under section 13 of the VET Act.

Ministerial directions are a form of delegated legislation, a term which covers legislation made under the authority of the Acts of Parliament. Delegated legislation includes regulations, rules, orders, declarations and by-laws. Delegated legislation is usually published in the Government Gazette and on government department websites.

VET Act guidelines relate to the functions of the State training system and stipulate the policy to be implemented and the procedures to be followed. Guidelines are to be followed by the body to which they are directed.

Ministerial directions and guidelines include the following:

General guidelines

- Premier's Circulars
- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Treasurer's Instructions
- Department of Treasury and Finance
- Public Sector Commissioner's Circulars

VET Act instruments

- Instrument of Delegation (Governing Council Chairs)
- Instrument of Delegation (colleges)
- Instrument of Authorisation (colleges)
- Strategic plans and annual business plans
- Commercial activities
- International commercial activities

Ministerial guidelines are available on the Department's website at https://www.wa.gov.au/government/document-collections/tafe-governing-councils-resources-templates-and-guidelines#ministerial-guidelines-and-vet-act-instruments .

Ministerial Statements of Expectation

- Statement of Expectations (Governing Councils)
- Statement of Expectations for TAFE colleges

Section 7: The Western Australian vocational education and training system

7.1 Vocational Education and Training Act 1996

The VET Act sets out the functions and powers of the VET (WA) Ministerial Corporation, governed by the Minister and provides for:

- a VET system for the State;
- the establishment and functions of the State Training Board and Training Accreditation Council;
- the establishment of TAFE colleges and other VET institutions; and
- the training of people, including apprentices, under training contracts with employers.

Under the VET Act, the Minister delegates the responsibilities of governing the functions and operations of a TAFE college to Governing Councils. The Minister does so with the expectation that councils will adopt public sector best practice in accountability, good governance and strategic and operational frameworks.

In performing their responsibilities, Governing Councils must ensure that their actions, and their courses, programs and services, align with, and are responsive to, the VET Act and the fundamental elements of the WA VET system.

7.2 Fundamental elements of the VET system

7.2.1 Quality frameworks

The **Australian Qualifications Framework** (AQF – see aqf.edu.au/) is a structure of endorsed qualifications that provide pathways through Australia's education and training system. The AQF is a key national policy instrument to protect the quality of Australian education and training wherever it is delivered.

The **2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations** were approved by Skills Ministers in March 2025 and formally enacted from 1 July 2025, replacing the 2015 version and marking a significant shift toward outcome-focused regulation.

All RTOs must have moved to the 2025 Standards on the enactment date of 1 January 2026. Compliance with these standards is mandatory and provides for nationally consistent, high-quality training and assessment practices across Australia's vocational education and training system. TAFE colleges are regulated against the Standards by the Training Accreditation Council (TAC) on a three-yearly cycle, support and resources can be found here: TAC Registration Standards 2025 Hub.

7.2.2 Registered training organisations

RTOs are providers of nationally recognised training. Only RTOs can issue nationally recognised AQF qualifications.

RTOs include public providers, adult and communication education providers, private providers, community organisations, schools, higher education institutions, commercial and enterprise training providers, industry bodies and other organisations that meet registration requirements.

7.3 Key VET stakeholders

Stakeholders are integral to the success of the VET system in Western Australia. While there are many stakeholders involved in the delivery of training, several are pivotal to the planning, coordination, monitoring, quality assurance, evaluation and purchasing of training services as outlined below.

7.3.1 Minister

The Minister is responsible for the VET sector in Western Australia, including TAFE colleges. Division 1 of the VET Act sets out the functions and powers of the Minister. section 8 of the VET Act outlines the functions of the Minister in relation to the VET sector in Western Australia, while section 9 outlines the powers of the Minister.

In addition to commissioning and approving the State Training Plan, from time to time the Minister will:

- control, direct and coordinate the State training system;
- ensure as far as practicable that the needs identified in the State Training Plan are met by a combination of State and private training providers;
- promote the development of a competitive training market and facilitate commercial activities that are authorised by or under the VET Act; and
- enter into commercial activities both within Australia and overseas, to generate revenue for, and otherwise benefit, the State training system.

Under section 10 of the VET Act, the Minister may also delegate the performance of Minister's functions, excluding the appointment of council members, to governing councils.

7.3.2 Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD)

The VET system in Western Australia is administered by DTWD in its role as the State Training Authority.

Established in October 2009, the Department operates in accordance with the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* and assists the Minister to manage and coordinate the State's vocational education and training sector in the administration of the VET Act.

As Sector Steward, the Department leads the Western Australian skills, training and workforce development sector and drives the State's training and workforce development agenda.

As System Manager, the Department partners with TAFE colleges to coordinate the TAFE system to ensure a flexible, responsive, innovative and quality System that meets student, community, industry and Government needs.

The system stewardship role of the Department is undertaken in the context of national frameworks which ensure the quality and portability of qualifications.

The Department commissions training services from the TAFE colleges and provides a range of services to TAFE colleges. The partnership governance model between TAFE colleges and the Department fosters a collaborative state-wide network of TAFE colleges, underpins acceleration of system-wide improvements, and maintains high standards of training, in the context of national frameworks which ensure the quality and portability of qualifications which enables the Western Australian workforce to support a thriving and diversifying economy.

The Department also procures training and related services from over 200 private and not-for profit organisations. These providers play an important role in the State training system as they can offer flexibility and agility, specialisations and support for disadvantaged and under-represented groups in our workforce. They also help to address the unique aspects of our economy, geography and population.

7.3.3 State Training Board

The State Training Board (the Board) is a statutory body established in accordance with Part 3 of the VET Act. The Board is the peak industry training advisory body to the Minister on matters relating to VET in Western Australia.

A key deliverable of the Board is to prepare a State Training Plan for the Minister's approval. The Plan identifies the training and skill development priorities for Western Australia's industries and guides the State Government's investment in training places under the Act.

The Board recognises and works collaboratively with various industry training advisory bodies, including industry training councils. The Board undertakes direct engagement with employers, peak industry associations, unions and training providers across WA.

In WA, industry training councils (ITCs) are contracted and funded by the Department of Training and Workforce Development. The State Training Board recognises ITCs as Industry Training Advisory Bodies under the VET Act.

The Training Council network consists of eight industry-specific ITCs and receives a wide range of input from key stakeholder representatives, including peak employer, employee and industry organisations. and is responsible for providing:

7.3.4 TAFE colleges

TAFE colleges are training institutes that have been established under section 35 of the VET Act. Each TAFE college is a separate statutory authority as per Schedule 2 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*.

There are five TAFE colleges throughout Western Australia with over fifty campuses stretching from Esperance in the south to Wyndham in the north. The TAFE colleges form part of an integrated system.

Funded predominantly by the State Government, they offer VET training to around than 80,000 people each year. TAFE colleges are responsible for implementing the State Government's policy objectives for VET.

The planning, development, monitoring and reporting of publicly funded VET is negotiated with the Department and formalised through the *Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA)* between the Department and the TAFE college.

While TAFE colleges may deliver higher education qualification on behalf of other training providers, all other higher education activity is subject to approval by the Minister via the strategic and business plans.

7.3.5 Australian Skills Quality Authority

ASQA became the national VET regulator in 2011 and provides audit and registration services for RTOs across Australia with the exception of Western Australia and Victoria.

Both WA and Victoria have not referred their VET regulatory control to the Commonwealth. In these States, regulation of RTOs is carried out by State authorities. RTOs registered and operating exclusively in WA only, or in WA and Victoria, remain under the jurisdiction of the Training Accreditation Council (TAC).

If an RTO is multi-jurisdictional and operates in other States and Territories outside of Western Australia, it will be regulated by ASQA. Similarly, if an RTO in Western Australia is registered under the *Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS)* it will be regulated by ASQA.

7.3.6 Western Australia Training Accreditation Council

TAC is Western Australia's State VET regulator and is responsible for quality assurance and recognition of VET services in Western Australia including TAFE colleges.

This includes:

- the registration of training providers and the accreditation of courses;
- the recognition of skills and qualifications; and
- providing policy advice to the State Training Board on recognition arrangements.

TAC is committed to being the national leader in the strategic management of the recognition and quality assurance of training, including associated policies, services and standards in the VET sector.

It provides support for government, the State Training Board, industry training providers, and the community.

Section 8: Annual Governance Cycle

While Governing Councils undertake a broad range of governance, oversight and strategic responsibilities throughout the year, several key activities form the core annual governance cycle. These activities support accountability to the Minister, Government and the community and assist Governing Councils to fulfil their statutory responsibilities under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* and associated legislation.

The timing of individual activities may vary from year to year depending on Ministerial requirements and advice from the Department; however, Governing Councils should ensure appropriate planning is undertaken to enable effective oversight of the following key governance obligations.

Key Governance activity	Governing Council role	Cycle	Approved by
Strategic Plan	Consider, review and endorse the college's strategic direction, priorities and objectives, ensuring alignment with Government policy, workforce development priorities and Ministerial expectations.	At least every three years	Minister
Annual Business Plan	Review and approve the Annual Business Plan, ensuring planned activities support delivery of the Strategic Plan and Ministerial priorities.	Annual	Minister
Section 40 Budget Estimates	Review and approve annual financial estimates prior to submission to the Minister in accordance with the Financial Management Act 2006.	Annual	Minister
Annual Budget	Review and approve annual budgets, financial assumptions and operating forecasts to support the college's financial sustainability and strategic objectives.	Annual	Governing Council

Managing Director Performance Agreement	Through the Governing Council Chair, contribute to the development, monitoring and assessment of the Managing Director's Performance Agreement and associated performance discussions.	Annual	Minister Governing Council Chair Public Sector Commissioner
Internal Audit Plan	Review and approve the annual internal audit plan and oversee the implementation of audit recommendations and assurance activities.	Annual	Governing Council
Risk Review	Regularly review strategic and operational risks, monitor the effectiveness of risk controls and ensure appropriate risk management frameworks are operating effectively.	Annual	Governing Council
Annual Governance Attestation Statement	Consider and endorse the Annual Governance Attestation Statement, providing assurance regarding the effectiveness of governance arrangements within the college.	Annual	Governing Council
Annual Report	Review and approve the Annual Report prior to submission to the Minister, ensuring compliance with legislative reporting requirements and public accountability obligations.	Annual	Governing Council

Appendix 1: Glossary of terms

Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS)	AVETMISS is a national data standard which ensures consistency and accuracy of VET information and covers three national data collections: the National VET Provider Collection, the National Apprentice and Trainee Collection and the National Financial Data Collection. All RTOs need to collect and report AVETMISS data on all accredited training activity. NCVER collects AVETMISS information on behalf of the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments.
Annual Business plan	A plan which outlines the operational activities to be undertaken in the year. The business plan is a requirement of the VET Act and must be consistent with the State Training Plan and any Ministerial Guidelines issued regarding Strategic plans.
Commonwealth Register of Institutions (CRICOS)	The official Australian Government website that lists all Australian education providers, the courses offered by education institutions, and information about courses and registration for overseas students.
Corruption and Crime Commission (CCC)	CCC is an anti-corruption body that works to improve the integrity of the Western Australian public sector by assisting public sector agencies to minimise and manage misconduct.
Delivery and performance agreement (DPA)	A formal agreement between the Department and TAFE college which specifies the agreed services and targets for the year.
Department of Training and Workforce Development (the Department)	The Department is the State Training Authority for Western Australia, with a mission to provide leadership in workforce development and drive a responsible, flexible and quality VET system to meet the needs of industry, the community and the individual.
Group training organisation (GTO)	GTOs manage the employment and training of apprentices and trainees under contracted work-based arrangements for the purpose of hosting those apprentices and trainees out to other employers.
Integrity Coordinating Group (ICG)	ICG promotes policy coherence and operational coordination in the ongoing work of Western Australia's core public sector integrity institutions.

Jobs and Skills Centre (JSC)	Western Australia's TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres are one-stop shops for careers, training and employment advice and assistance. Services are also provided to employers and business owners.
Managing Director's performance agreement	The Managing Director's performance agreement is a statutory requirement under the Public Sector Management Act which outlines the Managing Director's key deliverables for the year.
Minister's instrument of delegation (governing councils) No.1 of 2017	This document provides a delegation to Governing Council chairs to approve member's leave of absence for up to three months.
Ministerial Guidelines: International commercial activities of TAFE colleges	This document is a framework to guide TAFE colleges' offshore commercial activities.
Ministerial Guidelines: commercial activities of TAFE colleges	This document provides Ministerial Guidelines for TAFE colleges' commercial activities and includes policy details for implementation.
National Cabinet	National Cabinet is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia, comprising the Prime Minister, State Premiers and Territory Chief Ministers
National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)	NCVER is a private company owned by the federal, state and territory ministers responsible for training. NCVER is contracted by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment to collect, manage, analyse, evaluate and communicate research and statistics for the Australian VET sector.
Office of the Auditor General (OAG)	The Auditor General's role is to audit the finances and activities of the Western Australian public sector. In undertaking this task, the Auditor General will scrutinise the public sector for potential instances of wastage, inefficiency or ineffectiveness, and report his findings to Parliament. The Auditor General reports directly to Parliament and acts independently in carrying out all his or her powers and duties.
Operational plan	A plan which outlines how the strategies and business plan objectives will be achieved at an operational level.
Public Sector Commission (PSC)	The Public Sector Commission provides leadership and expertise to the Western Australian public sector to enhance integrity, effectiveness and efficiency.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL)	RPL is an assessment process that considers a student's existing skills, knowledge and experience, and may result in gaining a complete qualification, or gaining credit for part of a qualification which can then be completed with additional training.
Registered training organisation (RTO)	An RTO is a training provider registered to deliver nationally recognised training. Only RTOs can deliver and issue nationally recognised AQF qualifications on scope of registration.
Registered Training Organisation Network (RTONet)	Registered training organisations can view their details through the State Training and Recognition System (STARS) by accessing RTONet. RTONet is a direct link to all systems within the Department of Training and Workforce Development through one gateway that shows all activities.
Standards for Registered Training Organisations	The 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations were approved by Skills Ministers in March 2025 and formally enacted from 1 July 2025, replacing the 2015 version and marking a significant shift toward outcome-focused regulation.
State Priority Occupation List (SPOL)	The SPOL is a list of occupations rated according to their priority status for Western Australia.
State Training Authority (STA)	The STA is the state or territory authority with the primary responsibility for VET in that jurisdiction. The STA for Western Australia is the Department of Training and Workforce Development
State Training Plan	Section 21 (1) (a) of *the Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* requires the State Training Board to prepare, for the Minister's approval, a State Training Plan ('the Plan'). The Act defines the Plan as a 'comprehensive plan for the provision of vocational education and training in the State'.
Strategic plan	A plan which sets the strategic direction and identifies the college's medium to long term objectives and aligns them with State and Australian Government's priorities. The strategic plan is a requirement of the VET Act and must be consistent with the State Training Plan and any Ministerial guidelines issued regarding Strategic plans.
TAFE college	The five TAFE colleges of Western Australia, which deliver publicly funded VET training for the State.

TAFE International Western Australia (TIWA)	TIWA is the institute established under section 57 of the VET Act and *TAFE International WA Order 1997* (as amended in 2002 and 2011). TIWA is a Registered Training Provider responsible for marketing, enrolling and welfare of international students for TAFE colleges and public schools.
The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework. The AQF was introduced in 1995 to underpin the national system of qualifications in Australia encompassing higher education, vocational education and training and schools.
Training Accreditation Council (TAC)	TAC is Western Australia's State registering/course accrediting body and is responsible for quality assurance and recognition of VET services for training providers delivering training only in Western Australia, including TAFE colleges.
VET delivered to secondary students	VET delivered to secondary students studying towards the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) to gain a partial or complete VET qualification.
Vocational education and training (VET)	VET is 'education and training for work' and part of a broader network in Australia that includes schools, universities, registered training organisations and adult and community education. Most VET is accredited by the State or national VET regulatory body.
Western Australian skilled migration occupation list (WASMOL)	The WASMOL comprises occupations eligible for nomination for two skilled visas by the Western Australian Government.