



GOVERNING COUNCIL MEMBER POSITION DESCRIPTION SUGGESTED GUIDE

Function of Governing Councils as prescribed in the VET Act

Governing Councils represent the highest level of decision-making within a TAFE College.

Under section 42 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (the VET Act) Governing Council functions are listed as:

- performing the functions of the college and governing its operations and affairs;
- doing all things necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of its functions;
- performing its functions in another State or Territory if that is necessary or convenient for the performance of the functions of the college; and
- in performing its functions ensuring that the college's courses, programs and services are responsive to, and meet, the needs of students, industry and the community.

The functions of a college are stipulated in section 37 of the VET Act as providing:

- publicly funded VET in Western Australia targeted to meet the State Government's economic and social development objectives, in particular industry sectors and regional areas;
- skills recognition (recognition of prior learning);
- nationally recognised qualifications and accredited courses;
- apprenticeship and traineeship training;
- entry and bridging courses and qualifications leading into mainstream courses and qualifications;
- commercial training (fee for service) – customised training and short courses; and
- Adult Community Education (ACE) courses (accredited and non-accredited training).

1. Roles and responsibilities of a Governing Council member

Governing Council members have a duty to act in the best interests of the TAFE College at all times.

Member responsibilities may include (but are not limited to):

- contributing to the formation and/or 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 and working cooperatively with fellow members 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;
- undertaking projects on topics and issues concerning the TAFE College; and
- expressing concerns to the Chairperson or other relevant authority about consultations, decisions or actions that may be contrary to the Governing Council's public duty.

2. Accountabilities of a Governing Council member

The accountabilities of the position of Governing Council member are to:

- the Minister of Training and Workforce Development (the Minister), who:
 - controls, directs and coordinates the State training system;
 - ensures that the needs set out in the State Training Plan are provided by a combination of public and private training providers;
 - promotes the development of a competitive training market and facilitates commercial activities; and
 - enters into commercial activities within Australia and overseas to generate revenue for and benefit the State training system.
- the Chairperson, who:
 - ensures that all Governing Council members act in accordance with the VET Act and all other applicable legislation, government instructions, policies, frameworks and reporting requirements in fulfilling their duties;
 - participates with formal meetings with the Minister, and the Managing Director; and
 - assists the Governing Council in developing and maintaining good relationships with the Minister, the Department, industry groups, key stakeholders and the community.
- the TAFE College, its lecturers, staff and students; and
- the broader Western Australian community.

ESSENTIAL/DESIRED SKILLS, EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE

- an understanding of the role and structure of the VET system as prescribed by the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* and Regulations;
- experience and expertise in education and training, industry or community affairs;
- experience with strategic and operational planning, and the processes involved;
- ability to read and understand financial statements and reports; and
- a basic understanding of legal processes.

3. Governance and ethical standards

A Governing Council member is expected to:

- promote and support good governance and ethical practice within the Governing Council, its affairs and its functions;
- promote and support risk management, fraud prevention, corruption resistance and accountability requirements and processes;
- manage potential conflicts of interest;
- manage fraudulent or corrupt behaviour;
- report any information about actual or potential fraudulent, corrupt or illegal activities to the Chairperson, or if necessary, Public Interest Disclosure (PID) officers, the Public Sector Commission or the Corruption and Crime Commission; and
- understand the consequences of misconduct and the actions that may be taken if codes of conduct and associated policies are not complied with.

ESSENTIAL/DESIRED SKILLS, EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE

- an appreciation of the benefits of good governance practice in both the public and private sectors;
- a commitment to implementing best practice in risk management, policy development, and accountability frameworks;
- an understanding of the difference between governing and managing, and the functions and duties of the Managing Directors of TAFE Colleges; and
- an understanding of public sector ethical standards and behaviour.

4. Values, characteristics and commitment to the role

Governing Council members are expected to share the following values, characteristics and commitments:

- committing to the provision of high quality, equitable and competitive vocational education and training for the community of Western Australia;
- committing to attending meetings and being fully prepared to participate in decision making processes;
- exercising powers and discharging duties in the best interests of the college;
- making decisions fairly, impartially and promptly;
- treating members of the Department, industry, stakeholders, fellow Governing Council members and the public with respect, courtesy, honesty and fairness while having proper regard for their interests, rights, safety and welfare;
- displaying a willingness to listen to and consider other people's viewpoints; and
- displaying awareness and management of conflicts of interest.

ESSENTIAL/DESIRED SKILLS, EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE

- the ability to communicate, debate and actively participate in meetings;
- the ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships, and network with stakeholders, industry and the community; and
- ability to exercise independent judgement.

5. Professional Development

Governing Council members are expected to participate in professional development opportunities offered, and in Governing Council self-assessment and evaluation processes.

Reference may also be made to the:

- Governing Council Handbook; and
- Example Terms of Reference for a Governing Council.