

**MINISTERIAL GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF TAFE COLLEGE  
STRATEGIC AND ANNUAL BUSINESS PLANS  
Commencing 1 January 2025**

These guidelines are issued by the Minister Assisting the Minister for Training and Workforce Development to TAFE colleges under section 13 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* and are to be followed by Governing Councils and colleges pursuant to section 13(4) of the Act.

**Citation**

These guidelines may be cited as *Guidelines for TAFE college strategic plans and annual business plans commencing 1 January 2025*.

**Interpretation**

In these guidelines, unless the contrary intention appears –

‘college’ means a college established under section 35 of the VET Act;

‘the VET Act’ means the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* as amended;

‘TAFE college’ means a college established under section 35 of the VET Act.

In these guidelines, unless the contrary intention appears, a term that is used in the VET Act and in these guidelines has the same meaning as is given to the term in the VET Act.

**Application of these guidelines**

These guidelines apply with respect to the provision of a draft strategic plan and annual business plan by colleges for approval by the Minister Assisting the Minister.

Dated this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of May 2024.



HON HANNAH BEAZLEY MLA  
MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR TRAINING AND WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT

## Introduction

The *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (VET Act) requires TAFE colleges to submit a draft strategic plan, along with a proposed business plan commencing on the following 1 January. These plans should be submitted for approval by the Minister prior to 1 September of each year or prior to another date notified to the college by the Minister in writing (Section 43).

In 2024, the Minister Assisting the Minister for Training and Workforce Development, the Hon Hannah Beazley, MLA will be responsible for this approval process.

The Ministerial Statement of Expectations (**Appendix A**) should be used for guidance in the development of both the strategic plan and the business plan that will commence 1 January 2025.

## Purpose

These guidelines are provided to:

- refer Governing Councils to the legislative context relating to the development of Strategic Plans and Annual Business Plans;
- convey the Government's key priorities through the Ministerial Statement of Expectations; and
- within these parameters, provide autonomy to Governing Councils to tailor college directions and activities to local emerging needs and through industry partnerships.

## Legislative context

The VET Act (refer to Section 43 and 44A) includes but is not limited to the following requirements:

- For strategic plans: "set out the colleges medium to long term objectives (including economic and financial objectives) and operational targets and how those objectives and targets will be achieved".
- A college's business plan for a year must set out:
  - a) the vocational education and training that the college plans to provide in the year; and
  - b) the other functions of the college that it plans to perform in the year; and
  - c) any other matters that are prescribed.
- A college's strategic and business plans must be consistent with the State Training Plan, and the business plan should clearly align with the college's strategic plan.
- The Minister may approve a draft plan received from a college or refuse to approve it and require the college to prepare another or an amended draft.

A college must perform its functions in accordance with its strategic and business plans as per section 37(2) of the VET Act and within the parameters of the instruments of delegation and authorisation and the *Ministerial Guidelines*.

## Content and Format of the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan is required to be developed every three years, with interim updates or amendments provided in the intervening years<sup>1</sup> and should:

- incorporate relevant priorities identified in the Statement of Expectations included in Appendix A of these Guidelines; and
- be sufficiently broad to provide an overarching framework for the draft Business Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Colleges will be advised in the letter provided with these guidelines if a new strategic plan is required.

In the interests of ensuring consistency in form and consideration of issues across colleges, strategic plan formats must include the following components:

- operating environment analysis;
- the college's vision, mission and values; and
- strategic priorities and key actions required for their achievement.

### **Content and Format of the Annual Business Plan**

A college's business plan must set out:

- the vocational education and training that the college plans to provide in the year; and
- the other functions of the college that it plans to perform in the year; and
- any other matters that are prescribed (refer to **Appendix B** for details).

### **Responsibilities of TAFE colleges**

TAFE colleges must provide assurance through the submitted strategic and business plan that:

1. The college can manage its future operations in an open, transparent and accountable manner.
2. Planned operations are in accordance with college functions as stipulated in the VET Act and the following documents (available online):
  - [TAFE colleges commercial activities guidelines](#);
  - [Ministerial guidelines for international commercial activities of TAFE colleges](#);
  - [Minister's Instrument of Delegation \(Colleges\)](#); and
  - [VET \(WA\) Ministerial Corporation Instrument of Authorisation \(Colleges\)](#).
3. The college is practising risk management as required under the Treasurer's Instruction 825: [Risk Management](#).
4. Existing and planned operations will contribute to the skills and economic development of this State.
5. Western Australians will receive value for money from the State's commitment to vocational education and training (VET).
6. The college has incorporated the Statement of Expectations into its business planning.
7. Strategies are in place for the successful operation of Jobs and Skills Centres.
8. The college will operate within approved financial parameters.

The Governing Council and college senior management should be engaged in the planning process. Stakeholder perspectives will be important in the identification of future priorities. Additionally, strategic and business plan processes and content should incorporate provision for assuring appropriate financial and governance systems.

### **Responsibilities of the Department of Training and Workforce Development**

Following the approval of a college's strategic and business plan, the Department of Training and Workforce Development will work with each college to allocate resources and develop the Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA). The DPA will support the implementation of the college's business plan, having regard to the aggregate of training proposed across colleges and budget parameters.

### **Submission of draft Strategic and Business Plans**

Colleges are required to submit their draft strategic and business plan to the Minister Assisting the Minister in PDF format no later than **1 November 2024**. If applicable, colleges should include the commercial activities spreadsheets, in excel format.

Both the strategic and business plan must be endorsed by the Governing Council and accompanied by a covering letter to the Minister Assisting the Minister and signed by both the Governing Council Chair and the college Managing Director.

For those colleges not required to provide a new strategic plan this year, the letter should indicate whether there have been any amendments to the strategic plan from the previous year and the consultative process utilised in developing the amended plan. Amended strategic plans must retain the original dates from when it was developed, i.e. only new fully developed strategic plans in 2024 should reflect 2025 – 2027.

A template for both the strategic and business plan declarations is included at **Appendix C**.

the strategic plan should be made available to the public through college websites following the Minister Assisting the Minister's approval.

### **Amendments to Approved Annual Business Plans**

The college can change its annual business plan with the approval of the Minister Assisting the Minister.<sup>2</sup>

The college will need to submit a separate business case to gain approval for a new activity or for execution of contracts related to the relevant activities that sit outside the funding parameters of the *Minister's Instrument of Delegation (Colleges)*, and/or the *VET (WA) Ministerial Corporation Instrument of Authorisation (Colleges)*.

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<sup>2</sup> VET Act Section 44A.(5)

## Appendix A

### Ministerial Statement of Expectations

This statement sets out Government policies and priorities relevant to the work of the TAFE colleges.

TAFE plays a critical role in ensuring that all Western Australians, especially priority groups have access to the education, training and assistance they need to obtain the skills to participate and support business growth, and the diversification of the Western Australian economy.

I expect your college plans and operations will support:

- A training delivery profile that is aligned with:
  - [Western Australia's economic development framework, Diversify WA](#)
  - [State Training Plan 2023-2024](#);
  - Priorities in the National Skills Agreement including:
    - supporting the implementation of Centres of Excellence;
    - gender equality;
    - Closing the Gap;
    - supporting the net zero transformation;
    - sustaining essential care services;
    - developing Australia's sovereign capability and food security;
    - ensuring Australia's digital and technology capability;
    - improving the quality of VET qualifications; and
    - housing supply.
  - [Joint Ministerial statement on vocational education and training in schools](#)
  - [State STEM skills strategy - Future jobs, future skills – Driving STEM skills in Western Australia](#);
  - specific local and regional skill needs; and
  - new technologies and skills needed for emerging industries like renewable energy and automation.
- The delivery of specific VET related election commitments including:
  - TAFE fee guarantee and the extension of the *Lower Fees, Local Skills* initiative;
  - additional VET places for school students; and
  - linking the training provided by the local TAFE with the job opportunities in each region.
- The delivery of specific State budget initiatives related to TAFE colleges, such as: the regional international education initiative, the regional nurses stipend; women in non-traditional trades and technical occupations scholarships; heavy vehicle driving program; and increased travel and accommodation allowance.
- Specific strategies and outcome measures to increase the access and workforce participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, youth, women, people with disability, CALD people and other diversity groups;
- An integrated, customer focussed Jobs and Skills Centre service positioned to respond to community and business needs, and to support State Government jobseeker initiatives; and
- Continuing the rebuild the international student market.

I expect that your college plans will outline how the college:

- works collaboratively with the Department of Training and Workforce Development, State Training Board, other TAFE colleges, industry stakeholders, students and the community;
- continues to evolve digital service delivery to provide greater access and flexibility to training;
- continues to improve efficiency and quality in training delivery;
- monitors data and engages industry to ensure early identification and response to business needs and performance issues;
- fosters integrity and conduct that is transparent, accountable, and efficient;
- ensures sound governance and sustainable financial management practices; and
- effectively manages risk.

## Appendix B

### Annual Business Plan

#### Section 1: General operations – Areas to be addressed

##### 1.1 Overview

A short overview of the region's needs and challenges, and the positioning of the college.

##### 1.2 State profile delivery

In this section, provide details of planned key projects/initiatives that will allow the college to achieve the delivery targets set in the Profile Matrix.

##### 1.3 Training in priority areas

An outline of the strategies, consistent with identified priorities that the college plans to implement to achieve benchmarks for training.

#### Section 2: Response to the Ministerial Statement of Expectations

In this section outline strategies, not already covered, that directly respond to the Ministerial Statement of Expectations.

#### Section 3: Commercial operations

**Colleges that have no existing commercial contracts or activities planned for carry over, and no domestic and overseas commercial operations proposed for the future year should provide a statement to this effect and move onto Sections 4, 5 and 6.**

Ministerial approval of the annual business plan gives the college the authority to enter into contracts that have been included in the business plan. This gives the college a degree of flexibility to meet the needs of clients in a timely manner during the business plan implementation year.

The *VET Act* identifies commercial activities such as joint ventures and business arrangements as opposed to contracts that must be approved by the Treasurer and Minister Assisting the Minister through a separate process.<sup>3</sup>

As outlined in the [TAFE colleges commercial activities guidelines](#) and [Ministerial guidelines for international commercial activities of TAFE colleges](#) the Governing Council must ensure that the college:

- includes proposed commercial activities in its annual business plan;
- where necessary, seeks legal and other advice when deciding to undertake commercial activities;
- when considering commercial activities implements risk management practices as set out in the Treasurer's Instruction 825: [Risk Management and Security](#); and
- ensures all commercial activities are in accordance with the current *VET (WA) Ministerial Corporation Instrument of Authorisation (Colleges)* and the *Minister's Instrument of Delegation (Colleges)*.

Should new commercial opportunities arise over the year, these can be separately notified.

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<sup>3</sup> VET Act Section 37(1)(f)

In this section colleges should provide an overall statement of intent with regard to existing and planned domestic and overseas commercial operations for the future year and complete Table 1 and/or Table 2 as appropriate.

### 3.1 New and existing domestic commercial contracts and other activities

For new and existing domestic commercial contracts and other activities that are planned to start or continue in the future year colleges should complete all of Table 1.

Any onshore commercial activity for offshore clients should also be included in the domestic commercial activity spreadsheet below.

**Table 1:** *New and existing domestic commercial contracts and other activities as below (use the electronic excel spread sheet and submit this in excel format with your annual Business Plan).*

Domestic Commercial Activity				Note the drop down box options within the spreadsheet.				Please complete this spreadsheet and return it in Excel format which your annual business plan								
Domestic Commercial Activity Project Name	Status	Overall Gross Value	Total Value of Contract	Term of Contract X to X	Number of Contracts	Delivery Location	Contract Type	Other Contract/ Activity (please describe and number contract)	Activity Type	2025 Revenue (est. \$)	2025 Cost (est. \$)	2025 Profit (est. \$)	Risk Level	Anticipated Outcome(s) overview (Max 150 words)	Separate Business Case	Business Case endorsed by Governing Council

### Instructions

Colleges are requested to:

- Complete all sections of Table 1 for new and existing commercial contracts.
- In relation to Table 1, single subscriber commercial activities can be consolidated under one amount.
- For approval purposes, some commercial activities or contracts may be grouped under a common heading, such as ‘Fee for service short courses’ or ‘auspicing’, where the risks are similar. The total number and value of these contracts still needs to be provided.
- Anything of a high risk and/or contentious nature should be drawn to the Minister Assisting the Minister’s attention.
- A business case for all new domestic commercial activity with a contract value above \$1 million must be submitted for the Minister Assisting the Minister’s approval. This is separate to the annual Business Plan but may be submitted at the same time.
- If firm costs of proposed commercial activities are not available, colleges will need to provide the basis for indicative costs, which may involve previous experience and/or market research.

A sample [commercial business case template](#) is available on the Department’s TAFE college governance [webpage](#).

### 3.2 New and existing overseas commercial contracts and other activities

New and existing overseas commercial contracts and other activities should be included in Table 2 on the attached domestic commercial activity spreadsheet.

**Table 2:** *New and existing overseas commercial contracts and other activities as below (use the electronic excel spread sheet and submit this in excel format with your annual Business Plan).*



International Commercial Activity      Note the drop down box options within the spreadsheet.      Please complete this spreadsheet and return it in Excel format which your annual business plan

International Commercial Activity Project Name	Status	Total Value of Contract	Term of Contract X to X	Location (list country/region)	International Type	Contract/Activity Type	2025 Revenue (est. \$)	2025 Cost (est. \$)	2025 Profit (est. \$)	Risk Level	Separate Business Case	Anticipated Outcome(s)/ brief overview (150 words or less)	Business Case endorsed by Governing Council	Project risk assessment has been undertaken	For Overseas activities, approval has been received from the Minister

## Instructions

Colleges are requested to:

- Complete all sections of Table 2 for new and existing overseas commercial contracts.
- In relation to Table 2, single subscriber commercial activities can be consolidated under one amount.
- Corporate clients can be consolidated up to \$250,000. However, colleges will need to divide corporate clients where the consolidated amounts are greater than \$250,000.
- All new offshore activities must have a business case approved by the Minister Assisting the Minister. Please use the template provided with the *Ministerial guidelines for international commercial activities of TAFE colleges*.
- New offshore commercial business cases can be submitted with the college annual business plan for approval but are considered separately from the annual business plan.

## Section 4: Key performance indicators

Any key performance indicators in the college strategic and annual business plan should be reported in its annual report (i.e. in addition to the Office of the Auditor General's audited efficiency and effectiveness indicators).

### 4.1 Sector wide key performance indicators

Colleges should include the sector wide key performance indicators below in their annual business plans and provide targets and strategies on how these outcomes-based measures required by the Auditor General's Office will be achieved.

Table 3: Sector wide key performance indicators

<b>Key performance indicator framework</b>
<b>Stakeholder satisfaction</b>
<p><b>Student overall satisfaction *</b></p> <p>An overall expression of how satisfied students are with various services provided by the college.</p>
<p><b>Graduate achievement rate *</b></p> <p>The extent to which college graduates have achieved their main reason for undertaking the training.</p>
<p><b>Graduate destination *</b></p> <p>The extent to which the college is providing relevant and quality training that improves student employability.</p>
<b>Training outcome</b>
<p><b>Achievement of profile delivery *</b></p> <p>The effectiveness of the college in meeting delivery and performance agreement targets.</p>
<b>Financial/efficiency indicator</b>
<p><b>Delivery cost per student curriculum hour *</b></p> <p>The efficiency with which a college manages its resources to enable the provision of vocational education and training programs.</p>

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\* Note: key performance indicators above are the Outcomes Based Management (OBM) measures required by the Auditor General's Office.

## Appendix C

### Declaration

The college **must** include the signed declaration page at the back of the **strategic plan** as a separate page. A template is provided below.

<Insert college name> is pleased to submit its 2025 - 2027 strategic plan or revised strategic plan <20## - 20##> for the Minister Assisting the Minister's approval.

\_\_\_\_\_  
<Insert name of Governing Council Chair>  
GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIR

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
<Insert name of Managing Director>  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

The strategic plan is:

- approved.
- not approved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
HON HANNAH BEAZLEY MLA  
**MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR TRAINING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix C

### Declaration

The college **must** include a signed declaration page at the back of the **annual business plan** as a separate page. A template is provided below.

<Insert college name> is pleased to submit its 2025 annual business plan for the Minister Assisting the Minister's approval.

\_\_\_\_\_  
<Insert name of Governing Council Chair>  
GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIR

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
<Insert name of Managing Director>  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

The 2025 annual business plan is:

- approved.
- not approved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
HON HANNAH BEAZLEY MLA

**MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR TRAINING AND WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date