

MINISTER FOR TRAINING

Ministerial guidelines relating to the provision of TAFE college strategic plans 2024 – 2026

These guidelines are issued by the Minister for Training 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 2024 - 2026*.

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 by colleges for approval by the Minister.

Dated this 16th day of May 2023.



HON SIMONE McGURK MLA
MINISTER FOR TRAINING

Introduction

The *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (VET Act) requires TAFE colleges to submit a draft strategic plan to the Minister for Training prior to 1 September of each year or prior to another date notified to the college by the Minister in writing (Section 43). Regulation 3A of the *Vocational Education and Training (Colleges) Regulations 1996* prescribes that a college's draft strategic plan must be for a period of three years.

Recent practice has been for the strategic plans to be re-cast in entirety, usually each three years, with interim modifications to the strategic plans in intervening periods. Latest versions of strategic plans are required by the Act to be submitted each year.

The VET Act also requires that college business plans are submitted annually (see separate Ministerial guidelines).

Purpose of guidelines for TAFE college strategic plans

These guidelines are provided to:

- refer Governing Councils to the legislative context relating to the development of strategic plans;
- convey the Government's key priorities through the Minister's 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 Section 43 includes statements that the strategic plan must:

- "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"; and
- "be consistent with the State Training Plan"¹.

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.²

Content and format of the Strategic Plan

The strategic plan should:

- incorporate relevant priorities identified in the Minister's Statement of Expectations on page three of these Guidelines; and
- be sufficiently broad to provide an overarching framework for the draft annual business plan.

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

- Operating environment analysis.
- The organisation's vision, mission and values.
- Strategic priorities and key actions required for their achievement.

¹ Vocational Education and Training Act 1996 Section 43(2)(a) and 43(3)

² Ibid Section 43(4)

Responsibilities of TAFE colleges

Strategic plans and annual business plans are also mechanisms to provide assurance to councils and the Minister 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 and Security](#).

Strategic and business plan processes and content should incorporate provision for assuring appropriate governance systems.

A college must perform its functions in accordance with its strategic and annual business plan as per section 37(2) of the VET Act.

Process

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.

Responsibilities of the Department of Training and Workforce Development

Following the Minister's endorsement of strategic and annual business plans, the Department of Training and Workforce Development will work with colleges to allocate resources to support business plans having regard to parameters set by the Minister and annual budgets.

Submission of draft strategic plans

Colleges are required to submit their draft strategic plans to the Minister in PDF format no later than **1 November 2023**³.

The strategic plan should be accompanied by a covering letter to the Minister. 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 plan.

The strategic plan and the covering letter should be endorsed by the Governing Council and signed by both the Governing Council Chair and the college Managing Director. A template for the Strategic plan declaration is included on page four.

The Strategic Plan should be made available to the public through college websites following the Minister's approval.

³ Vocational Education and Training Act 1996 Section 43(1)

Minister's 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 Western Australians have the skills to support business growth, the diversification of the Western Australian economy and the participation of all members of the community in the workforce.

I expect your college plans and operations should support:

- a training delivery profile that is aligned with:
 - the State Training Plan;
 - WA Government priority sectors for economic diversification;
 - the State STEM strategy;
 - specific local and regional skill needs;
 - new technologies and skills need of emerging industries like renewable energy.
- the delivery of specific VET related election commitments:
 - TAFE fee guarantee and the extension of the *Lower Fees, Local Skills* initiative;
 - additional VET places for school students;
 - Year 9 Career Taster Program;
 - industry placements for TAFE lecturers;
 - new equipment for TAFE colleges;
 - linking the training provided by the local TAFE with the job opportunities in each region;
 - developing strategies to increase delivery in new automation qualifications; and
 - develop relevant courses to support iron ore railcar manufacturing in WA (when established).
- the delivery of specific State budget initiatives related to TAFE colleges, such as: 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, women, people with disabilities, 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;
- the rebuilding of the international student market post the COVID-19 pandemic;
- how the college:
 - works collaboratively with the Department of Training and Workforce Development, State Training Board, other TAFE colleges and industry stakeholders;
 - 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 conduct that is transparent, accountable, and efficient; and
 - effectively manages risk.

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 <year - year> strategic plan for the Minister's approval.

<Insert name of Governing Council Chair>
GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIR

Date

<Insert name of Managing Director>
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Date

The <year – year> strategic plan for <Insert college name> is:

☐ approved.

☐ not approved.

HON SIMONE McGURK MLA
MINISTER FOR TRAINING

Date