

MINISTERIAL GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF TAFE COLLEGE STRATEGIC AND ANNUAL BUSINESS PLANS Commencing 1 January 2026

Introduction

Under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (VET Act), TAFE colleges must submit a draft Strategic Plan and a draft Annual Business Plan to the Minister for Skills and TAFE for approval¹.

The draft Strategic Plan and draft Annual Business Plan must be prepared in accordance with the Minister's Statement of Expectations.

The Minister has advised that colleges must develop a revised draft Strategic Plan and 2026 Annual Business Plan, submitted to the Department of Training and Workforce Development (Department) by **1 October 2025**.

Each college must perform its functions in accordance with its approved Strategic² and Annual Business Plan³. These Ministerial Guidelines are provided to ensure consistency and completeness in the development of these plans across the TAFE sector.

Content and Format of the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan must be developed every three years, with interim updates or amendments provided in the intervening years⁴ and should:

- incorporate priorities outlined in the Minister's Statement of Expectations for TAFE colleges; 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 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 Annual 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 in **Appendix A**.

Responsibilities of TAFE colleges

TAFE colleges must provide assurance in their Strategic Plan and Annual Business Plan that:

1. The college can manage its future operations in an open, transparent and accountable manner.

¹ Refer to Section 43 and 44 of the VET Act

² Issued under Section 13 of the VET Act

³ Refer to Section 37 (2) of the VET Act

⁴ Colleges will be advised in the letter provided with these guidelines if a new Strategic Plan is required.

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 [Risk Management and Internal Control](#).
4. Existing and planned operations will contribute to the skills and economic development of Western Australia.
5. Western Australians will receive value for money from the State's commitment to vocational education and training.
6. Strategic and Annual Business Plans have been prepared in accordance with the Minister's Statement of Expectations.
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 are 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

The Department assists the Minister in administration of the VET Act and subsidiary regulations. This role includes coordinating the strategic management of government investment in the State VET system which encompasses the planning, purchasing and monitoring of VET services.

In relation to the draft TAFE colleges' strategic and annual business plans, the Department has responsibility for:

- reviewing the draft strategic and annual business planning guidelines on behalf of the Minister; and
- receiving and forwarding the draft plans to the Minister with any feedback based on the Department's analysis for the Minister's consideration as part of the approval process before the end of October 2025.

Following the Minister's approval of a college's Strategic Plan and Annual Business Plan, the Department 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 Plan and Annual Business Plan

Colleges are required to submit their draft strategic and business plan to the Department in PDF format by email to trainingprovidergovernance@dtwd.wa.gov.au no later than **1 October 2025**. 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 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 should reflect 2026 – 2028.

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

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

Amendments to Approved Annual Business Plans

The college can change its annual business plan with the approval of the Minister.⁵

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)*.

⁵ VET Act Section 44A.(5)

Appendix A

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 with 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 the Minister through a separate process.⁶

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 4: [Risk Management and Internal Control](#); 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.

⁶ 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	2026 Revenue (est. \$)	2026 Cost (est. \$)	2026 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's attention.
- A business case for all new domestic commercial activity with a contract value above \$1 million must be submitted for 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	2026 Revenue (est. \$)	2026 Cost (est. \$)	2026 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. 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 included in Table 3 (over the page) 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*

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

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

Appendix B

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 2026- 2028 Strategic Plan or revised Strategic Plan <20## - 20##> for the Minister for Skills and TAFE'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 AMBER-JADE SANDERSON MLA
MINISTER FOR SKILLS AND TAFE

Date

Appendix B

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 2026 annual business plan to the Minister for Skills and TAFE.

<Insert name of Governing Council Chair>
GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIR

Date

<Insert name of Managing Director>
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Date

The 2026 Annual Business Plan is:

☐ approved.

☐ not approved.

HON AMBER-JADE SANDERSON MLA
MINISTER FOR SKILLS AND TAFE

Date