

Policy Framework

Approved by: R/Chief Operating Officer

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Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, TAFE NSW acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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Section 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy establishes the framework for the development, approval, implementation and review of TAFE NSW policies and procedures. It provides a framework aimed at ensuring that policies and procedures are consistent, accessible and compliant with applicable obligations, and supports clear, accountable and effective decision-making across TAFE NSW.

Section 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff, branches, faculties, groups and committees involved in the development, approval, implementation, maintenance or communication of TAFE NSW policies and procedures. It applies across all TAFE NSW operations and locations.
- 2.2 This policy applies only to TAFE NSW policies, procedures, and other documents published on the Policy and Procedure Hub by exception. It does not apply to supporting materials or other operational documents unless explicitly stated.

Section 3. Policy statements

Risk appetite

- 3.1 TAFE NSW has a cautious risk appetite in relation to governance and compliance. Policies and procedures must be established, maintained and complied with to manage risk and meet compliance obligations. They must be clearly written, accurate and accessible to support consistent application across the organisation.

Understanding and accessibility

- 3.2 Policies and procedures provide clear principles and requirements to support consistent decision-making, practice and participation across TAFE NSW.
- 3.3 Policies and procedures must be written in plain English and use inclusive, accessible language to ensure they are clear, consistent and easy to understand.
- 3.4 TAFE NSW must take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are accessible to all users. This may include providing information in alternative formats and through appropriate support services where required.

Governance and reporting

- 3.5 All policies and procedures must have an Accountable Officer and at least one Responsible Officer appointed by the Accountable Officer. In exceptional circumstances, and with endorsement from the Executive Director, GLR, the Accountable Officer may appoint more than one Responsible Officer.

- 3.6 Accountable Officers approve new policies and procedures, amendments, and rescindments, subject to the following:
- approval requirements set out in applicable Delegations of Authority
 - any policies, procedures, directives or legislation requiring Ministerial or Managing Director approval (including where specific policies or procedures are identified by the Managing Director for approval) and where approval authority is established under the Technical and Further Education Commission Act 1990 or specified in the Delegations.
 - Any policies or procedures which are identified by the Managing Director as requiring endorsement by the Executive Leadership Team prior to approval.
 - referral of policies and procedures to other TAFE NSW committees identified by the Accountable Officer as requiring endorsement prior to approval. Committee endorsement does not replace or override the formal delegations or accountabilities of the Accountable Officer.
- 3.7 Responsible Officers support the Accountable Officer to:
- develop, review, implement, and monitor policies and procedures
 - manage subject matter expert input and feedback
 - continuously improve policies and procedures based on that feedback.
- 3.8 Approval requirements for policies and procedures are determined based on the nature and impact of the proposed change. Clauses 3.16–3.22 set out the conditions that must be satisfied before an Accountable Officer may approve a policy or procedure.
- 3.9 Where an immediate amendment to a policy or procedure is required to meet a compliance obligation, the Accountable Officer may approve the amendment in consultation with the Executive Director, GLR. Where referral to a committee is required under clause 3.6(c), the approved amendment must be submitted to the relevant committee for noting at its next meeting.
- 3.10 Accountable Officers may delegate activities under this Framework, except final approvals. Approval of minor amendments may be delegated to the Responsible Officer, unless:
- more than one Responsible Officer is appointed, in which case approval must be provided by the Accountable Officer, or
 - clause 3.6 applies.
- 3.11 The Accountable Officer remains accountable for all delegated activities.
- 3.12 GLR may undertake periodic reviews of compliance with this Policy Framework and the effectiveness of policy development, review and amendment processes, including through risk-based assessments. Outcomes of these reviews may inform reporting to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and relevant committees.
- 3.13 GLR will provide a quarterly report to the ELT, and to other committees as required, on the operation of the Policy Framework, including the number and status of policies and procedures within the TAFE NSW policy suite.

Policy Working Group

- 3.14 The Policy Working Group, chaired by the Executive Director GLR, and comprising Group Integration Managers and/or other nominated representatives from each group and the Course Development and Quality Branch, meets at least quarterly.
- 3.15 The role of the Policy Working Group is to:
- a. review Policy Framework templates and supporting materials
 - b. provide recommendations to Accountable Officers on matters relating to policy and procedure consultation, consistency, quality, language and accessibility
 - c. provide a forum for cross-organisational representation to assist in identifying and mitigating risks arising from inconsistency across organisational policies, procedures and policy management practices
 - d. identify impacts on related policies and procedures arising from the introduction or amendment of policies and procedures and recommend any consequential changes.

Approval requirements

New policies, significant amendments and rescinding of policies and procedures

- 3.16 New policies and procedures, significant amendments, and the rescinding of policies and procedures must be approved by the Accountable Officer and include any additional endorsements or approvals as required, in accordance with clause 3.6.
- 3.17 The following must be obtained, where applicable, before approval by the Accountable Officer:
- a. endorsement from the Legal Unit, where legal review is required, as determined by the Director of Legal or the Executive Director, GLR.
 - b. Ministerial approval, as determined by the Accountable Officer, and requested through the Executive and Ministerial Liaison (EML). The EML is responsible for coordinating Ministerial approvals.
- 3.18 The relevant policy consultation must be carried out in accordance with clauses 3.34-3.46 before approval by the Accountable Officer.
- 3.19 Significant amendments include changes that materially change the meaning, intent or application of a policy or procedure. This includes amendments that may introduce substantial changes to current practice, create or remove obligations, or significantly alter roles, responsibilities, or governance arrangements.

Minor amendments

- 3.20 As per clause 3.10, the Accountable Officer may delegate approval of minor amendments to the Responsible Officer, except where approvals under clause 3.6 are required.
- 3.21 Minor amendments are those that do not materially change the overall intent or principles of a policy or procedure but may clarify, improve, or moderately adjust how it is applied. This includes amendments that refine processes, update requirements, or make limited changes to roles or responsibilities without substantially altering their scope of responsibility.

- 3.22 Minor amendments must not introduce new obligations or materially alter compliance requirements.

Formal reviews and other amendments (including rescindments)

Formal review

- 3.23 Accountable Officers are to ensure policies and procedures are formally reviewed at least every 3 years or earlier if:
- review is required to meet compliance obligations
 - a change to operational, legislative, contractual, regulatory or other compliance requirements that requires significant amendment to the policy or procedure, such that a formal review should be undertaken.
- 3.24 Accountable Officers are responsible for monitoring relevant compliance obligations in accordance with the Compliance Procedure and initiating a review where changes may affect the policy or procedure.
- 3.25 The expiry of a review date does not, of itself, invalidate a policy document or render its provisions ineffective. A policy document remains in force until it is formally amended, replaced or rescinded.
- 3.26 A formal policy review is a structured, documented assessment conducted under this Framework to confirm that a policy or procedure remains current, effective, compliant, and fit for purpose. A formal policy review includes consideration of relevant legislation, regulatory and funding requirements, organisational strategy, risk, operational practice and stakeholder feedback. It may result in the policy or procedure being confirmed without change, amended, consolidated or rescinded.
- 3.27 A review of a policy or procedure is only considered a formal policy review for the purposes of this Policy Framework if all relevant matters set out clause 3.26 have been considered and documented. If one or more of these matters has not been considered, the review does not constitute a formal policy review.
- 3.28 Where a formal review is underway and an amendment is required to maintain currency or compliance, the policy or procedure may be amended in accordance with this Framework before completion of the formal review.

Other amendments and rescindments

- 3.29 Policies and procedures must be amended outside a scheduled formal review where a trigger for change arises, including when:
- there is a change in responsibilities under the policy or procedure, including changes to Accountable or Responsible Officers
 - there is a significant change to policy or procedure templates
 - this is a change to operational, legislative, contractual, regulatory or other compliance requirements that requires amendment, but does not warrant a full formal review
 - enhancements are appropriate in response to feedback, complaints, audits, correspondence from regulators or other reporting received in respect of the policy or procedure.

- 3.30 Policies or procedures that are no longer required must be rescinded outside of a formal review where this is identified and requires authorisation by the Accountable Officer.
- 3.31 Administrative amendments may be identified by the Policy Governance Team or requested through a member of the Policy Working Group. Administrative amendments are limited to those defined in this Policy and must not change the meaning or application of the policy or procedure. Where there is uncertainty as to whether a proposed change meets these criteria, the Policy Governance Team will determine the appropriate amendment classification.
- 3.32 Administrative amendments are to be assessed and approved by the Policy Governance Team. The Policy Governance Team may determine that Responsible Officer approval is required prior to the amendment being made. Following approval, the Policy Governance Team will process and record the amendment.

Policy consultation

- 3.33 Consultation requirements under clauses 3.34–3.46 apply when developing a new policy or procedure, conducting a formal review, rescinding a policy or procedure, or making a significant or minor amendment. For significant and minor amendments, consultation is only required with stakeholders impacted by the proposed changes.
- 3.34 Before commencing, or committing to, the development of a new policy or procedure, or the consolidation of existing policies or procedures, the Accountable Officer must consult with the Policy Governance Team to ensure the proposed approach is informed by existing policy and procedure coverage, whether a new or consolidated document is warranted, and alignment with the strategic development of the TAFE NSW policy suite.
- 3.35 When developing or amending a policy or procedure, Accountable Officers must consult with relevant internal and external stakeholders, including groups or branches affected by or responsible for the subject matter, based on the policy's nature and impact.
- 3.36 Where a policy or procedure may have a material impact on the workforce, the Accountable Officer must consult with the Office of the Chief of People Group to ensure consultation obligations, including those under applicable enterprise agreements, are met.
- 3.37 Where a policy or procedure may have a material financial impact, the Accountable Officer must consult with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer.
- 3.38 Where a policy or procedure may have a material impact on data, information or digital technology (that is, any change that affects how data is handled, systems are used, or technology is introduced, modified or relied upon in a meaningful way), the Accountable Officer must consult with the Office of the Chief Information Officer.
- 3.39 Where a policy or procedure introduces or materially changes record keeping requirements, retention periods, or systems used to create, capture or manage records, the Accountable Officer must consult with the Records Management Team in GLR.
- 3.40 Policies and procedures relating to students must include consultation with the:
 - a. Course Development and Quality Branch

- b. Learning and Teaching Group
- c. Student Support and Community Group.

- 3.41 The Accountable Officer must ensure the consultation approach is appropriate to the nature, complexity and impact of the policy or procedure and reflects a diversity of perspectives where relevant.
- 3.42 Consultation may be undertaken using a range of methods, including workshops, working groups, targeted review, or circulation for feedback.
- 3.43 The Accountable Officer must:
- a. consider consultation feedback and incorporate changes where appropriate
 - b. communicate outcomes to key stakeholders where relevant
 - c. document consultation activities, feedback, endorsements, and decisions, and retain appropriate records.
- 3.44 The Accountable Officer is responsible for receiving and considering feedback on policies and procedures outside formal review cycles and acting on that feedback where appropriate.

Legal review

- 3.45 Accountable Officers must seek legal advice from GLR if the review, amendment (other than minor amendment) or rescindment of a policy or procedure involves:
- a. policies or procedures identified as requiring endorsement by the Director, Legal or the Executive Director, GLR and General Counsel, as per clause 3.17(a).
 - b. the interpretation and application of principles of administrative law including procedural fairness, and decision-making authority
 - c. a significant legal or compliance matter
 - d. application of the Government Information Public Access Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPA Act) to the publication of the policy or procedure (see further below).
- 3.46 In addition to clause 3.45, and after conducting their own assessment in accordance with the Compliance Procedures, Accountable Officers may also seek legal advice from GLR if the policy or procedure involves:
- a. the interpretation and application of laws, regulations, legal rules or legal instruments
 - b. the interpretation and application of delegations
 - c. intellectual property considerations
 - d. data governance and privacy considerations.

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and other compliance obligations

- 3.47 The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPA Act)* requires that all TAFE NSW's policy documents that are related to TAFE NSW functions, and which affect or are likely to affect members of the public, are made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.
- 3.48 In addition to the GIPA Act, there may also be other compliance obligations which require policies and procedures be made available publicly, including to students or other persons.

- 3.49 Consultation with the Policy Governance Team and the Course Development and Quality Branch is required for policies or procedures to be published or otherwise made available to students, to determine the applicability of the GIPA Act and other compliance obligations.

Policy compliance

- 3.50 TAFE NSW is subject to a range of compliance obligations that must be considered in the development and implementation of policies and procedures. Compliance with approved policies and procedures is mandatory for staff, students and other stakeholders within their scope.
- 3.51 Policy compliance is supported through:
- a. this Policy Framework and its supporting materials developed and maintained by GLR
 - b. assigned Accountable Officers and Responsible Officers
 - c. training and communication of new and updated policies
 - d. formal reviews and risk-based checks to assess the currency and relevance of a policy or procedure
 - e. monitoring of policy and procedure breaches and corrective actions identified by Accountable Officers, and monitoring through group risk reporting
 - f. Accountable Officers monitoring compliance responsibilities in accordance with the TAFE NSW Compliance Procedure and updating policies and procedures in response to relevant changes to compliance obligations
 - g. Accountable Officers must consider compliance with the Policy Framework annually as part of the annual TAFE NSW Compliance Policy attestation process
 - h. the Risk and Audit team of GLR where policies require risk-based assessments
 - i. legal reviews of identified policies and procedures through GLR
 - j. the consideration and, where appropriate, actioning of feedback received from stakeholders in relation to policies and procedures.
- 3.52 Where supporting materials are developed to support the implementation of policies and procedures, these are to be clearly identified as separate reference materials that do not form part of the policy and procedure.
- 3.53 It is the responsibility of the Accountable Officer to ensure that supporting materials:
- a. do not contain material inconsistent with approved policies and procedures
 - b. are not framed as policy or procedure documents
 - c. reference the relevant approved policies and procedures
 - d. are removed from publication when they are no longer required.
- 3.54 The Policy & Procedure Hub will clearly identify what comprises the policy library, including what is a policy, a procedure and supporting material.

Policy Framework supporting materials

- 3.55 The following supporting materials are available and maintained by GLR to support the development, review and publication of policies and procedures, and must be used by Accountable Officers to ensure quality and consistency across TAFE NSW:

- a. Service Now – Policy & Procedure Hub Publication Request
 - b. Policy Template
 - c. Procedure Template
 - d. Policy Writing and Template Guide
 - e. Formal Policy Review Guide.
- 3.56 Minor modifications to the policy or procedure templates may be made by Accountable Officers in consultation with the Policy Governance Team where required for a specific policy or procedure, provided the changes are consistent with the overall template design, functionality and branding.
- 3.57 Publication to the Policy & Procedure Hub may only occur through the Policy Governance Team following confirmation from the approving Accountable or Responsible Officer that the requirements of this Framework have been met. Policies or procedures submitted to the Policy Governance Team for publication that do not meet the requirements set out in the Policy Framework or its supporting materials will be returned to the Accountable Officer for correction prior to publication.

Record keeping requirements

- 3.58 Approved policies and procedures, relevant supporting materials and approval records submitted with the publication or rescindment must be stored in Content Manager. The Policy Governance Team is responsible for ensuring this occurs upon publication.
- 3.59 Records must be retained after removal from publication, in accordance with the State Records Policy and the *State Records Act 1998 (NSW)*.

Section 4. Responsibilities

Position, Branch or Team	Responsibilities
Accountable Officer	• Approve new policies and procedures, significant amendments, minor amendments and rescindments, in accordance with this Framework and applicable approval requirements • Consult with Policy Governance Team in GLR prior to commencing development or consolidation of policies or procedures • Ensure appropriate consultation, legal review and approvals are undertaken • Ensure policies and procedures are implemented, monitored and formally reviewed as required • Ensure records of approvals, reviews and consultation are retained.

Position, Branch or Team	Responsibilities
Responsible Officer	Support the Accountable Officer to: • Oversee the development, amendment, implementation and review of assigned policies and procedures • Coordinate drafting and consultation to required standards, ensuring documents remain accurate, current, compliant and fit for purpose • Maintain oversight of assigned policies and procedures to ensure they remain operationally effective and aligned with organisational and compliance requirements • Support implementation of new and revised policies and procedures • Approve minor amendments where delegated by the Accountable Officer
Governance, Legal and Risk Branch (GLR)	• Maintain the Policy Framework, templates and supporting materials • Provide advice on governance, legal review, compliance and publication requirements • Publish approved policies and procedures and manage record keeping in Content Manager • Provide reporting on the Policy Framework and policy suite.
Policy Working Group	• Review and provide recommendations on policy and procedure templates and supporting materials • Provide advice on consistency, quality, language and accessibility across the policy suite • Support identification and mitigation of risks arising from policy inconsistency • Identify impacts on related policies and procedures arising from the introduction or amendment of policies and procedures and recommend any consequential changes
Staff and stakeholders within scope	• Comply with approved policies and procedures relevant to their role • Participate in consultation and provide feedback where appropriate.

Section 5. Governance information

Governance	Details
Legislation, regulations, and standards	This policy is governed by applicable legislation including regulations as well as relevant standards, and includes without limitation: - all applicable VET standards regulated through ASQA under the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth) - Regulatory obligations under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cth) Government Information Public Access Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPA Act) State Records Act 1998 (NSW)
Related policies	This policy is to be read together with the: TAFE NSW Compliance Procedure Delegations Manual (Financial expenditure, Procurement and Administration) Delegations Manual (Human Resources, Land and Premises, Education other Financial and GIPA) Enterprise Risk Management Policy
Accountable Officer	Chief Operating Officer
Content Manager number	PROJ25/338
Responsible Officer	Executive Director, Governance Legal and Risk and General Counsel
Next review date	17 September 2029

Section 6. Definitions

Word	Definition
Accountable Officer	The member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) responsible for the area that is the primary subject of the Policy or Procedure and identified as such in the policy or procedure.

Word	Definition
Administrative requirements	A direction made pursuant to a statutory body or whole of government policies which may take the form of a memorandum issued by the Premier to all Ministers to communicate whole of Government administrative policies. Departmental Circulars may also contain whole of Government policy announcements, relating mainly to the management and administration of the NSW Public Sector. Refer https://arp.nsw.gov.au/ .
Administrative amendment	An amendment that does not change the meaning or application of a policy or procedure and includes: • correction of typographical or grammatical errors • formatting changes • correction of broken links • updates to related document references Administrative amendments are approved and processed by the Policy Governance Team and do not require Accountable Officer approval.
Compliance obligations	All applicable legislation, regulations or standards or Administrative Requirements.
Groups	Student Support and Community Group, Learning and Teaching Group, People Group, Corporate Services Group, Digital Solutions Group and for the purposes of this Policy, the Course Development and Quality Branch and the Office of the Managing Director.
Minor amendment	An amendment that does not materially change the overall intent or principles of a policy or procedure but may clarify, improve, or moderately adjust how it is applied. This includes amendments that refine processes, update requirements, or make limited changes to roles or responsibilities without substantially altering their scope. Minor amendments must not introduce new obligations or materially alter compliance requirements.
Policy or policies	A policy is a formal statement of principles and rules which indicates how TAFE NSW will act in a particular area of its operations. Policies provides staff with the approved ways of working in relation to a particular matter. Policies may apply to staff, students, contractors or third parties as outlined in the policy scope. A policy does not usually include specific practice management guidance, instructions or procedural elements, but may do so to address compliance obligations or other practical considerations.
Policy & Procedure Hub	The intranet page that houses approved TAFE NSW policies and procedures, provides access to the publication process for policies and procedures, and hosts the supporting materials for this Policy Framework. Publication of policies and procedures and maintenance of the Hub are managed by the Governance, Legal and Risk Branch (GLR).

Word	Definition
Procedure	Procedures are documents which prescribe the steps that must be taken to implement a particular policy and/or compliance obligations.
Responsible Officer	The senior leader nominated by the Accountable Officer to oversee the development, implementation and review of a policy or procedure.
Significant amendment	An amendment that materially changes the meaning, intent or application of a policy or procedure. This includes amendments that may introduce substantial changes to current practice, create or remove obligations, or significantly alter roles, responsibilities, or governance arrangements.
Supporting materials	Tools designed to assist with supporting policy or procedure implementation such as 'How Do I' guides, handbooks, guidelines, fact sheets, templates, forms, checklists, process maps, and internal and public webpages.

Section 7. Document history

No.	Effective	Approved by	Amendment
1	30 June 2025	Chief Operating Officer	Replacement for the Ways of Working Policy (PRG21/141) and Ways of Working Procedure (PROJ21/2041) given changes to roles and responsibilities across the Policy Process.
2	27 August 2025	Executive Leadership Team	Allowance of minor, non-material changes to be made to Policies and Procedures to be made by the Responsible Officer. Clarification of requirements for Legal review.
3	17 September 2026	R/Chief Operating Officer	Revisions to align the structure of the document with the current TAFE NSW policy writing and template requirements and further clarification on policy reviews, consultation and publication requirements.