

# P1 POLICY FRAMEWORK POLICY

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## 1. PURPOSE

This policy sets a broad framework for the development, approval, communication, review, and implementation of *BBI The Australian Institute of Theological Education* (the Institute) policies and procedures to:

- enunciate the principles of the policy framework adopted by the Institute, including:
  - consistency in the development of policies and procedures
  - ongoing assessment of policies and procedures to ensure that they meet their objectives
  - compliance with all Federal and State laws and regulations
  - adaptability to the changing institutional and regulatory environment, and
  - the implementation of policies and procedures to ensure that users understand, adhere to, and demonstrate the the application of Institute policy and procedure.
- ensure that the Institute meets the requirements of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) (2021) (HESF) Domain 6: Governance and Accountability*. In particular:
  - 6.1 *Corporate Governance*
    1. *There is a formally constituted governing body, which includes independent members, that exercises competent governance oversight of and is accountable for all of the higher education provider's operations in or from Australia, including accountability for the award of higher education qualifications, for continuing to meet the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework and for the provider's representation of itself.*
    2. *Members of the governing body:*
      - a. *are fit and proper persons, and*
      - b. *meet the Australian residency requirements, if any, of the instrument under which the provider is established or incorporated, or otherwise there are at least two members of the governing body who are ordinarily resident in Australia.*
    3. *The governing body attends to governance functions and processes diligently and effectively, including:*
      - a. *obtaining and using such information and advice, including independent advice and academic advice, as is necessary for informed and competent decision making and direction setting*
      - b. *defining roles and delegating authority as is necessary for effective governance, policy development and management; and monitoring the implementation of those delegations*
      - c. *confirming that the provision of higher education and research training and the conduct of research, whether by the provider or*

*through an arrangement with another party, are governed by the registered provider's institutional policies, and the operations of the provider and any associated party(ies) are consistent with those policies*

- d. undertaking periodic (at least every seven years) independent reviews of the effectiveness of the governing body and academic governance processes and ensuring that the findings of such reviews are considered by a competent body or officer(s) and that agreed actions are implemented, and*
  - e. maintaining a true record of the business of the governing body.*
- 4. The governing body takes steps to develop and maintain an institutional environment in which freedom of intellectual inquiry is upheld and protected, students and staff are treated equitably, the wellbeing of students and staff is fostered, informed decision making by students is supported and students have opportunities to participate in the deliberative and decision making processes of the higher education provider.*

## **6.2 Corporate Monitoring and Accountability**

- 1. The provider is able to demonstrate, and the corporate governing body assures itself, that the provider is operating effectively and sustainably, including:*
  - a. the governing body and the entity comply with the requirements of the legislation under which the provider is established, recognised or incorporated, any other legislative requirements and the entity's constitution or equivalent*
  - b. the provider's future directions in higher education have been determined, realistic performance targets have been established, progress against targets is monitored and action is taken to correct underperformance*
  - c. the provider is financially viable and applies, and has the capacity to continue to apply, sufficient financial and other resources to maintain the viability of the entity and its business model, to meet and continue to meet the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework, to achieve the provider's higher education objectives and performance targets and to sustain the quality of higher education that is offered*
  - d. the financial position, financial performance and cash flows of the entity are monitored regularly and understood, financial reporting is materially accurate, financial management meets Australian accounting standards, effective financial safeguards and controls are operating and financial statements are audited independently by a qualified auditor against Australian accounting and auditing standards*
  - e. risks to higher education operations have been identified and material risks are being managed and mitigated effectively*
  - f. mechanisms for competent academic governance and leadership of higher education provision and other academic activities have been implemented and these are operating according to an institutional academic governance policy*

- framework and are effective in maintaining the quality of higher education offered*
- g. educational policies and practices support participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures*
  - h. qualifications are awarded legitimately*
  - i. there are credible business continuity plans and adequately resourced financial and tuition safeguards to mitigate disadvantage to students who are unable to progress in a course of study due to unexpected changes to the higher education provider's operations, including if the provider is unable to provide a course of study, ceases to operate as a provider, loses professional accreditation for a course of study or is otherwise not able to offer a course of study*
  - j. the occurrence and nature of formal complaints, allegations of misconduct, breaches of academic or research integrity and critical incidents are monitored and action is taken to address underlying causes, and*
  - k. lapses in compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework are identified and monitored, and prompt corrective action is taken.*

### **6.3 Academic Governance**

- 1. Processes and structures are established and responsibilities assigned that collectively:*
  - a. achieve effective academic oversight of the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training*
  - b. set and monitor institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes*
  - c. establish and maintain academic leadership at an institutional level, consistent with the types and levels of higher education offered, and*
  - d. provide competent advice to the corporate governing body and management on academic matters, including advice on academic outcomes, policies and practices.*
- 2. Academic oversight assures the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training effectively, including by:*
  - a. developing, monitoring and reviewing academic policies and their effectiveness*
  - b. confirming that delegations of academic authority are implemented*
  - c. critically scrutinising, approving and, if authority to self-accredit is held, accrediting or advising on approving and accrediting, courses of study and their associated qualifications*
  - d. maintaining oversight of academic and research integrity, including monitoring of potential risks*
  - e. monitoring and initiating action to improve performance against institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes*
  - f. critically evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational innovations or proposals for innovations*

- g. evaluating the effectiveness of institutional monitoring, review and improvement of academic activities, and*
  - h. monitoring and reporting to the corporate governing body on the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training.*
3. *Students have opportunities to participate in academic governance.*<sup>1</sup>

## **2 POLICY FRAMEWORK STRUCTURE**

The Institute is governed by its Board of Directors. The Institute's policy framework and its policies and procedures provide an account of statutory requirements and the national standards required of the Institute.

There are three types of policy and procedure of the Institute:

*a. Academic policy and procedure*

These policies and procedures relate to the core academic work of the Institute. The Institute Board delegates the development, review and approval of all academic policy and procedure to its Academic Board; however, it retains oversight of all academic policy.

Academic policies and procedures apply to all staff and, where appropriate, students of the Institute. For example, academic policies and procedures relate to teaching and learning, research, courses and course approvals, admissions, English language proficiency, credit, enrolment, academic integrity, student and staff conduct, academic staff accreditation, membership and terms of reference of academic committees of the Institute, complaints, assessment, anti-discrimination and graduation, among others.

The Institute publishes all academic policies and procedures on its [website](#).

*b. Operational policy and procedure*

These policies and procedures relate to the administrative and operational work of the Institute. For example, staffing, finance, property, audit and risk, and critical incidents.

*c. Governance policy and procedure*

Governance policies and procedures support the Institute's governance and, unless otherwise delegated, are approved by the Institute's Board. For example, they may relate to delegations and authorities, investment, risk, fiduciary responsibility, and compliance with statutory and common law requirements.

## **3 SCOPE**

This policy and procedure apply to:

- a. all Institute staff involved in the development, review, approval, transmission, and application of the Institute's policies and procedures*
- b. all policies, procedures and guidelines developed on behalf of the Institute*
- c. all members of the Institute's governing bodies, and*
- d. all members of the Institute's community, including students, full-time/fractional and sessional academic staff, volunteers, and appointed and elected committee members.*

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<sup>1</sup> TEQSA. Higher Education Standards Framework (2021), online at:

[https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2021L00488/Html/Text#\\_Toc67664722](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2021L00488/Html/Text#_Toc67664722). Accessed 29 July 2021.

## 4 POLICY

- a. *Application*: According to established principles and procedures set out in this policy, the Institute applies policy and procedure fairly and consistently.
- b. *Principles* are the standards supporting the decision-making processes of the Institute.
- c. *Procedures* relate to the practical application of policy, delineating the processes to implement policy or assist with compliance with government legislation. Procedures may be explicitly associated with a specific activity or procedure or general in nature.
- d. *Attributes*: Institute policy comprises both policy and procedures and has the following attributes:
  - it supports the strategic objectives and plans of the Institute;
  - it is consultative in development, implementation, and evaluation;
  - it is clear and concise and adequately resourced in its delivery;
  - it ensures efficient and straightforward operation of the Institute;
  - it reduces risk;
  - it complies with all external standards and relevant legislation;
  - it incorporates regular review and improvement;
  - it meets all legal and regulatory requirements; and
  - it is for the enduring benefit of the Institute, its staff, students, and community.
- e. *Restrictions*: Policy documentation is limited to the content of the policy developed and any procedure related to the implementation of the policy.
- f. *Consultation*: The Institute should consult relevant stakeholders in the development, revision, amendment, or withdrawal of any policy.
- g. *Authorities*: *D1 Delegations and Authorities Policy* and the accompanying *Schedule 1 Policy Delegations*, *Schedule 2 Academic and Course Delegations*, and *Schedule 3 Operational Delegations* contain the relevant authorities for the specific area of the Institute's operations.
- h. *Policy and procedure custodians*

The policy and procedure custodians are:

- *Academic policy and procedure*: Presiding Officer of Academic Board.
- *Operational policy and procedure*: Principal/CEO.
- *Governance policy and procedure*: Chair of the Institute Board of Directors

## 5 PROCEDURE

### 5.1 Policy review

- a. The Institute reviews policies and procedures at least once every three (3) years.
- b. If the Institute identifies a need for an amendment between review cycles, policy and procedure modifications may occur under the authorities designated in *Schedule 1 Policy Delegations*.
- c. A policy and procedure in review or amendment will not lapse until the revised or amended policy is approved.

5.2 *Rescinding of policy and procedure*: Rescinding of policy and procedure is approved by the relevant authority listed in *Schedule 1 Policy Delegations*.

5.3 *HESF (2021) Standards*: Include for ease of reference the relevant HESF standard(s) that relate(s) to the policy and procedure at the beginning of each policy document.

## 6 GUIDELINES FOR DRAFTING POLICY

- 6.1 *Plain English*: Write all policies in plain English, not legal or complex language for everyday people to understand. Keep in mind the intended audience who read and implement the policy and use gender-neutral pronouns, for example, ‘they’ instead of ‘he or she.’
- 6.2 *Present tense and active voice*: Use these where possible.
- 6.3 *Hyperlinks*: Use where appropriate, rather than duplicating long portions of text across different policies.
- 6.4 *Title of policy*: The title of the policy should reflect the focus of the policy.
- 6.5 *Purpose of the policy*: Provide a concise statement of the purpose of the policy, for example: “This policy sets a broad framework for the development, review, approval, and implementation of *BBI-The Australian Institute of Theological Education* (the Institute) policies and procedures to...”
- 6.6 *Scope of the policy*: State who the policy applies to and, if appropriate, the policy’s implementation timeline.
- 6.7 *Procedures*: Clearly state procedures for the practical implementation of a policy.
- 6.8 *Delegations and responsibilities*: Delegations and responsibilities required to administer a policy effectively should be listed under this section and cross-referenced to the appropriate Delegations Schedule delegation. Identify the responsibilities for each procedure.
- 6.9 *Notes*: Ensure that any updates to policy are recorded in the notes section of the document, reflecting all changes made to the policy and procedure and the date the committee made the changes.

## 7 NOTES

Contact Officer	Presiding Officer of Academic Board
Implementation Officer/s	Chair of the Institute Board of Directors; Principal/CEO; and Associate Dean (Academic)
Approval Authority / Authorities	Board of Directors Audit and Risk Committee Academic Governance Committee Academic Board
Date Approved	23/08/16 14/02/2022 Revised Policy Framework Policy approved by the Board of Directors in resolution BoD22/11
Date of Commencement	04/10/16
Date for Review	3 years after commencement
Amendment History	February 2022 Complete revision of the Policy Framework Policy
Key Stakeholders	Board of Directors Audit and Risk Committee Governance Committee Academic Board Principal/CEO Associate Dean (Academic) Associate Dean (Courses) Executive Team The staff of the Institute