



11. Facilitated development session: **Meeting governance standards**





Introduction

The aim of this governance development session is to provide the board or management committee with an overview of the governance standards that are relevant to non-government organisations (NGOs) and to examine the application of the governance-related sections of the *Queensland Standards for Community Services* to the organisation.

The session includes an assessment of the extent to which the organisation currently meets the governance-related sections of the *Queensland Standards for Community Services* in terms of its documented processes and records.

Ideally, this development session should be facilitated by a person with a sound understanding of the *Queensland Standards for Community Services* and how these apply to the governance role. This may be an experienced person within the organisation or an external facilitator.

Timing of this program: 1.5 hours

FACILITATOR'S NOTES

25 min

1. Introduction: Purpose of session and overview of standards

Session purpose

The purpose of this session is to look at the range of organisational standards that apply to NGOs and to look in particular at how the governance-related areas of the *Queensland Standards for Community Services* apply to this organisation.

Overview of standards

Provide the group with a brief overview of standards, dealing with the following points:

- Standards are descriptions or measures of acceptable practice in the way organisations or individuals carry out aspects of their work. A standard describes a way of doing things or a level of activity that would be considered good practice.
- Standards for NGOs are usually concerned with the way in which work is performed — processes, procedures and outcomes.
- Standards may be developed by central accrediting agencies such as the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), Standards Australia, and the Quality Improvement Council, or by government agencies or peak bodies.
- It may be mandatory or optional for an organisation to meet specific sets of standards.
- The following are some of the most common sets of standards required by particular funding or regulating bodies that may apply to Queensland NGOs:



- Queensland Department of Communities: *Queensland Standards for Community Services*
- Disability Services Queensland: *Disability Service Standards*
- Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, and Queensland Health: *Home and Community Care (HACC) National Service Standards*
- Queensland Department of Housing: *National Community Housing Standards*
- Commonwealth Department of Families, Communities and Indigenous Affairs: *National Standards for Child Care Services*
- Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing: *Standards for Aged Care Facilities.*
- Organisations can use relevant standards to assess how competently they are performing and to monitor improvements that they make.

Applicable standards

Ask the group to identify which sets of standards apply to their organisation and to discuss for each of these sets of standards:

- how the assessment for these standards is conducted (i.e. whether an external or independent assessor is required or the organisation may conduct the assessment itself)
- whether the organisation is required to meet the standards or be formally accredited against the standards in order to operate its services, obtain a licence to operate, or receive funding
- whether the organisation has completed an assessment against these standards.

Governance standards

Many community service standards cover organisational management incorporating some aspects of governance, but most do not deal with governance in any detail. The most comprehensive standards for governance for Queensland NGOs are contained in:

- the *Queensland Standards for Community Services*
- the *National Community Housing Standards.*

There is also a specific Australian standard for governance (AS/8000: Standards Australia) and a standard for building quality organisations in the core module of the health and community services standards (Quality Improvement Council). This latter standard goes into aspects of organisational functioning that fall into the governance role, although they are not identified in this way.

1 h

2. Reviewing governance standards

Using *worksheet one*, review the extent to which the organisation meets the *Queensland Standards for Community Services* in terms of its guiding documents and records. This checklist guides the group through the types of guiding



documents and records that should be in place for Standards 10 and 11 and the issues that should be covered in the guiding documents.

Ask the group to identify whether they have the documentation and, if so, where the document is kept (for example, in a policies and procedures manual).

The second part of this exercise involves an assessment of staff awareness of aspects of governance practices in the organisation and of client feedback on the governance of the organisation.

If the group is interested in conducting this part of the exercise, they need to have consulted with staff and client representatives (if relevant) to gather the required information. This can be done through a simple questionnaire, group discussion with staff or client representatives, or interviews conducted by an independent person.

With this information, the group can then complete the checklist on *worksheet two*.

Reference materials

- *About the Standards for Community Services* (Link back to these resources that are already on Community Door.)

Queensland Standards for Community Services — policy and procedure guides and templates (Community Door):

- *Vision, values and planning policy guideline*
- *Vision, values and planning policy template*
- *Organisational authority policy guideline*
- *Organisational authority policy template*
- *Performance monitoring and reporting policy guideline*
- *Performance monitoring and reporting policy template*
- *Election of governing body policy guideline*
- *Election of governing body policy template*
- *Induction of governing body policy guideline*
- *Induction of governing body policy template*
- *Training and development for governing body policy guideline*
- *Training and development for governing body policy template*
- *Conflict of interest policy guideline*
- *Conflict of interest policy template*
- *Asset management policy guideline*
- *Asset management policy template*
- *Financial management and delegations policy guideline*
- *Financial management and delegations policy template*
- *Budget policy guideline*
- *Budget policy template*



WORKSHEET ONE: STANDARDS 10 AND 11 — QUEENSLAND STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

Guiding documents and records

Standard 10	What should be addressed in guiding documents and records	Is this documented? ✓ for yes ✗ for no	What document is this in?
10.1 Vision, values and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documented statement of organisational vision and values or philosophy How the vision and values statement is promoted How strategic and operational planning processes and service delivery models are informed by this vision and values and are responsive to the needs of clients 		
Records	Records show vision and values statements have been developed and planning processes have been undertaken.		
10.2 Organisational authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How a delegation or authority to make different types of decisions is established for relevant positions 		
Records	Records show persons with appropriate authority make relevant decisions.		
10.3 Performance monitoring and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the organisation tracks its progress in meeting the requirements of its service agreement How the organisation provides client and service data as agreed to with the department Documented model of service showing how resources (including employees) are applied to provide services or activities to meet the needs of the agreed target group Reports to management committee or board showing service achievements against stated service goals. 		
Records	Records show how the organisation monitors its obligations under its service agreement and provides reports and data the Department of Communities requires under the service agreement.		



Standard 11	What should be addressed in a guiding document	Is this documented? ✓ for yes * for no	What document is this in?
11.1 Election of governing body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How election procedures reflect the legal obligations of the organisation in electing or appointing members of management committee or board members 		
Records	Records of elected or appointed executive officers are available and up to date		
11.2 Induction for executive officers of governing body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the content and supporting materials for induction, including an induction checklist and induction kit, are developed, reviewed and updated, with records of induction being maintained 		
Records	Records of induction processes for executive officers are available and show they are reviewed and kept up to date.		
11.3 Training and development for governing body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How priorities for training and development of management committee or board members are established, reviewed and budgeted 		
Records	Records show the organisation assesses training and development needs, and provides training and development opportunities.		
11.4 Conflict of interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the organisation manages and documents conflicts of interest 		
Records	Records show the organisation declares, records, and manages conflicts and potential conflicts of interest arising in the organisation.		
11.5 Asset management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the organisation documents and plans for the cyclic maintenance and periodic upgrade of its assets to ensure accommodation quality and overall value is maintained, with ongoing insurance cover 		
Records	Records of asset management are available and up to date.		



Standard 11	What should be addressed in a guiding document	Is this documented? ✓ for yes * for no	What document is this in?
11.6 Financial management and delegations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of financial controls and delegations and how safeguards are set to prevent fraud and financial mismanagement Procedures are set out clearly, and guidance is provided for financial processes in light of the skill levels of those involved in financial tasks 		
Records	Records of financial decision making are available and up to date, with evidence of use of internal controls to prevent misuse or misappropriation of funds.		
11.7 Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes are in place (electronic or paper-based) for developing, overseeing, monitoring and regularly reviewing the budget of the organisation for each financial year Reports on budget position are easy to understand, and are made available to all board members and relevant staff 		
Records	Records of budget management, including budget projections and reviews, are available and up to date.		



WORKSHEET TWO: STANDARDS 10 AND 11 — QUEENSLAND STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

Staff awareness and client feedback

	Staff awareness	✓ for yes * for no	Client feedback	✓ for yes * for no
10.1 Vision, values and planning	Staff are aware of the vision and values of the organisation and understand how the organisation plans to achieve them.		Clients are aware of the values and vision of the organisation and understand what this means for the services they receive.	
10.2 Organisational authority	Staff know who has the authority to make relevant decisions within their organisation and what decisions they have authority to make.		Client representatives, where these exist, are confident that decisions are made by the appropriate person.	
10.3 Performance monitoring and reporting	Staff know how the organisation monitors its obligations under its service agreement and provides data the department requires under the service agreement.		Client representatives, where these exist, are confident the organisation monitors its obligations under its service agreement and provides data the department requires under the service agreement.	

	Staff awareness	✓ for yes * for no	Client feedback	✓ for yes * for no
11.1 Election of governing body	Executive officers and relevant employees are familiar with the processes relating to election or appointment of governing bodies.		Client representatives, where these exist, are confident about the processes for election of governing bodies, and appointment of executive officers for the governing body.	
11.2 Induction for executive officers of governing body	Executive officers have sufficient understanding of organisational procedures so as to be able to effectively manage the provider's community services.		Client representatives, where these exist, are confident about induction processes for executive officers, and clients experience a well-managed organisation.	



	Staff awareness	✓ for yes * for no	Client feedback	✓ for yes * for no
11.3 Training and development for governing body	Executive officers participate in training and development activities.		Client representatives, where these exist, are confident about induction processes for executive officers, and clients experience a well-managed organisation.	
11.4 Conflict of interest	Executive officers, employees and volunteers have knowledge of processes relating to managing conflicts and potential conflicts of interest in the organisation.		Client representatives, where these exist, are confident the organisation declares, records, and manages conflicts of interest in the organisation.	
11.5 Asset management	Staff are confident that assets are appropriate to the services provided, the needs of the clients, and the provider's circumstances, and that they are appropriately maintained.		Clients find assets to be safe, amenable, and suitable to their needs.	
11.6 Financial management and delegations	Board members and organisational officers understand and implement appropriate financial management practices, understand financial delegations, and implement internal controls to prevent misuse or misappropriation of funds.		Client representatives, where these exist, are confident about financial management processes in the organisation.	
11.7 Budget	Board members and organisational officers are familiar with the budget and the processes for developing and monitoring it.		Client representatives, where these exist, are confident about budget management in the organisation.	