

GUIDE TO INDUCTION OF GOVERNING BODY POLICY TEMPLATE

ABOUT THIS POLICY AREA

This policy guides how the organisation provides new members of the board or management committee with an orientation and induction to their roles and responsibilities as board or management committee members.

A written induction of governing body policy is required as part of meeting Standard 11 (Governance and accountability).

Standard 11 — governance and accountability

The organisation develops, implements and reviews procedures, strategies and resources for the induction of its governing body and executive officers.

Policy checklist

The following checklist will help you check that an existing policy covers this area adequately.

The policy should:

- say when and how induction for the governing body will be conducted
- say what resources and materials will be used to provide effective induction for the governing body
- say how these materials will be developed and kept up to date
- say how records of induction will be kept
- contain clear procedures and actions
- indicate the timing of any actions
- show when it was approved
- show when it was last reviewed.

COMPLETING YOUR INDUCTION OF GOVERNING BODY POLICY

Using the policy template

The template provides some example statements. You can adapt these statements and include them in your policy or write your own statements to better suit the operations and services of your organisation.

To customise the policy template, click on the shaded sections **<<Insert text>>** and insert the information that is specific to your organisation.

When you have completed the policy template, delete the shaded instruction sections such as: [Refer to the induction of governing body policy template guide for questions and/or examples to consider when customising this section.](#)

For further information on using the policy guides, refer to the information in *Using the policy templates and guides*.

Guidelines for each section of your policy

1. Purpose

When identifying the purpose of the policy, consider how it might apply to the particular needs of your organisation's board or management committee. Do you need to make specific statements to ensure you are inclusive of the induction needs of particular groups that may be represented on your board or management committee, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Australian South Sea Islanders, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability?

2. Scope

To determine the scope of the policy, consider the following questions:

- Does this policy apply to all new members of the board or management committee?
- Are there circumstances in which the policy may apply to existing members of the board or management committee?

3. Policy statement

If you are adopting the policy statement in the template, consider whether there are any additional commitments your organisation wants to make.

In identifying the actions your organisation will take to implement this policy, you should include the following:

- developing a set of induction materials, including an induction checklist and induction kit
- assessing the specific needs of new members of the board or management committee and designing an induction program that will meet their needs
- providing induction programs for all new board or management committee members in a timely manner
- maintaining records of induction programs completed.

4. Procedures

The procedures describe how your organisation achieves the aims and goals you have outlined in your purpose, scope and policy statement.

4.1 Maintaining an up-to-date induction kit

Describe what will be in the induction kit. This should include:

- a checklist for people who are coordinating an induction program
- a set of resource materials for board or management committee members, including:
 - an overview of the organisation's purpose and work
 - a diagram and explanation of the organisation's structure
 - roles and responsibilities of board or management committee members
 - what is expected of board or management committee members
 - meeting schedules and processes
 - key policy documents
 - a copy of the organisation's constitution.

Describe who will be responsible for the development and maintenance of an induction kit and how and when the kit will be reviewed.

4.2 Providing induction programs

Describe how the induction program will be organised and conducted. This will involve deciding:

- **timing:** An induction program should ideally be run as soon as possible after the election or appointment of new members (within 1–2 months). This should also apply to appointments between annual general meetings (filling of casual vacancies).
- **method:** Induction can be conducted as a face-to-face group session, one-to-one mentoring, self-directed reading of an induction kit, or a combination of methods. Where there is turnover of a significant proportion of the board, a group session may be the most appropriate. Induction programs may also need to be conducted for one or two new members when there is limited turnover or filling of casual vacancies.
- **responsibility:** The responsibility for organising induction may be with specified staff positions or the board or management committee itself. If there is the possibility that all the board or management committee will be new, then clearly a staff member will need to take responsibility.
- **assessment of need:** An induction program may be run without any adaptation, but will be more successful if tailored to take into account the skills and experience that new members bring with them and any specific knowledge they may require.

4.3 Maintaining induction records

Describe what induction records will be kept and who will take responsibility for keeping them. Induction records will need to show who has received induction, the dates of induction, and the material covered (if this is to vary).

5. Other related policies and documents

List the other policies related to the induction of governing body policy. The policy should be linked to:

- election of governing body policy
- training and development for governing body policy.

6. Review processes

Consider how often the policy should be reviewed and the process for doing this:

- **frequency of review:** Most policies benefit from an annual review. The experience of implementing the policy is used to decide which changes are necessary. Consider reviewing your induction of governing body policy as part of an annual review of governance-related policies, or, if your organisation is small, perhaps over a three-year period. Critical incidents may prompt you to review the policy ahead of schedule.
- **responsibility for the review:** In most organisations, the board or management committee would be responsible for reviewing this policy in consultation with organisation members.
- **process for the review:** Decide which particular staff, volunteers, external people and organisations will provide input to the policy review.
- **decision-making process:** Who will review draft changes to the policy and approve changes? What will be the timeframe for the review process?
- **documentation and communication:** What records of the policy review process are needed? How will changes to the policy be communicated to staff implementing the

policy? In a small organisation, this may be as simple as noting the changes at a staff meeting. In a larger organisation, an email memo may be needed.

- **key questions for the review:** Is the policy being implemented? Are procedures being followed? Is the policy clear? What has changed that may prompt a change to the policy (for example, new services, activities, job roles, policies and procedures)? Have particular stakeholders had difficulty with any aspect of the policy? Can their concerns be resolved? How does the policy compare with that of similar organisations?