UQ Governance and Management Framework

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

Context

(1) The University of Queensland (UQ or the University) is a body corporate established under the University of Queensland Act 1998 (UQ Act). The UQ Act specifies the University's functions as follows:

a. disseminate knowledge and promote scholarship;
b. provide education at university standard;
c. provide facilities for, and encourage, study and research;
d. encourage the advancement and development of knowledge, and its application;
e. provide courses of study or instruction (at the levels of achievement the Senate considers appropriate) to meet the needs of the community;
f. confer higher education awards;
g. provide facilities and resources for the wellbeing of the University's staff, students and other persons undertaking courses at the University;
h. exploit commercially, for the University's benefit, a facility or resource of the University, including, for example, study, research or knowledge, or the practical application of study, research or knowledge, belonging to the University, whether alone or with someone else; and
i. perform other functions given to the University under the UQ Act or another Act.

(2) The UQ Act also establishes the Senate of the University and recognises it as the University's governing body. The Senate elects a Chancellor and Deputy Chancellor. The Chancellor presides at meetings of Senate and in the Chancellor's absence the Deputy Chancellor presides.

(3) The positions of the Vice-Chancellor and the President of the Academic Board are also established under the UQ Act. The Vice-Chancellor is the Chief Executive Officer of the University and is also known as the Vice-Chancellor and President, however for clarity, in this document is called the Vice-Chancellor.

(4) As a higher education provider, registered charitable organisation and statutory body, UQ's governance framework has compliance obligations under the ACNC Governance Standards and the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021. UQ is also subject to a wide range of other compliance obligations under Commonwealth and Queensland laws. For example, as a statutory body under the Financial Accountability Act 2009.

Objective of the UQ Governance and Management Framework

(5) The objective of the UQ Governance and Management Framework (Governance Framework) is to provide the overall structure and direction for the systematic and disciplined governance and management of UQ and to enable it to:

a. perform its functions effectively and efficiently;
b. plan, create and protect value;

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c. acquire, allocate and use University resources responsibly;
d. optimise individual and organisational performance;
e. demonstrate effective risk management and compliance; and
f. provide assurance on University governance, performance, risk management and compliance.

(6) The Governance Framework demonstrates the Senate and management's commitment to the effective and efficient governance and management of the University. It seeks to enable governance and management responsibilities to be supported and carried out in a planned, organised, coordinated, controlled and transparent manner.

Scope

(7) The Governance Framework applies to the whole of UQ and to the extent relevant, its controlled entities. Compliance with the Governance Framework is mandatory.

Governance

(8) Governance comprises the set of principles and rules, values and culture, people and relationships, and systems and processes within and by which:

a. strategic direction and oversight are provided;
b. objectives are set and achieved;
c. authority is exercised and controlled;
d. risks are assessed and managed
e. Compliance with laws and regulations is demonstrated; and
f. those in control are held to account.

(9) Governance at UQ consists of corporate governance and academic governance with the latter focussing on leadership, direction and oversight of UQ's academic activities (teaching, learning and scholarship, research and research training) at an institutional level.

Section 2 - Principles and Key Requirements

(10) To achieve the University's strategic objectives and to demonstrate effective and efficient governance and management, UQ will:

a. Stakeholders:
   Recognise the strategic significance and contributions of its primary stakeholders including students, staff, benefactors, alumni, peers, partners, government and the local and wider community; protect their rights, and treat them respectfully and equitably.
b. Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom:
   Promote and protect freedom of speech and academic freedom.
c. Strategic Intent:
   Define and communicate the UQ Mission, Vision, Values and strategic objectives and priorities consistent with its core functions prescribed under the UQ Act.
d. Quality Assurance:
   Develop and implement institutional quality assurance processes to ensure the integrity and quality in teaching and research.
e. Planning and Budgeting:

Develop and implement strategic, capital investment and operational plans and budgets, together with prioritised and time-framed programs of work, resource plans, and key performance indicators.

f. Organisational Structure:
Define and implement an organisational structure and governance arrangements that ensures the effective and efficient execution of approved plans and programs of work.

g. Responsibilities and Accountabilities:
Provide clarity of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities and assign commensurate authorities and delegations.

h. Staffing:
Ensure equitable, merit-based, transparent, systematic and consistent approaches to staff recruitment, selection, development, promotion and remuneration to attract and retain the most capable staff.\

i. Culture:
Cultivate a cohesive and positive culture and an operating environment that is performance-based, customer-focussed, entails ethical decision making and helps direct organisational effort, energy and resources towards the promotion, protection and overall success of UQ.

j. Safety and Well-being:
Define and implement all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing of its staff, students, visitors, contractors and volunteers throughout all areas of its activities and to meet its workplace health and safety obligations.

k. Resource Management:
Enable and ensure planning, prioritisation, procurement, allocation, use and management of its resources in a manner that demonstrates best practice and value for money.

l. Capital Investments:
Develop and implement a framework to facilitate:
    i. The proactive identification, analysis and evaluation of feasible opportunities.
    ii. The systematic development and robust assessment of investment proposals (business cases) to ensure alignment with UQ’s strategic objectives and priorities and to validate that the proposals are attractive, affordable, achievable and adaptable.
    iii. The development and implementation of appropriate Project Management Plans and programs of work to give effect to approved business cases.
    iv. The monitoring, tracking and progressive reporting on planned benefits to ensure they are fully realised.

m. Asset Management:
Properly account for, manage, maintain and protect its assets, both tangible and intangible, including information and vital records, commensurate with their value, against loss, misuse and unauthorised access or modification.

n. Risk Management:
Recognise, assess and efficiently manage risks, consistent with Senate-approved Risk Appetite Statement. Adopt adequate and effective business resilience and incident management procedures and practices to prevent, prepare, respond to and recover from any major adverse risk events.

o. Compliance Management:
Demonstrably comply with applicable laws, regulations, government policies, mandatory standards, and contractual obligations.

p. Sustainability and Environment:
Adopt economical, socially responsible and environmentally sustainable practices in all areas of its operations to ensure the University's long-term sustainability, and to protect and where feasible, enhance the natural environment.

q. Information and Records Management:
Create and maintain authentic, reliable and useable information and records to support effective and efficient

operations and decision-making and to substantiate University decisions, activities and transactions.

r. Reporting and Disclosures:
Ensure relevant, reliable, timely, balanced and honest disclosures and reporting of University performance and position, both against plans and KPIs, and to meet legal or regulatory reporting and disclosure requirements.

s. Monitoring and Reviews:
Establish and implement effective supervisory, monitoring, review and management assurance activities and promptly rectify any identified discrepancies including unfavourable trends and variances.

t. Capabilities:
Develop and continually enhance its people, process and systems capabilities, including where appropriate, through the use of innovative technology.

u. Policies and Procedures:
Determine, develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures containing mandatory requirements to enable and ensure effective and efficient governance and management.

(11) For staff, compliance with applicable mandatory requirements is a condition of their appointment and continuing employment with the University.

(12) For students, compliance with applicable mandatory requirements is a condition of their admission and ongoing enrolment at the University.

Documented Controls

(13) In addition to policies and procedures, UQ has other documented controls that are categorised based on their purpose, approval authority, scope and application, as set out in the following diagram:

> Figure 1 - Hierarchy of UQ Documented Controls.

Senate Charter

(14) The Senate Charter outlines how Senate operates to fulfil its functions. Where there is a conflict between the Charter and the provisions of the Act, the Act will prevail. The Charter is supplemented by Standing Orders, approved by Senate, which set out Senate's processes in more detail.

Policies

(15) Policies define UQ's position and objective/s on matters of strategic significance and the relevant outputs and outcomes that UQ needs to deliver to achieve its policy objectives.

Criteria for Issuing Policies

(16) Policies are developed, adopted and managed to realise one or more of the following objectives:

a. To support the achievement of the University’s objectives and strategic priorities;
b. To give effect to directions or advice from Senate, the Vice-Chancellor or the Academic Board (subject to approval from the Vice-Chancellor);
c. To manage significant strategic or financial risks; and
d. To demonstrate compliance with applicable laws, regulations, mandatory government policies/standards, legal obligations and mandatory professional standards.

Categories of Policies

(17) Policies are categorised into Governance, Academic and Operational policies. The Academic and Operational policies are subordinate to the Governance policies.

(18) Governance Policies:

a. Governance policies relate to Senate's reserved powers and governance responsibilities (Senate's reserved powers are set out in the 'Instrument of Delegation – Delegation to the Vice-Chancellor of Senate's powers under the University of Queensland Act 1998'). Governance policies are approved by the University's Senate.
b. Compliance with Governance policies is mandatory across UQ. Controlled entities must adopt policies consistent with Governance policies (unless the policy specifically excludes them).

(19) Academic Policies:

a. Academic policies govern the University's teaching, learning and research functions and their supporting strategies and activities.
b. Unless reserved by Senate, these policies are approved by the Vice-Chancellor based on advice and recommendations from the Provost or relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor and after considering any advice from the Academic Board. The Vice-Chancellor may delegate the approval of academic policies to the Provost or a Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
c. Compliance with Academic policies is mandatory across UQ, excluding controlled entities (unless the policy specifically includes them).

(20) Operational Policies:

a. Operational policies govern the University's corporate/administrative and non-academic functions and their strategies and activities.
b. Unless reserved by Senate, these policies are approved by the Vice-Chancellor based on advice and recommendations from the Provost, relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor or the Chief Operating Officer. The Vice-Chancellor may delegate the approval of operational policies to the Provost, relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor or the Chief Operating Officer.
c. Compliance with Operational policies is mandatory across UQ, excluding controlled entities (unless the policy specifically includes them).

Policy Approvers and Owners

(21) Ownership of policies is determined by reference to the Criteria for Issuing Policies (see provision above). The party accountable for achieving the objective/s owns the relevant policy that supports or arises from that objective; and they are also responsible for monitoring, assessing and providing assurance on the effectiveness of their policies and procedures and remedying any deficiencies.

(22) Administrative changes[1] to Governance policies are approved by the Vice-Chancellor or the Director, Governance and Risk.

(23) Administrative changes to Academic and Operational policies are approved by the policy owners or the Associate Director, Enterprise Governance. The policy owner also owns the procedure/s linked to that policy.

Policy Requirements and Development

(24) All policy requirements are principles-based, consistent with legal or regulatory obligations, and their adoption and effectiveness is evidenced and verifiable.

(25) Drafting of new or revised policies must have regard to the Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy.

(26) All new or revised policies are referred to relevant stakeholders for consultation prior to being issued.

(27) Prior endorsement from the Provost, relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor or the Chief Operating Officer is required for the development of a new policy or to make a significant changes to an existing policy.

Procedures

(28) Procedures describe the processes and activities that realise the outcomes defined in their parent policies. Procedures are categorised based on the categorisation of the parent policy.

(29) Approval of some academic and operational procedures may be reserved by the Vice-Chancellor.

(30) Unless reserved by the Vice-Chancellor:

a. Academic procedures are approved by the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor after considering any advice from the Academic Board.
b. Operational procedures are approved by the relevant policy owner.

(31) New or revised procedures are referred to relevant stakeholders for consultation prior to being approved and issued.

(32) Compliance with procedures is mandatory across UQ, excluding UQ's controlled entities (unless they are specifically included).

(33) Administrative changes[1] to academic and operational procedures are approved by the Policy Owner or the Associate Director, Enterprise Governance.

Standard Operating Procedures

(34) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are step-by-step instructions to enable the correct, consistent and efficient undertaking of particular tasks/activities at a local or functional level across the organisation. SOPs are consistent with relevant policies and procedures.

(35) The structure and content of SOPs is decided by the issuing manager and may be customised to best meet the local area or the University's needs. SOPs may be mandatory and, if so, they will be notated as such and protocols will be implemented to provide assurance on their effectiveness.

Guidelines

(36) Guidelines provide general statements, recommendations or administrative instructions designed to achieve the objectives of a compliance obligation, policy or procedure. Guidelines can be statements of ‘best practice’, provide advice on or expand the application of a policy or procedure. Compliance with guidelines is not mandatory.

Quality Requirements

(37) All documented controls with mandatory requirements must:

a. Enable prudent and timely decisions to be made and University operations performed effectively and efficiently.
b. Focus on delivering specific outputs and outcomes in a competent manner.
c. Provide clarity of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.
d. Adopt a holistic and risk-based approach to the design and implementation of controls and for demonstrating

compliance.

e. Actively support automation and the innovative use of technology.
f. Incorporate management assurance protocols to provide assurance on the effectiveness and efficiency of the documented control/s and to ensure their currency and continuous improvement; and
g. be based on approved document templates for policies and procedures (see Appendix A and Appendix B) and written in plain language.

Section 3 - Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Senate

(38) The Senate is the University's governing body and accountable for the effective, efficient and sustainable governance of the University. The Senate's responsibilities are outlined in the UQ Act and Senate Charter. The Senate Charter also highlights the Committees that Senate has established to assist in the discharge of its obligations. Senate is also responsible for ensuring compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.

Vice-Chancellor

(39) The Vice-Chancellor is the Chief Executive Officer of the University and is responsible to the Senate for executive decisions and the overall management and performance of the University.

(40) The Vice-Chancellor is supported by a number of management committees, all of which have their own Terms of Reference.

Academic Board

(41) The UQ Act sets out the main functions of the Academic Board, which are to:

a. advise Senate about teaching, scholarship and research matters concerning the University;
b. formulate proposals for the academic policies of the University;
c. monitor the academic activities of the University's faculties; and
d. promote and encourage scholarship and research at the University.

(42) The roles and functions of the Academic Board are further elaborated in the Academic Board Policy.

Controlled Entities

(43) Empowered by the UQ Act, a number of operations exist as separate legal entities under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) to benefit the University and help carry out its functions specified under the UQ Act. Controlled entities must implement appropriate systems and processes that are consistent with the Governance Framework.

(44) UQ's controlled entities are responsible for:

a. developing their strategic and operational plans and delivering outputs and outcomes as per their approved plans and KPIs;
b. demonstrating effective and efficient performance, governance, risk management and compliance and providing assurance on the same; and
c. protecting and enhancing UQ's value.

Section 4 - Monitoring and Review

(45) Under the oversight and direction of Senate, the Vice-Chancellor and the University Senior Executive Team, monitoring and reviews are undertaken at different levels of the University to provide assurance on performance, governance, risk management and compliance. The following figure illustrates these levels and relevant assurance responsibilities.

> Figure 2: Levels of monitoring and review.

(46) The oversight, monitoring and review responsibilities of each of these groups are set out below.

Senate

(47) The Senate is the University's governing body and accountable for the effective and efficient governance of the University.

Vice-Chancellor and University Senior Executive Team

(48) The Vice-Chancellor provides assurance to Senate on UQ's performance, governance, risk management and compliance.

(49) The Vice-Chancellor with support from the University Senior Executive Team is responsible for:

a. reinforcing commitment to and role modelling UQ Values and Code of Conduct;
b. creating and maintaining an appropriate system of internal control including an appropriate control environment ('Tone at the Top');
c. establishing structure, authority and responsibility for all management and staff roles;
d. demonstrating commitment to competence and enforcing accountability for performance; and
e. exercising management oversight responsibility, monitoring enterprise performance, governance, risk management and compliance, and ensuring any deficiencies are promptly remedied.

Academic Board

(50) The Academic Board is responsible for monitoring the academic activities of the University and providing advice to Senate, the Vice-Chancellor and the University Senior Executive Team on academic matters within the scope of the Academic Board.

Heads of Organisational Units

(51) The Heads of Organisational Units are responsible for:

a. providing leadership and direction of their portfolios (faculties, schools, institutes, divisions, etc.) including clarity of portfolio objectives, scope, strategies and KPIs;
b. assessing and understanding portfolio-specific risks and compliance obligations and implementing controls to manage risks and demonstrate compliance; and
c. monitoring, reviewing and providing assurance on portfolio performance and the effectiveness of controls to manage risks and demonstrate compliance and remedying any deficiencies.

Local Managers and Supervisors

(52) Managers and Supervisors who report to the Heads of Organisational Units are responsible for:

a. providing leadership and direction to their local teams including clarity of team objectives, scope, strategies and KPIs;
b. assessing, understanding and effectively managing team-specific risks and compliance obligations including through adoption of University policies and procedures; and
c. monitoring, reviewing and providing assurance on team performance including risk management and compliance and remedying any deficiencies.

Internal Audit

(53) Internal Audit is responsible for providing objective assurance and advice to Senate, the Vice-Chancellor, University Senior Executive Team and Managers on performance, governance, risk management and compliance matters, including the manner in which management discharge their monitoring and review responsibilities.

Section 5 - Recording and Reporting

(54) The Vice-Chancellor reports to Senate and its Committees periodically on the University's performance, governance, risk management and internal control frameworks.

Section 6 - Appendix

(55) Appendix A - Policy Document Template

(56) Appendix B - Procedure Document Template.

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[1] Administrative changes include (but are not limited to) correcting patent errors, updating references and links in a policy or procedure (e.g. changes in titles of legislation, codes, etc.) and updating a policy or procedure to reflect nomenclature or title changes. Administrative changes do not affect or change the overall intent of the policy or procedure including its purpose, scope and key requirements.

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