



**Waikato Clinical Psychology
Educational Trust Inc.**
(WCPET)

Trustees Policy Handbook

The governance policies adopted by the Waikato Clinical Psychology
Educational Trust Board.

Waikato Clinical Psychology Educational Trust (WCPET)

Trustees* Policy Handbook

Welcome to this handbook which contains all the current policies adopted by successive WCPET Boards.

These policies have been derived and reviewed over the years to express the way the WCPET Board fulfills its responsibilities.

Policies are formulated under one of four categories:

- ◆ *Governance Process policies*: describe the way the Board carries out its governing role.
- ◆ *Board – Staff Linkage policies*: define the nature of the interrelationship between the Board and the Director* and staff.
- ◆ *Director Limitations policies*: limit the Director's freedom to use means unacceptable to the Board in the achievement of the Strategic Results policies.
- ◆ *Strategic Results policies*: describe the outcomes the Board wants to be achieved. Strategic results policies define the benefit provided, who is to benefit, and the cost or worth of the benefit.

There are two companion handbooks:

- a) the Trustees Operational Handbook which contains all the current policies derived by the Board relating to operational guidelines for Trustees; and
- b) the Director's Operational Handbook which contains policies derived by the Director relating to the operation of The Psychology Centre (TPC).

Note

* Throughout this document the word "trustee" is used to describe an elected/appointed member of the Board of Trustees of WCPET. The word "Director" is used to refer to the Chief Executive/primary paid employee.

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POLICIES RELATING TO THE GOVERNING PROCESS

Board Responsibilities

Criteria for becoming a Trustee of WCPET

Background

The Board of WCPET consists of not less than six and no more than ten members as outline in the Deed of Trust. These are three persons from the School of Psychology at the University of Waikato, two from Health Waikato, the Director of TPC, and up to three others. Officers are to be elected by the Board from within its own numbers.

Experience

It is desirable for Trustees to be familiar with the organisation and operation of mental health providers, and be familiar with the various aspects of the application of clinical psychology in New Zealand.

Commitment and Adding Value

Trustees must be interested in healthcare in general and the WCPET in particular and be able to commit the time and effort required to carry out their role as a board member effectively. The Board should strive to add value to the organisation in terms of strategic direction and through its decision making process.

Commitment to Excellence

Trustees must have a commitment to excellence, both personally and for the organisation as a whole.

Decision-Making

Trustees must have the ability to consider and make decisions which benefit the organisation. They must demonstrate good judgement, common sense and independence of thought, allowing for a wide perspective on issues.

Financial Understanding

Trustees must understand financial matters and their implications to the organisation.

Honesty and Integrity

Trustees must be able to demonstrate honesty and integrity at all times. This includes being non-negotiable in their personal values.

Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Trustees must have good interpersonal skills, including the ability to interact and communicate with people from a wide variety of backgrounds.

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Leadership

Trustees must be able to demonstrate leadership skills, both in directing the organisation and to stakeholders.

Organisational Awareness

Trustees must have knowledge of the organisation, its structure and the issues which are important to members as a whole.

Strategic Thinking

Trustees must have the ability to think strategically and consider the wider perspective of issues. They must be able to distinguish between governance and operational matters.

Preparation of Trustees for their role

Individuals nominated for election, or being appointed, to the WCPET Board should both understand the obligations they will be taking on and be adequately prepared to take up the role of WCPET Trustee. It is desirable that the individual should both complete due diligence with the Chairperson prior to nomination, and be adequately prepared for membership of WCPET through an appropriate induction and training program.

Due Diligence

Individuals considering nomination as a WCPET Trustee should complete the following due diligence.

Prior to accepting nomination the individual should gain an understanding of:

- the personal accountabilities and obligations of being a WCPET Trustee
- the Trust Deed of WCPET
- any legislative or regulatory framework applicable to WCPET
- the responsibilities they are undertaking
- the risks of being an WCPET Trustee
- the organisation, what it does and its objectives
- the last annual report
- the current financial position
- Trustee remuneration and expenses reimbursement policy
- any potential conflicts of interest

The individual should discuss with the Chairperson the time commitment required, including the time outside Board and committee meetings, reading Board papers and other material, and resolve any concerns they may have about WCPET.

Trustee Orientation

All Trustees are expected to contribute to Board meetings to the best of their ability. To facilitate this WCPET will guarantee a thorough orientation into the

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affairs of both the Board and WCPET at large, its issues, current concerns, staff, current financial position etc.

1. All prospective Trustees will be provided with all relevant information.
2. Prior to attendance at their first Board meeting, new Trustees will:
 - Receive a copy of the Trustees Policy Handbook which includes a copy of the previous year's accounts, an up-to-date copy of year-to-date financial statements, and the strategic and annual plans.
 - Meet with the Chairperson for a governance familiarisation. This meeting may be held as a group session or with individual new Trustees.
 - Meet with the Director for an operational familiarisation.

The Board's Job Description

The Board is responsible for the long-term health and prosperity of WCPET

The Board charts the direction of WCPET and monitors management's performance on behalf of stakeholders.

The Board fulfils its responsibilities by ensuring:

- the relevance of its policies and the appropriateness of the ways in which programs and services are provided;
- that WCPET has the capacity to implement policy and to manage its affairs;
- risks regarding type, level and quality of programs and services provided (or not provided) are understood and that means are in place to manage these risks;
- that what WCPET set out to accomplish, what it accomplished, and the choices that were made and why are adequately explained to stakeholders.

Linkage to Stakeholders

The Board will at all times recognise the trust placed in it by the stakeholders and their requirements and expectations of the Board of WCPET, demonstrating this :

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1. Through their attitudes expressed as appropriate behaviours towards the stakeholders (and the community at large);
2. By demonstrating loyalty to the stakeholders;
3. By gathering information from the stakeholders about their concerns, needs, demands and fears;
4. By remaining up-to-date in matters concerning the stakeholders' interests;
5. By reporting to the stakeholders on a regular basis on the performance of the organisation.

Policy Making

Policies are designed to provide clear, unambiguous guidelines for the implementation of the various operational elements of WCPET. Policies provide continuity and a consistent point of accountability.

Once a policy is adopted the Board will speak with one voice around that policy.

1. The Board at a formally constituted Board meeting will approve all governance policies.
2. Individual Trustees, the Director, staff members or stakeholders of WCPET may notify the need for new policies or alterations to existing policies.
3. All governance policies will be systematically reviewed by the Board as a whole.
4. All governance policies shall be available to all Trustees, the Director and to staff as appropriate via the Director.

Code of Ethics and Proper Behaviour

WCPET is committed to the adoption of ethical conduct in all areas of its responsibilities and authority.

Trustees:

1. Shall act honestly and in good faith at all times in the interest of WCPET and its stakeholders, ensuring that all stakeholders, particularly its members, are

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treated fairly according to their rights;

2. Shall carry out their duties in a lawful manner and ensure that WCPET carries out its business in accordance with the law and the terms of its own constitution;
3. Shall act in accordance with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi;
4. Shall avoid conflicts of interests in as far as this is possible. Where such conflicts arise, the Trustee/s concerned will act within the terms of the Board's Conflict of Interests policy;
5. Shall be diligent, attend Board meetings and devote sufficient time to preparation for Board meetings to allow for full and appropriate participation in the Board's decision making;
6. Shall observe the confidentiality of non-public information acquired by them in their role as Trustees and not disclose to any other person such information;
7. Shall act in accordance with their fiduciary duties, complying with the spirit as well as the letter of the law, recognising both the legal and moral duties of the role;
8. Shall interact with the Board and WCPET in a positive and constructive manner;
9. Shall be loyal and supportive to the Board, abiding by Board decisions once reached;
10. Shall not do anything that in any way denigrates WCPET or harms its public image;

The Board:

11. Shall meet regularly to monitor the performance of management and WCPET as a whole, and to do this the Board will ensure that appropriate monitoring and reporting systems are in place and that these are maintained and utilised to provide accurate and timely information to the Board;
12. Shall ensure that there is an appropriate separation of duties and responsibilities between itself and the Director and that no one has unfettered powers of decision making;

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13. Shall ensure that the independent views of Trustees are given due consideration and weight;
14. Shall ensure that stakeholders are provided with an accurate and balanced view of WCPET performance including both financial and service provision;
15. Shall regularly review its own performance as the basis for its own development and quality improvement;
16. Shall carry out its meetings in such a manner as to ensure fair and full participation of all Trustees;

Governance Process

The Board will govern with an emphasis on:

1. outward vision rather than inward concern;
2. encouragement of diversity of opinions and views;
3. strategic leadership rather than administrative detail;
4. collective rather than individual decisions;
5. future rather than present focus;
6. a clear distinction between Board and Director roles;
7. pro-activity rather than reactivity.

The Board will:

1. Cultivate a sense of group responsibility with a close attention to achieving a high level of governance excellence;
2. Govern WCPET through careful design and review of written policies that reflect the Board's values, focusing on the long-term effects of these;
3. Maintain a commitment to excellence in all matters coming before it. It will establish a code of ethics and proper practice that is binding on all Trustees;
4. Not allow any officer, individual or committee of the Board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling Board commitments.

Work Planning and Agenda Setting

To achieve its governance outcomes in a manner consistent with its policies, the Board will follow an annual work plan that (1) focuses on issues in its Strategic Plan and (2) continually improves Board performance through education and evaluation of effectiveness. Accordingly:

1. The Board's work plan cycle will commence at the October meeting so that the budget and planning can be based on a one year segment of the Board's focus on Strategic Plan results achievement.

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2. The cycle will start with the Board's development of its work plan for the following year.
 - a) Consultations will be held with selected groups from the stakeholders and other input into the exploration of Strategic Planning issues.
 - b) Governance education relating to the Board's job, provided from both internal (staff) sources and external sources will be arranged on a quarterly basis.
3. Director monitoring will be included in the work plan if monitoring reports show policy violations or if policy criteria are to be debated.
4. Director remuneration will be decided after a review of monitoring reports and upon receipt of the annual audited financial statements, but not later than 31st March each year.

Note: The Strategic Plan is a document that outlines planning for a two to three year period consistent with Strategic Ends policies. The Business Plan is a plan of the year's activities in relation to the Strategic Plan.

Conflicts of Interest

The Board places great importance on making clear any existing or potential conflicts of interest for its Trustees. All such conflicts of interest shall be declared by the Trustee concerned and officially documented in a Conflicts of Interests Register. Accordingly:

1. Any business or personal matter which is, or could be, a conflict of interest involving the individual and his/her role and relationship with WCPET must be declared and registered in the Conflicts of Interest Register;
2. All such entries in the Register shall be presented to the Board and minuted at the first Board meeting following entry in the records;
3. Where a conflict of interest is identified and registered, the Trustee concerned shall not vote on that issue. Only with the unanimous agreement of all other Trustees present may the Trustee concerned participate in any Board discussion on that topic. Failing such agreement being reached, the individual shall either refrain from participation or leave the room;
4. When the Chairperson is aware of a real or potential conflict of interest involving one of more Trustees, the Chairperson must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the conflict is managed in an appropriate manner according to this policy;
5. Individual Trustees, aware of a real or potential conflict of interest of another Trustee, have a responsibility to bring this to the notice of the Board.

Examples of conflicts of interest are:

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- When a Trustee or his/her immediate family or business interests stands to gain financially from any business dealings, programmes or services of WCPET.
- When a Trustee offers a professional service to WCPET.
- When a Trustee stands to gain personally or professionally from any insider knowledge if that knowledge is used for personal or professional advantage.

Confidentiality

The objective of meetings of the Board is to bring together ideas of Trustees in free and open discussion. However, there will be times when an issue arises which may need to be treated with discretion. These are handled as outlined below:

"In Committee" Sessions

When necessary, it is general business practice that "In Committee" Sessions are held during meetings. This is used when issues which need to be discussed are sensitive, and Trustees need to be totally comfortable that what is said in the confines of the meeting room will not be repeated outside the meeting.

"In Committee" sessions are held to:

Discuss commercially sensitive matters
Discuss personal and personnel issues
Enable an open and frank discussion

Board Evaluation

The Board of Trustees will carry out a formal evaluation on its activities annually. This will be done in two parts:

Internal Evaluation

This will look at how the Board works together and could include the following assessments:

- Assessment of Chairperson by all other Board Members.
- Assessment of each Board Member by all other Board Members.
- Self-assessment by each Board Member.
- Assessment of Board by Director and senior staff.

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The Board may choose to have this carried out and collated by an outside consultant and the results will be confidential to the WCPET Board.

Chairperson's Role Description

The Chairperson assures the integrity of the Board's process and occasionally represents WCPET to outside parties.

Accordingly,

1. The Chairperson ensures that the Board behaves consistently with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside WCPET.
 - Meeting discussion content will be only those issues which, according to Board policy, clearly belong to the Board to decide, not the Director.
 - Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough but also timely, orderly, and kept to the point.
2. The authority of the Chairperson consists in making decisions that fall within topics covered by Board policies on Governance Process, except where the Board specifically delegates portions of this authority to others. The Chairperson is authorised to use any reasonable interpretation of the provisions in these policies.
 - The Chairperson is empowered to chair Board meetings, with all the commonly accepted power of that position (for example, ruling, recognising).
 - The Chairperson has no authority to make decisions (such as creating, recreating or varying) about policies created by the Board.
 - The Chairperson acts as the conduit between the Board and the Director.
 - The Chairperson may represent the Board to outside parties in announcing Board-stated positions and in stating chair decisions and interpretations within the area delegated to her or him.
 - The Chairperson may delegate this authority but remains accountable for its use.

Outside Trustees

Each year, at the meeting following the Annual General Meeting, the Trustees shall consider whether outside Trustees are required for the ensuing year. In accordance with the Board's Rules, the Board may appoint up to three outside Trustees who are not necessarily stakeholders of WCPET. Such appointments

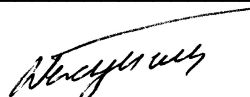
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are made when specialist knowledge or expertise is required and where it is felt this is not available in the appointed or elected Board Members. These appointments are in place until the next AGM.

Board Committees

1. The Board has the authority to establish both standing and ad-hoc committees to assist in its work. Standing Committees will be limited to:
 - Staff sub-committee
2. Committees shall develop their own terms of reference, endorsed by the Board, clearly defining their role, procedures and functions, and the boundaries of their authority.
3. Committees may co-opt outside members from time to time in order to bring additional skills, experience or networks.
4. Committees cannot exercise authority over staff nor shall they delegate tasks to any staff unless the Director has specifically agreed to such delegations.
5. All ad-hoc committees are automatically disestablished once they have completed their work and have reported to the Board.
6. All standing committees shall review their terms of reference annually including their membership and the results of their work and so report to the Board.
7. Unless explicitly empowered by the full Board, committees cannot make binding Board decisions. For the most part the function of committees is to solve problems for and/or make recommendations to the Board on which the latter, and only the latter, has the power to make decisions or policy.



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POLICIES RELATING TO THE BOARD-STAFF LINKAGE

Board Responsibilities

The Board's sole official connection with the operations of the WCPET, its achievement, and conduct will be through the Director.

Only decisions of the Board acting as a body are binding on the Director.

In the case of Trustees or committees requesting information or assistance without Board authorisation, the Director can refuse such requests that require, in the Director's opinion, a material amount of staff time or funds, or are disruptive.

The Board's resolutions describing the organisational Results to be achieved will be the basis for the Director to develop the organisational means to achieve the Results.

The Board will develop policies that limit the latitude the Director may exercise in choosing the organisational means. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels and they will be called *Executive Limitations policies*.

As long as the Director uses any reasonable interpretation of the Board's Results resolutions and Executive Limitations policies, the Director is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, and develop all activities.

The Director is not restricted from using the expert knowledge of individual Trustees.

The Board will view the Director's performance as the same as organisational performance so that achievement of the Board's Strategic Results resolutions and non violation of Director limitation policies will be viewed as successful Director performance.

Monitoring Director Performance

Systematic and rigorous monitoring of Director job performance will be solely against the only expected Director job outputs:

Organisational accomplishment of Board policies on Results and;

Organisational operation within the boundaries established in Board policies on Executive Limitations.

The Board will acquire monitoring data by one or more of three methods:

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- (a) by internal report, in which the Director discloses compliance information to the Board;
- (b) by external report, in which an external, disinterested third party selected by the Board assesses compliance with Board policies; and
- (c) by direct Board inspection, in which a designated member or members of the Board assess compliance with the appropriate policy criteria.

In every case, the standard for compliance shall be *any reasonable Director interpretation* of the Board policy being monitored.

All policies that instruct the Director will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the Board. The Board can monitor any policy at any time by any method, but will ordinarily depend on routine schedule as shown at the foot of each policy page.

There will be established an agreed-upon when the Director and the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson meet annually to carry out a formal appraisal based on the criteria agreed to and set at the beginning of the monitoring period. The format and process for this meeting will be negotiated and agreed upon between the Director and the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson. In the absence of one of these officers, another Trustee will act for them.



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POLICIES RELATING TO DIRECTOR LIMITATIONS

Director Responsibilities

The job of the Director is to manage WCPET in accordance with commonly accepted business and professional practice and ethics.

Accordingly the Director shall:

- not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organisational circumstance that is in any way unethical, unlawful, imprudent, or which violates any Board policy or expressed Board values;
- not conduct any business activity which is clearly outside WCPET competency areas;
- keep the Board informed of the true and accurate position of the outcomes of programmes and services, financial position, significant management issues and all matters having real or potential legal considerations for the organisation;
- submit data in a timely, accurate and understandable fashion addressing the various issues to be monitored by the Board;
- inform the Board of significant trends, implications of Board decisions, issues arising from policy matters or changes in the basic assumptions upon which the Board's strategic Results policies are based;
- present information in a manner which enhances Trustees' understanding of the issues contained therein;
- keep Trustees informed when for any reason there is actual or anticipated non-compliance of a Board policy;
- marshal for the Board as many staff and external points of view, issues and opinions as needed for fully informed Board choices;
- inform the Board of such occasions when it violates one of its own policies;.
- inform the Board of all matters having real or potential legal considerations for WCPET;
- ensure that there are effective communication channels relevant to the Board's task;
- deal with the Board as a whole except when responding to individual requests for information or requests from Board committees or working parties

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Budgeting and financial planning

Financial planning for any financial year or the remaining part of any financial year must be materially consistent with the Board's Strategic Results priorities.

Accordingly, the Director shall ensure that the budget:

- contains sufficient information to enable credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, cash flow, and disclosure of planning assumptions;
- projects current assets at any time to be greater than the current liabilities;
- provides for Board expenditure in accordance with the Cost of Governance policy;
- is adopted by the Board in accordance with the Board's Strategic Results policies.

Financial Condition

With respect to the actual, ongoing financial conditions and activities, the Director must protect against the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from Board priorities established in the Strategic Results policies.

Accordingly, the Director shall report to the Board:

any deviation from the projected Statement of Financial Performance which is greater than 10% of total revenue and or 10% of total expenditure and or 5% of the surplus on a trend basis;

any deviation from the projected Cash Flow Statement which is greater than 5% of the projected bank balance on a trend basis;

and shall provide the Board with a monthly bank certificate of the closing bank balance if so required.

To guard against any situation whereby WCPET is unable to function effectively and to provide essential services, the Director shall maintain as appropriate assessments and evaluations of risk factors which could conceivably disrupt WCPET, and ensure there are current and operable plans and systems in place that, in the event of disruptive events, will allow continuity of WCPET business.

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Investments

The investments of WCPET are to be invested in a manner that does not threaten WCPET financial security. Therefore the Director shall:

ensure that investments maximise long term total returns consistent with prudent levels of risk, whilst maintaining sufficient liquidity to enable WCPET to meet its day-to-day financial commitments;

ensure that returns on investments enhance the real value of the assets after the funds have been released to meet WCPET needs.

Protection of Assets

WCPET assets are to be protected, adequately maintained and not unnecessarily risked. Therefore the Director shall:

ensure that only authorised person's handle cash;

that funds are deposited in institutions where they are not exposed to above average risk;

that the assets are insured for what is considered necessary for prudent risk management;

be limited in the purchase goods or services;

(a) to protect against conflict of interest

(b) to \$2,000 without having obtained comparative prices and assessment of quality

(c) to \$5,000 without a stringent method of assuring the balance of long-term quality and cost;

prevent intellectual property, information or files to be used for purposes other than in WCPET best interests;

not allow insurances to terminate without Board notification;

take all reasonable steps to prevent WCPET, its Board and staff to claims of liability;

not allow plant and equipment to deteriorate through improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.

Remuneration and Benefits

With respect to employment, compensation and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers and volunteers, the Director must ensure that

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WCPET financial integrity or good name in the community is maintained at all times.

Therefore the Director shall:

only change his/her own remuneration or benefits with the approval of the Board;

establish remuneration or benefits which conform with industry averages in the sector having regard for the employee's skills, experience and the market conditions for such skills and conditions;

not cause unfunded liabilities to occur or in any way commit the organisation to benefits which incur unpredictable future costs.

Public Affairs

The Director shall not approve or in any way support any public affairs action or activity that in any way brings WCPET name into ill repute.

Therefore the Director shall not:

Make, or knowingly allow to be made, any statements to the public media or in any public situation that are derogatory or in any way damaging to WCPET;

Engage personally, or allow staff to engage, in any public role or activity that is inconsistent with the achievement of WCPET Strategic Results policies.

Make, or knowingly allow to be made any statements about WCPET which are reserved to the chairperson under the Chairperson's role policies.

Treatment of Staff

With respect to the employment and treatment of staff, the Director shall provide an environment that is fair, culturally safe, safe, dignified, not intrusive, and that provides appropriate confidentiality or privacy.

Accordingly, the Director shall not:

deny to any employees their right to personal dignity, safety (including cultural safety), ethical position-related dissent and to an approved and fair internal grievance process;

operate without written personnel policies that make clear rules for staff and protect against unfair practices such as preferential treatment for personal reasons;

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discriminate against any staff member expressing an ethical dissent;

violate any part of relevant workplace employment legislation;

deny the right of any staff member to join a relevant professional association or union or to have access to the services of that union as these relate to the workplace and related conditions;

fail to keep the Board fully informed about impending disputes and grievances that may lead to termination of employment or action against the Board;

prevent staff from bringing a grievance to the Board (via the Chairperson) when (a) a Board policy has been violated to his/her detriment; or (b) a Board policy does not adequately protect his or her human rights; or (c) when a matter which the staff member(s) considers poses a serious threat to the viability and/or reputation of the organisation occurs, has occurred or is imminently to occur. (Such matters may relate, but not be limited to, for example, financial wrong doing, serious ethical breaches, and conflicts of interest).

fail to ensure that all staff members are acquainted with their rights under this policy.



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POLICIES RELATING TO STRATEGIC RESULTS

These policies are available separately and are reviewed by the Board on a regular basis.

- Finance and Delegated Authorities policies
- Staff Remuneration and Development policies
- Research and Research Associations
- Student Placement

- Emergency Management Plan
- Maori Health Action Plan

