

Apprenticeships
Are Us



TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY POLICY



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INTRODUCTION

As a Registered Group Training Organisation (GTO), *Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd* complies with the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations*. These standards require transparency and accountability in managing apprentice and trainee placements, host business relationships, and stakeholder engagement. This policy aligns with *National Standard 1 – Effective Governance and Management*, which ensures that proper governance systems are in place to support effective reporting and accountability.

Apprenticeships Are Us Limited (ARU) places great value on its relationships with clients, members, volunteers, and various stakeholders who collaborate with the organisation to advance its mission. ARU acknowledges that transparency and accountability are foundational to fostering trust and nurturing these vital partnerships. This policy is designed to underscore the significance of transparency and accountability while guiding the ARU Board and Staff in establishing and executing measures in accordance with the Corporations Act, Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Governance Standards, and the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) guidelines to ensure an appropriate level of transparency and accountability.

This policy also ensures compliance with the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), which outlines the legal obligations of directors and officers to act in good faith, provide accurate financial reports, and ensure transparency in reporting to stakeholders. ARU will ensure all records, including financial and operational documents, are maintained in accordance with these legal obligations.

As a registered charity, *Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd* complies with the *ACNC Governance Standards*, which mandate transparency and accountability to the public, donors, members, and stakeholders. This policy is designed to uphold these standards by promoting open communication, accurate reporting, and ethical management of ARU's activities.

This policy operates as a controlled governance and compliance document and forms part of ARU's Quality Assurance Framework. It is relied upon as evidentiary support during regulatory audits, ACNC reviews, funding acquittals, and internal governance assurance activities.

PURPOSE

The primary objective of this policy is to acknowledge and promote the crucial role of transparency and accountability within Apprenticeships Are Us Limited. This document seeks to facilitate the development and implementation of practices and procedures that align with corporate governance standards and legal requirements, in order to enhance transparency and accountability.

This policy also establishes accountability mechanisms to ensure transparency and accuracy in reporting, defines responsibilities across governance and management functions, and supports continuous improvement through periodic review and Board oversight.

POLICY

Board Reporting

In fulfilling its reporting obligations, the ARU Board must act in accordance with its statutory and fiduciary duties under sections 180–184 of the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), ACNC Governance Standard 5 (Duties of Responsible Persons), and National Standard 1 – Effective Governance and Management.

1. The ARU Board must ensure that it complies with its legal and contractual reporting obligations. They include:
 - a. Reporting annually to the Members, in accordance with the requirements of the constitution, on the organisation’s activities in the preceding year, and providing an opportunity for questions.
 - b. Preparing financial reports as required by law.
 - c. Preparing an annual report.
 - d. Reporting to government agencies in accordance with the terms of grants and funding contracts and relevant governance standards.
 - e. Reporting to the Australian Taxation Office, and/or other relevant Commonwealth Government departments, in accordance with the requirements of its deductible gift recipient status.
 - f. Reporting to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).
 - g. In all reporting activities, the ARU Board must be mindful of its privacy law obligations. Reporting will be done in accordance with ARU’s *Privacy Policy*, ensuring that personal, sensitive, or confidential information is protected at all times. This applies to Host Business records, staff and apprentice records, and all stakeholder engagements. All reports prepared by the ARU Board must be supported by accurate, verifiable records and appropriate internal controls to ensure completeness, reliability, and audit readiness.
2. In addition to its specific legal and contractual obligations, the ARU Board will consider each year whether there are any other stakeholder relationships which could benefit from receiving a report from the ARU Board on the organisation’s activities and performance.
3. In preparing its reports, the ARU Board will consider the extent to which it can report on each of the following matters:
 - a. The purpose of Apprenticeships Are Us Limited
 - i. A report on the purpose of involves explaining the environment in which the organisation operates. It includes reporting on Apprenticeships Are Us Limited mission, vision and values, and explaining Apprenticeships Are Us Limited relevance in the current environment.
 - b. Apprenticeships Are Us Limited stakeholder reporting and engagement
 - i. This includes reporting on how stakeholder relationships are managed, how employees and volunteers are recruited, trained, rewarded, retained, and recognised, and how the organisation is funded.

c. Investments

- i. This includes reporting on the source of funds, investments, and investment targets.
- ii. It includes reporting on accountability mechanisms governing the use of the funds for investment.
- iii. It includes an assessment of Apprenticeships Are Us Limited ability to maintain the current levels of funding in the future, and how its fundraising approach is being evolved or adapted to changes in circumstances.
- iv. It includes reporting on investments, and the management oversight and skills in Apprenticeships Are Us Limited to manage investment risks and performance.
- v. It includes reporting on movements in the level of investment, particularly where it has fallen in any year.

d. Business strategy and mission

- i. This includes explaining the strategy and structures that enable Apprenticeships Are Us Limited to operate and to grow.
- ii. It includes identifying the priorities and associated budgets and allocation of resources.
- iii. It also includes honest self-assessment and disclosure of performance and plans to address underperformance and/or ongoing challenges, recognising that this helps to build trust.

This includes transparent disclosure of material risks, compliance issues, and corrective actions where required.

e. Governance structure and processes

- i. This includes reporting on governance structures, systems, processes and how risk management frameworks are aligned with those structures, systems and processes. This also includes disclosure of governance reviews, Board performance evaluations, and compliance monitoring activities where applicable.
- ii. It includes providing clear diagrams of the organisational structure with reporting lines and key roles identified.
- iii. It includes disclosure of qualifications, experience, and length of service of the members of the Board, Managing Director and senior management.
- iv. It includes reporting on how Apprenticeships Are Us Limited identifies and manages risks, and what risks are specific to Apprenticeships Are Us Limited in addition to general risks.

f. Activity and performance

- i. This includes reporting on outputs, outcomes and impacts.
- ii. It also includes reporting on KPIs.

g. Financial performance and position

- i. ARU will ensure financial accountability by preparing accurate financial reports that comply with the *Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)* and ACNC's financial reporting requirements. These reports will detail sources of revenue, financial performance, and risk management strategies. In line with *National Standard 3 – Risk Management*, ARU will identify and manage financial

risks, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently and ethically to support the organization's mission. Financial reports must be prepared in a manner that enables independent verification and demonstrates prudent financial stewardship, sustainability, and alignment with charitable purpose as required by the ACNC.

4. In undertaking its function of reporting to stakeholders, the ARU Board must be mindful of the organisation's privacy policy, underpinned by its privacy law obligations, and it must take care to act in the interests of Apprenticeships Are Us Limited.
5. Deliberations of the ARU Board and its sub-committees shall be dealt with in accordance with the ARU Board confidentiality policy/procedure. Unauthorised disclosure of confidential or personal information may result in disciplinary action and, where applicable, notification to regulators in accordance with legal obligations.
6. In addition to its legal and contractual obligations, the ARU Board will ensure that it provides clear, timely, and accessible reports to all relevant stakeholders. The Board will also ensure compliance with *National Standard 3* by implementing governance processes that support the reporting of accurate financial, operational, and compliance data. Stakeholder engagement, including host businesses, staff, and apprentices, will be central to ARU's transparency efforts, and these relationships will be managed with open communication and accountability.

Host Business Records

ARU will manage Host Business records in accordance with the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations*, ensuring that all records are maintained accurately and securely. These records must comply with privacy law obligations and the ACNC Governance Standards, ensuring that the privacy of host businesses is protected and that they are fully informed about their engagement with ARU.

Staff and Apprentice Records

ARU will maintain staff and apprentice records in compliance with the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*, ensuring that all employment-related records are managed in accordance with Australian employment law. Additionally, ARU will adhere to its privacy law obligations, ensuring that staff and apprentice records are securely stored, and access is restricted to authorized personnel only.

Member records

ARU will manage member records in line with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *ACNC Governance Standards*. This includes ensuring that records are maintained accurately and are available to members, subject to the appropriate privacy protections. ARU will take reasonable steps to ensure that members' personal data is protected from unauthorised access or misuse.

Access to Minutes of General Meetings and the Members Register

Access to minutes of general meetings and the Members Register will be provided in accordance with the terms of the constitution, the *Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)*, and the *ACNC Governance Standards*. ARU will ensure that these records are accessible to members and relevant stakeholders, while also protecting the confidentiality of sensitive or personal information as required by privacy laws.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff are responsible for implementing and adhering to the policies and procedures developed by the Managing Director.

To foster enhanced accountability and transparency with stakeholders, it is imperative for the ARU Board to establish robust internal documentation and reporting practices.

The Managing Director assumes a pivotal role in this regard, entrusted with the responsibility of orchestrating the implementation of comprehensive systems and processes designed to effectively capture, record, and analyse information essential for enabling the ARU Board to carry out its reporting functions diligently. This encompasses the regular presentation of operational updates to the ARU Board, ensuring that they remain well-informed about the activities of Apprenticeships Are Us Limited.

Moreover, the Managing Director is charged with the task of formulating and implementing privacy and other pertinent policies that govern the access and utilisation of critical documents. This includes, but is not limited to, records pertaining to Host Business, staff and apprentice records, member data, and minutes of general meetings. The objective is to ensure that these policies align seamlessly with the ARU Board's transparency and accountability policy, guaranteeing the highest standards of data privacy and responsible document handling.

Concurrently, it is incumbent upon the staff to diligently implement and adhere to the policies and procedures devised under the guidance of the Managing Director. This collaborative effort across the organization serves as a pillar of support for maintaining and further enhancing the level of accountability and transparency in all endeavours undertaken by Apprenticeships Are Us Limited.

The ARU Board, Managing Director, and all staff are responsible for ensuring transparency and accountability in all reporting functions. The Board will oversee the development of internal reporting frameworks that align with the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations*, the *ACNC Governance Standards*, and the *Corporations Act*

2001 (Cth). Staff must adhere to the internal reporting requirements and ensure the accuracy of all records they manage.

AUTHORISATION

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Managing Director

Apprenticeships Are Us Limited

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Authorised by	Authorisation Date	Sections	Amendment
1.1	M. Wentworth	27/10/2022	All	N/A
1.2	M. Wentworth	07/11/2023	All	Cover page, minor information update
1.3	M. Wentworth	31/10/2024	All	Information update
1.4	M. Wentworth	23/01/2026	All	Information update