



Academic Governance Body (AGB) – Terms of Reference

Gestalt Therapy Brisbane Pty Ltd (GTB) has a properly constituted academic board which provides the institution with access to expertise to ensure that GTB has high standards of higher education provision. GTB's Academic Governance Body (AGB) has been given delegated authority from the GTB Corporate Governance Body (CGB) according to its Terms of Reference.

These Terms of Reference describe GTB's AGB and the responsibility it has for the delivery of the GTB accredited programs. The Governance Personnel Structure Diagram, identifies the reporting and delegated authority given to it from the CGB.

Terms of Reference

The AGB holds the role of academic governance and does not take on corporate governance responsibilities. The Board of Directors of Gestalt Therapy Brisbane are accountable to the CGB and the AGB.

The AGB is given delegated authority from the CGB to ensure that GTB's financial, academic and managerial operations as they relate to the delivery of the two accredited higher education programs are appropriate, documented, observed, and regularly reviewed for the purposes of ensuring high academic quality and scholarship in the delivery of the higher education courses. This action will be in accordance with GTB's Constitution, Governance Framework and appropriate Policies and Procedures.

1. The AGB takes delegated direction from the CGB in the oversight of the implementation of strategic developments to ensure academic excellence. The AGB reports to the CGB regarding these matters.
2. The AGB has a sub-committee the Gestalt Education Processes Committee to which it delegates matters relating to academic review according to its Terms of Reference.
3. The AGB regularly inspects the academic quality of the courses offered and delivered at GTB.
4. The AGB critically evaluates the quality and effectiveness of educational innovations or proposals for innovations.
5. The AGB holds delegated authority through the CGB to establish, review and ratify the academic policies within GTB in order to academically govern and carry out GTB's educational mission, vision and values.
6. The AGB establishes and ensures the maintenance of academic leadership of GTB consistent with the two degrees it offers, the Graduate Certificate in Gestalt Therapy and the Master of Gestalt Therapy.

7. The AGB maintains oversight of academic integrity, including monitoring of potential risk.
8. The AGB ensures that students are provided with guidance on what constitutes academic misconduct and the development of good practices in maintaining academic integrity.
9. The AGB ensures there is interim monitoring of the quality of teaching and supervision of students, student progress and overall delivery of units (yearly program) within each course of study.
10. The AGB ensures that all GTB's accredited courses are subject to a seven year comprehensive review. This review is overseen by academic governance processes and include external referencing or other benchmarking activities. The review will include an assessment of:
 1. Learning outcomes
 2. Methods for assessment of learning outcomes
 3. Extent of students' achievement of learning outcomes
 4. Modes of delivery
 5. The changing needs of students
 6. Identified risks to the quality of the course of study
 7. Emerging developments in the field of education
 8. Current requirements of TEQSA
11. The AGB ensures that all GTB academic staff have opportunities to review feedback on their teaching and are supported in enhancing their delivery
12. The AGB concerns itself with student welfare through the Year Coordinator structure which reports to the Board of Directors in their Executive function.
13. The results of regular monitoring, reviews, external referencing and student feedback are used by the AGB to mitigate future risks to the quality of the education provided and to guide and evaluate improvements including the use of data:
 - a) On student progress and success to inform admission criteria; and,
 - b) Approaches to course design, teaching, supervision, learning and academic support.
14. The AGB will report to the CGB after each of its meetings.
15. The AGB will engage in benchmarking activities to review its education operations.

The AGB will comprise 7-10 members.

Composition

The membership of the AGB has a majority of external members drawn from the psychotherapy profession and Higher Education and/or University institutions. Consequently, its membership consists of:

- A. Director/Directors of GTB;
- B. Academics from public sector or private sector educational institutions who offer similar or associated courses of study;
- C. Professionals with relevant backgrounds drawn from organizations or associations within the Counselling/Therapy industry;

- D. Independent practitioners with demonstrated experience in the practice of Counselling/therapy;

Standing Orders

The chair of the AGB will be a standing position and the person will be drawn from the membership of AGB but will not be a Director of GTB. The person who takes on this role will be given the title of Chair, Academic Governance Body, Gestalt Therapy Brisbane.

Minutes of the meetings of the Academic Governance Body will be prepared by the Secretary and the contents of the meetings will form part of Reports to the CGB, the Board of Directors of GTB and Accrediting bodies.

The Director of Education of GTB will report to the AGB through the Chair as to the changes or initiatives that have been implemented as a result of recommendations made by the AGB within its meeting processes. A report on academic issues at GTB will be tabled at each meeting by the Director of Education.

The composition of the current AGB is displayed in the addendum, along with brief biographies.

Roles & Responsibilities

Members will take responsibility for the following:

Educational processes

As delegated through the Corporate Governance Body (CGB) the AGB will:

- Accept student numbers at the beginning of each year, review the viability of GTB and make recommendations as to ongoing education;
- Ratify decisions about recognising prior learning and granting credit to student applicants into the Master of Gestalt Therapy course when a student is seeking enrolment on the basis of equivalence to an undergraduate degree under Policy No 8A: Procedures for the Selection of Students, or the student is dissatisfied with a decision made by the Directors of GTB;
- The AGB will inspect the academic achievement of each student and recommend the conferral of the awards of Graduate Certificate in Gestalt Therapy and Master of Gestalt Therapy to successful students to the CGB. The CGB will approve the giving of the awards and the awards be signed by the chair of the CGB together with the Directors.
- Receive a report at the beginning of each year as to the membership of the academic staff so that the academic leadership at GTB is maintained. Approve the suitability of academic staff. A current CV of all new academic staff members is to be submitted to the AGB.
- Ensure all academic staff have opportunity to review feedback of their teaching. To receive such reports.
- Receive and approve report from GTB on in-service plans and provisions for the development of academic staff for current year (Staff development and Scholarship Plan). AGB will make recommendations as to in-service and activities that promote learning and scholarship;
- Receive reports from the GTB's sub-committee GEP (Gestalt Educational Processes Committee).
- Send Minutes and Reports to the CGB on matters tabled at AGB meetings.
- Advise the Directors of GTB on any matters of an academic nature that come to the attention or AGB or on which the Directors of GTB seek advice.
- Accept and review any proposals for educational innovations.

- Establish benchmarking activities and provide reports on these to the CGB.
- Seeks, accepts and reviews from the GTB sub-committee GEP Committee interim monitoring of the quality of teaching, student progress and delivery of units over each year of teaching.

Academic Policy

As delegated through the Corporate Governance Body (CGB) the AGB will:

- Approve, review, develop, disseminate and monitor all academic policies related to academic standards in order to ensure that GTB carries out its mission;

Planning processes

As delegated through the Corporate Governance Body (CGB) the AGB will:

- **Receive, review and ratify those items in the** GTB budget that are relevant to the delivery of teaching and learning, namely: library allocation, professional development of staff allocation, teaching and learning allocation and academic staffing allocation.
- It is the responsibility of the AGB to make recommendations on budget allocations in matters concerning academic delivery.

Grievance processes

As delegated through the Corporate Governance Body (CGB) the AGB will:

- Receive advice on grievances that have become formal and entered into the 1st Stage of the Formal Grievance Process as per the GTB Policy No 3: Grievance Policy and Procedure;
- Deal with written letters of complaint addressed to the Chair, AGB, according to the second stage process as outlined in GTB's Policy No 3: Grievance Policy and Procedure.
- Respond as per the **second stage** of the GTB Policy No 3: Grievance Policy and Procedure: "If (the complainant is) unsatisfied with the response to the complaint or the time taken to resolve the matter, the complainant may submit the complaint in writing to the Chair, Academic Governance Body and ask that the matter be dealt with at a meeting of this committee. On receiving such a letter the Chair will call for a meeting of the AGB within a reasonable time, normally within 30 days of receipt of the complaint. Every effort will be made to make a decision within 30 days."
- Advise the CGB on any formal grievances that are in process.

Quality Assurance

As delegated through the Corporate Governance Body (CGB) the AGB will:

- Ensure that GTB has effective mechanisms to collect regular, valid and reliable feedback on academic matters from stakeholders, such as students, graduates and staff.
- Consider and act on relevant data including reviews generated by the GEP Committee according to the Terms of Reference such as teaching evaluations, student feedback, student attrition, progress rates, grade distributions, course completions and graduate satisfaction;
- Receive and review reports from the Directors of Education with regard to academic issues. These reports will include the analysis, as generated by the GEP Committee, of the feedback received from student feedback tools;
- Monitor and receive reports of non-compliance on the two academic courses offered by Gestalt Therapy Brisbane namely, the Graduate Certificate in Gestalt Therapy and the Master of Gestalt Therapy;

External relationships

As delegated through the Corporate Governance Body (CGB) the AGB will:

- AGB sets up benchmarking activities of GTB's academic performance against other appropriate higher education institutions to identify and act upon areas requiring improvements and advising on the comparability of the courses to similar courses at universities and other private higher education providers; and,
- Promote the academic standing of GTB with professionals, accrediting bodies, professional associations and other stakeholders with whom GTB is or might be a partner.

Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least twice per year and usually will meet between 3 to 4 times a year.

A quorum (half the recognised membership plus one) must be at each meeting.

Members will hold office for a period of 5 years commencing in March of each year. Membership can be renewed for an additional period of 5 years and further years with review.

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Committee at which he or she is present. If the Chair is not present another member (not one of the Directors) will chair the meeting.

The Terms of Reference of the Academic Governance Body shall be reviewed at its inaugural meeting every three years.

Composition of AGB as at 2020

Refer to Governance Delegation Framework