

SCHOOL COUNCIL SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

School councils play a key role in Victorian government schools, supporting the school to provide the best possible educational outcomes for students.

Principals, as Executive Officers of school council can access the School Council Portal to complete and submit the School Council Self-Assessment Tool. The School Council Portal is located at: <https://scp.educationapps.vic.gov.au>

The self-assessment tool can be distributed to all members of council. This document will help members as a group, to reflect, discuss and identify their capabilities when matched against the roles and responsibilities of the council. Principals will then be required to log into the School Council Portal and submit the self-assessment.

This instructional video provides information about the School Council Portal and the online self-assessment tool, including instructions on how to complete and submit the form online.

The effectiveness of a school council relies on both the skills and expertise of its individual members, and on council working as a team.

Under the *Public Administration Act 2004*, school councils are required to assess their performance on an annual basis. By using this self-assessment tool early in the life of the new council, a council will be able to assess its strengths and identify areas where it would benefit from development and training. It is also good governance practice for a school council to regularly review its operation and effectiveness and this could be done by revisiting the tool, or parts of it, later in the year.

The sections of this self-assessment tool correspond to the Department's *Improving School Governance* (ISG) training modules. Links to the modules are provided in each section of the tool.

This self-assessment tool consists of a series of statements school councillors can discuss as a group. A council can then rate itself as a group using the ratings scale and descriptors below.

Lower ratings will indicate possible areas for development and training. Training information is provided on the last page of the tool.

+Rating scale

1 Emerging	We are beginning to do this
2 Evolving	We are working this into our systems and routines
3 Established	We consistently do this and we do it very well

Governance

School council:	1	2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> members have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understands the legislative framework of the Acts, Regulations and Ministerial Orders that underpin their authority. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussions and actions collectively reflect an understanding of and commitment to the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussions and decisions reflect an understanding of their role and the differences between the governance role of council and the operational role of the principal and school administration. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is able to identify and manage actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. 			

Further information about governance and school council operations is found in *the Improving School Governance*, Governance module in the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) at School Council - Training and Good Governance (link <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy>)

School council operations

School council:	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a set of Standing Orders that are reviewed annually. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> meets with a quorum at least 8 times per year. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> receives meeting agenda and papers at least five days where possible prior to the meeting. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a meeting minute taker to record items discussed and decisions made. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has delegated school council powers and functions where appropriate. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses subcommittees and working groups to effectively manage school council business. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> holds a public meeting annually to report on the proceedings of council for the period since the previous public meeting, present the Annual Report to the School Community and present a copy of the accounts of the council, if they have been audited. 		

Further information about governance and school council operations is found in *the Improving School Governance*, Governance module [in the Policy and Advisory Library \(PAL\) at School Council - Training and Good Governance](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy) (link <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy>)

Strategic planning for school improvement

School council understands:	1	2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school's values, vision and mission 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO 2.0) and school improvement cycle 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and uses data to evaluate and report on school performance. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> its role in the development and monitoring of key processes and documents, including: the School Strategic Plan 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> its role in the monitoring of the Annual Implementation Plan and how it reflects goals and targets in the School Strategic Plan. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> its role to review and comment on the Annual Report to the School Community. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> its role in the four yearly Pre-review Self-Evaluation and School Review. 			

Further information about the role of the school council in strategic planning is found in the *Improving School Governance*, Strategic Planning module [in the Policy and Advisory Library \(PAL\) at School Council - Training and Good Governance](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy) (link <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy>)

Finance

School council:	1	2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understands its role with respect to budgets, procurement, financial controls and reports. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> appropriately fulfils its role in approving the annual school budget and monitoring expenditure. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> appropriately fulfils its role with respect to the school's internal controls and financial reports. 			

- appropriately fulfils its role with respect to fundraising, as specified in the Schools Finance Manual

Further information about the finance role of school councils is found in the *Improving School Governance*, Finance module [in the Policy and Advisory Library \(PAL\) at School Council - Training and Good Governance](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy) (link <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy>).

Policy development and review

School Council understands:	1	2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the role and purpose of policy in school governance. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • which school policies fall within its powers and functions and has processes in place to ensure those policies are appropriately reviewed, approved and recorded. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to develop policies consistent with DET guidance and resources (see information in the School Policy Template portal). 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to write school policies that are accessible to the community, which achieve their intended purpose and best meet the needs of the school, its students and the community (including alignment with the School Strategic Plan and address educational, social and cultural diversity). 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • which school policies require further community consultation and the nature and extent of this consultation for each policy. 			

Further information about policy development and review is found in the *Improving School Governance*, Policy and Review module [in the Policy and Advisory Library \(PAL\) at School Council - Training and Good Governance](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy) (link <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy>).

The [School Policy Templates Portal](#) lists those policies that are relevant to school councils, whether the policy requires or does not require school council approval and when consultation is recommended or required. The portal requires users to have an Education email account and is accessible by principals, school staff and school council presidents.

Community engagement

School council...	1	2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understands the benefits of engaging with the community 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes members who reflect the diversity of their community. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knows and engages with the school's community to build productive relationships 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> productively leads consultation with the community through meetings, and focus groups 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shares information using reports, newsletters, social media etc, with the school community, as appropriate 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> members support school council decisions in the school community. 			

School council president

The school council president...	1	2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understands their leadership role and responsibilities and those of the principal. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understands the characteristics of an effective school council. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> runs school council meetings appropriately according to the Standing Orders. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> engages all members in frank, open and respectful discussion. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understands the processes for effectively making decisions. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively resolves conflict, disagreements, concerns and complaints. 			

Further information about community engagement and the role of school council president is found in the Improving School Governance, School Council President module [in the Policy and Advisory Library \(PAL\) at School Council - Training and Good Governance \(link https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy \)](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy)

Previous school council training completed

Enter the total number of current members on your school council before completing the table below:

School Council Training	Number of current school councillors who have completed training in the past two years
Viewed Induction Video https://vimeo.com/545797330/7d226593fc	
Governance	
Strategic planning	
Finance	
Policy and Review (Online only)	
School Council President	

NB. Ideally, everyone on council will view the induction video and complete governance training, then sufficient members will have completed training in the other modules so that they will be able to advise and, where appropriate, lead council in these areas.

From the self-assessment...

What key training / projects / actions will school council undertake to address areas identified for development: please provide a minimum of one response:

Example: "School council will undertake governance training."

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

The Department provides free training to school councils of Victorian government schools. The training is based on the *Improving School Governance* (ISG) materials that **are available on the Department's website and updated each year**, at <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy>. The ISG has five modules: Governance; Strategic Planning; Finance; Policy and Review and the School Council President.

The Department offers the face to face and virtual live training, free of charge, in four modules: Governance; Strategic Planning; Finance and the School Council President.

Book training at: <https://www.synergistiq.com/sct-home/>

The ISG training is also offered in an interactive online format in all five modules. School councillors self-register to have access to the five modules, an induction video and additional online mini modules - running meetings, dealing with conflict and reaching agreement, community engagement, school council elections and being a school councillor.

The online training is available at: <https://lms.learneyo.com/DETSC/>