The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (the Act) requires the ACFE Board and the Regional Councils to consult with a range of stakeholders ‘as a matter of general practice’.

## The ACFE Board

The ACFE Board must

(c) consult, as a matter of general practice, with—

(i) the Regional Councils; and

(ii) the governing boards of adult education institutions; and

(iii) the boards of TAFE institutes; and

(iv) any person or organisation providing or using adult, community and further education—

on any matter of general concern about adult, community and further education;

from *Education and Training Reform Act, s. 3.3.5*

## ACFE Regional Councils

Consultation provides Regional Councils with the ‘regional intelligence’ to undertake the functions listed in the Act.

Regional Councils must consult as a matter of general practice with any person or organisation who uses or provides adult, community and further education and any other education and training organisation in its region, including the board of any TAFE institute which provides or offers adult, community and further education in the region and the governing board of an adult education institution if it provides or offers adult, community and further education in the region.

from *Education and Training Reform Act, s. 3.3.18 (3) (a)*

## Why consult

As well as being required by the Act, effective consultation enables better-informed advice to the ACFE Board and contributes to improved services for learners.

Stakeholders can contribute their expertise to policy, program development and services, have their issues heard and participate in the decision-making process.

Through consultation, Regional Councils can tap into local knowledge and ‘road-test’ policy initiatives or proposals.

## Who to consult

Depending on the topic, you might consult any or all the following in the region:

* Employers and businesses
* Industry bodies/associations
* Local government
* Communities and community organisations
* Learn Local providers
* TAFE institutes and their Boards who are active in the region
* AMES Australia and their Board
* Registered training organisations and higher education providers
* Schools and non-school senior secondary education providers
* Learners and the organisations who support and refer them (government and community).

## What to consult about

The ACFE Board’s 2020–25 strategy provides the framework for your consultation. When your Regional Council is asked for specific information about the impact of a policy or decision, consultation will help you form a more complete picture.

Try to ensure that your consultation ‘question’ is specific and that the people you are consulting can see its relevance to their interest group or community.

## Choosing how to consult

The approach to any consultation will depend on:

* the issue and its significance
* how much formality is required
* the time and resources available.

Department staff will assist you to determine the most appropriate way to gain the information you need.