

New Unit: BTX5090
Good Governance and Accountability in Not for Profit Organisations and Social Enterprises
Winter (Intensive) Semester, 2009

This unit examines the laws governing not for profit organisations including corporations law, Associations Incorporation Acts, tax law, trusts and the roles of various regulators. It also explores various techniques of good governance – going beyond legal compliance - including board procedure, reporting and stakeholder engagement to enhance organisational learning and performance in community organisations, aid organisations and social enterprises.

The unit is tailored to:

- **those who wish to work in the not for profit sector**
- **advisors to the sector, such as accountants, lawyers and board members**
- **those currently working in community organisations, aid organisations or businesses that have social purposes who want to make a concrete difference to the good governance and increased accountability of their organisations.**

The unit provides practical advice and draws on experts from law, accounting and management. It also examines case studies of not-for-profit and social enterprises as they have implemented new systems of governance and accountability.

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The not for profit (NFP) sector is now larger than the mining industry in its contribution to GDP and employment in Australia. In addition to its direct contribution to the economy, through, for instance, buttressing communities in difficult times, it also plays a crucial role in bringing people together and fostering social capital. The laws regulating this sector are notoriously complex with different Associations Incorporation Acts in each state as well as the option of becoming incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. NFP organisations must also navigate tax concessions and exemptions rules, as well as fundraising laws. This unit provides a simple guide to these laws.

Whilst many NFP organisations are strictly *non*-profit, a large proportion now has commercial arms in order to sustain their social purposes. In addition to the NFP sector, there is a growing aspect of the 'for profit' sector which also operates with some social purposes. Following the success and international recognition of companies like the Body Shop, more and more companies are turning to this model of entrepreneurship, based on sustainability and heightened accountability to a wider sector of the community. Managing and reporting for a social purpose is different and perhaps more challenging, to managing for a strictly commercial purpose. This unit draws on management, accounting and industry experience to present different models of governance and stakeholder engagement.