

Glossary Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The purpose of this Policy is to establish use of a single authoritative glossary of key terminology (terms), acronyms, and abbreviations across Macquarie University and its controlled entities.

(2) This Policy sets out the governance structures, principles, and standards that underpin the management of the Macquarie University Glossary.

Background

(3) Terminology is at the core of language, and the general understanding and use of terminology affects our ability to effectively define and communicate information. As such, clearly defined terminology supports good governance, coherent policies, principles, rules and procedures, and accountability and decision making. Clearly defined terminology is also an effective way to describe the scope of information that needs to be recorded in University systems or documents.

(4) Uncontrolled terminology leads to misunderstandings, inefficiencies, and potential compliance breaches, and as such, can lead to increased operational, legal, and financial, risk to the University. Controlled terminology is a fundamental requirement for data quality management.

(5) Governance of University terms is core to the overall governance of our information.

(6) The quality of our information underpins the University's ability to meet its strategic objectives.

Scope

(7) This Policy applies to:

- a. all Macquarie University staff including:
 - i. consultants and independent contractors (and their employees) engaged by Macquarie University and its controlled entities;
 - ii. employees of corporations engaged by Macquarie University under a contract to provide services to Macquarie University; and
 - iii. volunteers of the University.
- b. all Macquarie University students;
- c. all Macquarie University campuses and locations and controlled entities; and
- d. all Macquarie University physical and online operations and processes.

Section 2 - Policy

(8) University terms and definitions are information assets and must be managed accordingly.

(9) All terms in the Macquarie University Glossary will be governed as follows:

- a. a term will have an appointed Steward which will be one of the three Data Governance Groups: Students and Teaching, Research, and Professional Services;
- b. a term will have a Data Custodian who will be the approval authority, as nominated by the respective Data Governance Group (Steward); and
- c. a term will have a Data Governance Analyst who will be responsible for defining the term in consultation with appropriate Data Custodian and other stakeholders.

(10) A term must be defined if any of the following apply:

- a. it is used in a report or other published communication, such as (but not limited to): rules, policies, procedures, codes, regulations, strategy documents;
- b. it may be easily confused;
- c. it means something different between functional areas;
- d. it is used in legislation or government regulations; or
- e. it is used differently or more precisely than would be expected in standard English.

(11) A term will have one definition. If a different definition is required for an existing term in a different context, or for a different purpose (e.g. within a different business function), it will require a different term with its own name and definition. Where a term is already defined within a policy, procedure, guideline or rule that term will apply for the purposes of that document. However, the Macquarie University Glossary term must be considered for usage within the document upon review.

(12) A definition will be written in accordance with the [Appendix 1 Definitions Standards](#).

(13) All terms must be established in accordance with the [Glossary Procedure](#) and [Glossary Term Life Cycle Model](#) in order to be included in the Macquarie University Glossary.

(14) Terms will be reviewed annually or as required.

(15) A term that is no longer fit for purpose will be archived rather than deleted from the University Glossary. The reason it is no longer fit for purpose will be recorded in the University Glossary (e.g. "replaced by another term").

Location of Macquarie University Glossary

(16) The Macquarie University Glossary will be publicly available within [Policy Central](#). The University will only permit one location for the Glossary i.e. no other Glossary will be published on any other University webpage or system. Subsets of the Glossary may be made available through other University systems as necessary.

Governance Structure

(17) The four Data Governance Groups, which are the Stewards of a term, will report to the Data and Information Governance Committee (DIGC) and the Vice-Chancellor regarding terms recommended for use within the Macquarie University Glossary. The reporting hierarchy is shown in the [Macquarie University Glossary Governance Structure](#).

(18) The Data and Information Governance Committee (DIGC) is accountable for the overall governance of the Macquarie University Glossary and the alignment of terms and language used across the University. The DIGC membership is specified within the DIGC Terms of Reference.

(19) The four Data Governance Groups will act as Stewards of their respective terms. The Data Governance Groups will consist of representatives from functional areas of the University. Each Group will nominate one or more Data Custodians to approve terms based on subject matter expertise.

(20) A Data Governance Group may establish a working group as needed, on the recommendation of the Data

Governance Analyst and endorsed by the relevant Data Custodian. A working group is a dynamic team that will develop the definition for a specific term, or a set of terms, for potential inclusion in the University Glossary.

Assigning terms to a Data Governance Group

(21) A term will be assigned to one of three Data Governance Groups:

- a. Students and Teaching;
- b. Research;
- c. Professional Services; or
- d. MQ Health.

(22) Assigning terms to a functional area grouping allows for the management of those terms and definitions within the business function that creates and / or primarily uses that term.

(23) Although a term may be used by multiple functions / functional areas, it will be managed under one Data Governance Group, ensuring a single point of accountability for aligning and approving the definition across all business functions and ensuring the ongoing life cycle management of that term.

(24) If there is a dispute regarding the assignment of a term, it will be resolved by the DIGC. If term ownership cannot be resolved, it will be escalated to the Vice-Chancellor.

Section 3 - Procedures

(25) Refer to the [Glossary Procedure](#).

Section 4 - Guidelines

(26) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(27) The following definitions apply for the Purposes of this Policy:

- a. Data Custodian means a member of staff that will be responsible for reviewing and approving one or more terms within the Glossary, in consultation with the Data Governance Analyst, based on subject matter expertise.
- b. Data Governance Analyst means the responsible person who is trained and assigned to write term definition content for the Glossary, and will coordinate with the relevant Data Governance Group to assign and prioritise terms for inclusion in the Glossary.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	6th September 2021
Review Date	6th September 2024
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	6th September 2021
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Nicole Gower Vice-President, Professional Services
Responsible Officer	David Miller Chief Data Officer +612 9850 1624
Enquiries Contact	Business Intelligence and Reporting