

Policy Cycle Tips Stage 1

Approval to Proceed

INTRODUCTION

The Policy Unit is available to guide stakeholders throughout the policy cycle.

Policy Cycle: Stage 1: Approval to Proceed

Stage 2: Drafting / Writing

Stage 3: Consultation

Stage 4: Document Approval

Stage 5: Publication

Stage 6: Implementation and Communication

Stage 7: Evaluation and Review

Before any drafting or redrafting of a policy document begins, approval to proceed must be obtained from the relevant Approval Authority, as set out in the Delegations of Authority Register, using the Approval to Proceed Checklist.

IDENTIFY REASONS FOR POLICY GAP OR AMENDMENTS REQUIRED

Changes may have been made to:

- Federal or state legislation, regulations, standards or codes
- Macquarie University governance instruments (By-laws, Rules, Codes, Policy Documents)
- TEQSA Threshold Standards, Higher Education Standards Framework, AQF, NHMRC Regulations, ARC Standards etc.
- Macquarie University's strategic direction, priorities, or structure of the University or of a major functional area
- Macquarie University risk ratings
- Macquarie University business systems.

Issues may have arisen through feedback from:

- committees, faculties, offices, executives
- implementation or evaluation processes.

The Policy Document may soon be due for review.

RESEARCH GOOD PRACTICE RESPONSES

Undertake benchmarking across the higher education sector ([Universities Australia](https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/)) and other relevant industries to identify good practice responses that could also be appropriate for Macquarie University.

Refer to existing University governance instruments that may already be partly addressing the policy gap and that could / will need to be modified or consolidated to address the issue:

- [Policy Central](#)
- [Calendar](#) of Governance, Legislation and Rules
- [Functional area webpages](#)
- [Academic Senate](#)
- Governance Services
- MQ Compliance and Risk Network.

Contact the Policy Unit policy@mq.edu.au to discuss further options.

CONSULT KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Key stakeholders can be drawn from:

- Staff who may already be handling the issue or who will need to handle it. This group is important so that the Implementation Officer can better understand how the issue is currently being addressed at Macquarie as each Faculty / Office may be approaching the matter in a different way. This group could form the targeted 'stakeholders' for future consultation, or 'content experts' for drafting / redrafting of the document(s), or 'policy writer' when convening a policy project team.
- Delegations of Authority [Register](#) to ascertain the Senior Executive responsible for approving policy documents within the functional area. Members of the Executive (and Senior Managers) are key stakeholders in policy, and can provide valuable guidance and feedback as drafts are developed, since they are ultimately responsible for policy compliance. They also tend to have considerable experience and access to more streams of information within and outside the institution.
- MQ Compliance Coordinator for guidance on risk ratings and compliance matters that need to be embedded into the process and the document.
- [Policy Unit](#) to determine whether the issue overlaps with other documents already under development, to confirm the appropriate Approval Authority and to understand the document development process.

NEXT STEP

If the above analysis provides evidence that a new policy document is needed or substantial amendments need to be made to an existing document:

Complete the [Approval to Proceed](#) Checklist, which includes information on:

- the reason/s for the policy gap
- the benchmarking, research and consultation already undertaken
- other documents that may need to be developed or amended as a result of the new or amended policy document, and
- the proposed Implementation Officer, Policy Writer, and Project team members.

Submit the *Approval to Proceed Checklist* to the relevant Approval Authority/ies **before** any drafting of the new / revised document commences.