

Policy Cycle Tips Stage 2

Drafting Policy Documents

INTRODUCTION

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

Once the [Approval to Proceed Checklist](#) has been endorsed by the relevant Approval Authority and an Implementation Officer has been nominated by that Approval Authority, drafting or redrafting of the policy document can commence.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER

The Implementation Officer is to:

1. establish a **Policy Project Team** so that different appropriate perspectives can be considered in the drafting. The Team can be drawn from:
 - relevant stakeholders or content experts who may be implementing the policy document in their functional areas
 - coordinators of the business systems that will be relevant to manage the information (e.g. Tracker, AMIS, HRIS, TRUTH, TRIM, IRIS)
 - if an Academic or Research policy document, the Academic Senate or its Committees.
2. identify a **Policy Writer** to do the actual writing and recording of the views, ideas and opinions of the Policy Project Team and feedback from consultation, and progress drafts through the Policy Cycle and approval processes. The Policy Writer could be a member of the Policy Project Team who is located in either the section of the University with expertise in the subject area or the area that will be responsible for compliance and implementation of the policy document. The Implementation Officer might also be the Policy Writer.
3. advise Policy Unit that a Policy document is under development or under review and seek relevant assistance throughout the process.

BENCHMARKING, RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

The Implementation Officer and/or Policy Writer is to:

- review the information in the completed *Approval To Proceed Checklist* and the outcome of the benchmarking exercise undertaken in Stage 1

- locate and review any legislative or regulatory requirements or associated [University Governance](#) instruments or [policies](#) that impact on or inform the new or amended policy document
- analyse and assess whether the intent of the new or amended policy document will be consistent with that regulatory framework and the University's current strategic objectives and priorities (e.g. cost-benefit analysis, risk assessment, exploration of theoretical scenarios, literature review, seeking expert advice)
- consider who, how and when consultation will occur on the various drafts and what feedback will be sought. Ensure the dates of appropriate committee meetings (e.g. Academic Senate, University Council) are identified so that timeframes for consultation can be set
- consider how and when the policy document will be implemented and by whom. There is no point writing a policy document that cannot be implemented, and
- consider how to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy document and when and how compliance will be evaluated (refer also *Policy Cycle Tips Stage 7 - [Evaluation and Review](#)*). This will assist in deciding when the document should next be reviewed and what format the review will take.

WRITING POLICY DOCUMENTS

An initial draft of a policy document is written by the designated Policy Writer. Amending an existing policy document is initiated by obtaining the most recent word-version from the [Policy Unit](#).

Structure, content and language used in each policy document needs to be consistent with current [templates](#), the University's Style Guide, the University [Glossary](#) and other [University governance instruments](#).

The language used in policies is quite different to the language used in procedures, schedules and other supporting material. This is to avoid ambiguity. If you are writing

- policies - include *WHAT* the principle is, *WHEN* it applies and *WHO* it covers
- procedures - begin with a flowchart. If required, procedures may also include text describing the *ACTIONS* needed to achieve the necessary results and the *POSITION TITLE* of who is responsible for taking those actions
- schedules - structure the information into a table if possible (eg criteria for promotion).

See also *Policy Cycle Tips Stage 2- [Writing Policy Documents](#)*.

IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

Start to consider how the new or revised document is to be implemented and communicated across the University. Draft the [Implementation and Communication Plan](#). This will need to be submitted with the policy document for final approval (Stage 4).

NEXT STEP

Ensure that the draft document receives wide consultation. See *Policy Cycle Tips Stage 3 - [Consultation](#)*.