

# Policy Framework (MPF1308)

## 1. Objectives

1.1. The objectives of the Policy Framework (the 'Framework') are to:

- (a) govern the development, establishment, amendment and review of policies to ensure relevance, authority and consistency with internal and external legislation; and
- (b) define the roles, responsibilities and authorities in relation to the development, establishment, amendment and review of policies.

## 2. Scope

This Framework applies to all policy and processes developed for and on behalf of the University.

## 3. Authority

This Framework is made under the [University of Melbourne Act 2009 \(Vic\)](#) and the Council, Academic Board and Vice-Chancellor [Regulations](#).

## 4. Policy

4.1. Policy must:

- (a) be created only where there is a clear and justifiable need, with long-term application to the University;
- (b) align with University objects in the Act, strategic and business plans;
- (c) be consistent with legal and regulatory requirements, other policies, and community expectations;
- (d) apply and be binding across the University;
- (e) be developed, established, amended and reviewed in consultation with key stakeholders;
- (f) assign roles and responsibilities to ensure transparency;
- (g) align with the University's published commitments with regard to diversity and the inclusion of all people;
- (h) be in accordance with the current University's [policy style guide](#);
- (i) be written in plain language to aid comprehension;
- (j) where appropriate, link to one or more relevant business processes (processes may be available to staff only);
- (k) encourage responsible process ownership; and
- (l) be able to be implemented within University resources.

4.2. Policies exist within a broader hierarchical [regulatory framework](#). In all cases, documents must be consistent with any requirements or restrictions imposed by higher-order instruments. The regulatory framework consists of:

- (a) the Act;
- (b) University statutes;
- (c) University regulations;
- (d) policies; and
- (e) processes.

4.3. Only policies in the central policy repository on the University of Melbourne website are authorised policies of the University. No local policies may be made or enforced by any part of the University.

4.4. Processes supporting the operationalising of a policy must be created in accordance with the University's Process Framework. Processes must be:

- (a) fully aligned with and consistent with the authorising policy; and
- (b) approved for development by the policy approver.

4.5. Local operating practices/guidelines must not be inconsistent with any document contained within the regulatory framework described in section 4.2.

## 5. Procedural principles

5.1. New policy must be initiated by a policy proposal. Approvers of policy proposals must:

- (a) endorse the proposal prior to the final drafting of the policy;
- (b) assess the proposal against the principles of this Framework; and
- (c) ensure the relevant process owner/s are notified of the endorsed proposal.

5.2. A policy must:

- (a) record the policy approver and policy steward;
- (b) comply with the University policy template which mandates sections for:
  - (i) policy objectives;
  - (ii) scope of the application of the policy;
  - (iii) titles of University legislation which provides its authority and any Australian or Victorian legislation with which it supports compliance;
  - (iv) policy;

- (v) procedural principles; and
  - (vi) a summary of roles and responsibilities in the policy.
- (c) where possible, consolidate content into fewer rather than more instruments based around a broad area of University operations; and
- (d) restrict content to policy and any procedural principles that direct how those principles are to be enacted.

5.3. Prior to a new policy or major amendment to a policy proceeding to approval:

- (a) the approval pathway must be set by the policy approver;
- (b) key stakeholders including diverse groups, as appropriate, must be consulted; and
- (c) legal advice regarding compliance must be obtained if the policy relates to:
  - (i) implementation of a legal requirement; or
  - (ii) a right or obligation established under the Act, University statutes or University regulations.

## Approval

5.4. Policy approvers are determined in accordance with University legislation. Policy approvers approve policy content as meeting the objectives of the policy as follows:

- (a) within scope of their authority Council, the Academic Board, the Vice-Chancellor or the Vice-Chancellor's delegate may:
- (i) approve new policy or major amendments to policy; and
  - (ii) rescind policy.
- (b) the designated policy steward may approve minor amendments to policy, provided notification is given to the relevant policy approver.

5.5. Typographical amendments may be made to policy by the relevant officer with responsibility for managing the University's policy repository, provided notification is given to the relevant policy steward within five working days of publishing the amendment.

5.6. New policy, major amendments to policy and rescissions of policy must be promulgated to areas of the University community affected by the policy.

## Reviews

5.7. A review must be undertaken by the policy steward of each policy against the principles set in this Framework:

- (a) every three years; or
- (b) more frequently if required by a precipitating event (e.g. new legislative requirements).

5.8. A formal scheduled three-yearly review may be deferred by the policy steward if an initial check indicates that the policy is not in need of change and this advice is provided to the relevant officer with responsibility for managing the University’s policy repository for the record. Each policy may only be deferred once (i.e. every policy must undergo a full review no less frequently than every six years).

5.9. During a policy review, all processes associated with the policy must also be reviewed by the relevant process owner to ensure that consistency is retained and any amendments cascaded to the process level.

5.10. The relevant officer with responsibility for managing the University’s policy repository must provide an annual report on policy reviews conducted under section 5.7 to the University Secretary who may report any non-compliance to Council.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

<i>Role/Decision/Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Conditions and limitations</i>
Approves policy proposal and sets approval pathway for new policy	President of Academic Board Chancellor Vice-Chancellor (or delegate)	Within scope of policy approval  May consult with policy steward or University Secretary on the appropriate approval pathway
Provides advice on approved policies  Drafts or oversees the drafting of policy  Consults with key stakeholders and obtains advice from legal services as required  Ensures new policy and major amendments to policy or rescissions of existing policy are promulgated	Policy steward	As per definition of ‘policy steward’ (section 7)
Policy approval (new policy, major amendments to and/or rescission of policy)	Council  Vice-Chancellor (or delegate)  Academic Board	Scope of authority is limited to University Governance duties, powers and functions in accordance with University legislation.  Scope of authority is limited to leadership, management and administration duties, powers and functions in accordance with University legislation. The scope of delegated authority is recorded in

		the Vice-Chancellor's Delegations Manual.  Scope of authority is limited to Academic Governance duties, powers and functions in accordance with University legislation.
Policy approval (minor amendments only)	Policy steward	Must notify the policy approver of the amendments
Conduct policy reviews	Policy steward	Every three to six years in accordance with sections 5.7 and 5.8
Enact typographical amendments	Officer responsible for managing the policy repository	As per definition of 'typographical amendment' (section 7)
Administer and maintain central policy repository	General Counsel & Executive Director, Legal and Risk	Enacted by the policy support team
Provide advice on policy compliance with Australian laws	General Counsel & Executive Director, Legal and Risk	
Timetable policy reviews	Director, Information Governance Services (or delegate)	

## 7. Definitions

**Approval pathway** means the pathway through which a policy must proceed in order to be approved.

**Board** means Academic Board.

**Key stakeholders** means persons, or a class of persons, whose roles or responsibilities are directly affected by a policy and includes policy approvers and relevant process owners.

**Local operating practices/guidelines** means mandatory processes or guidelines applicable at the level of an organisation unit (that is, at the level of a faculty, department, school, division or other organisation unit), approved by the head of the local organisational unit.

**Major amendment** includes a change that will impact on:

- (a) objectives of the policy;
- (b) the rights or obligations of any person; and/or
- (c) the implementation requirements, including resourcing of those requirements, of the policy.

**Minor amendment** includes a change that will not alter the rights or obligations of any person and is not likely to impact on:

- (a) objectives of the policy; and/or
- (b) the implementation requirements, including resourcing of those requirements, of the policy.

**Policy** means:

- (a) a formal statement of principle that regulates University operations; and
- (b) an instrument approved under this framework.

**Policy approver** means the relevant approval authority responsible for approving a new policy, a major amendment to an existing policy or the rescission of an existing policy as specified in section 5.4.

**Procedural principle** informs the steps to be taken to implement a policy.

**Policy steward** is a senior officer assigned by the policy approver and recorded on each policy instrument. Each policy is assigned one policy steward. Stewards are responsible for:

- (a) providing advice on approved policies under their stewardship;
- (b) drafting or overseeing the drafting of policy;
- (c) reviewing policy in accordance with this Framework;
- (d) consulting key stakeholders and obtaining advice from legal services as required;
- (e) approving minor amendments to policy; and
- (f) ensuring new policy and major amendments to policy or rescissions of existing policy are promulgated.

**Process** means the group of activities and tasks undertaken by staff to achieve a consistent output. Process development is governed by the University's Process Framework .

**Senior officer** in this Framework means a staff member who is Level 2 or Level 3 in the delegations framework.

**Typographical amendment** means change to nomenclature, correction of typographical, referencing and formatting errors, removing or repairing broken hyperlinks, and cosmetic changes required to support compliance with law, statute or regulation (eg updating the name or year of an Act, or the relevant clause number).

**University legislation** includes the University of Melbourne Act 2009, University statutes and University regulations.

## **POLICY APPROVER**

Council

## **POLICY STEWARD**

University Secretary

## REVIEW

This Framework is due to be reviewed by 12 May 2023.

## VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified
1	Council	9 November 2015	9 November 2015	New Policy Framework.
2	University Secretary	18 November 2015	18 November 2015	Editorial amendment to re-order section 5.2(b).
3	Governance and Nominations Committee authorised by Council	23 June 2016	24 June 2016	Add provision for local operating rules, add definition of local operating rules update 'supporting processes' and link to Policy Lifecycle Process.
4	Council	10 October 2019	14 October 2019	Inserted Section 4.1(h)
5	Council	6 May 2020	12 May 2020	Amendments introduced to include the requirement that diversity and inclusion be an active consideration in the development and review of all policies.  Major structural and governance amendments introduced throughout the Policy Framework to improve the way policies are initiated, amended, reviewed and approved.