

# Policy Governance Procedure

## Section 1 - Context

- (1) This procedure details how to:
- a. propose and categorise new policy documents
  - b. develop policies, procedures and resources
  - c. communicate and implement approved policy documents
  - d. conduct reviews
  - e. amend policy documents.

## Section 2 - Authority

- (2) Authority for this document is established by the [Policy Governance Framework](#).

## Section 3 - Scope

- (3) All staff proposing, maintaining and reviewing policy documents must follow this procedure.

## Section 4 - Procedure

### Policy Categories

- (4) The category of a policy document is determined with reference to the definitions in the [Policy Governance Framework](#).
- (5) If the appropriate category is unclear, the University Policy Manager will recommend the category to the approval authority. In doing so, the University Policy Manager must consider:
- a. subject matter
  - b. content
  - c. the intended consequence of the policy document.

- (6) A decision on policy category by the approval authority will be final.

### The University Policy Manager

- (7) The Executive Director, Governance, Legal and Strategic Operations is the University Policy Manager.
- (8) The University Policy Manager manages the [Policy Register](#) and attends to administrative and advisory matters (including policy assurance) to direct implementation of the Framework. The University Policy Manager provides guidance material on all aspects of policy governance, development and review.

(9) The University Policy Manager may establish Terms of Reference for an internal working group to consider policy governance matters, good practice and develop awareness initiatives for RMIT Group policies. The working group shall provide advice and general guidance to champion policy practice.

## **Stage 1 - Identify and Propose**

(10) Policy proposals constitute the first stage in the process for new policies and procedures and must be submitted on the online form specified located in the Staff Policy Resources on the Policy Register.

(11) Policy proposals are reviewed by the University Policy Manager against the principles of the Framework to ensure consistency and avoid unnecessary duplication, prior to the University Policy Manager endorsing their development.

(12) A policy proposal proceeds once in-principle endorsement is obtained.

(13) A policy proposal is not required where:

- a. the proposal is necessary to address a material compliance obligation and time is of the essence
- b. the policy document is expressly referred to in an approved policy
- c. an amendment is proposed to give effect to an outcome of formal review (Stage 4)

(14) The University Policy Manager must advise the intended policy owner of the review outcome.

## **Stage 2 - Develop and Consult**

(15) Policy development commences once a policy proposal (Stage 1) has received in-principle endorsement from the University Policy Manager.

(16) The policy owner can direct the policy author to conduct an impact assessment to inform the development of policy documents.

(17) Policies and procedures are developed using the prescribed templates located in the Staff Policy Resources on the Policy Register.

(18) After completing desktop research and early consultations, and prior to drafting the policy documents, the policy owner must submit a paper to the relevant approval authority outlining the proposed direction of the new policy suite, or the proposed changes to an existing policy suite. (Refer to policy development and review tools in the Policy Register for the activities that constitute desktop research.) Policies cannot progress through for approval unless they have completed this consultative step with the relevant approval authority.

(19) The policy owner must ensure and be able to provide evidence that key stakeholders (including relevant committees) were adequately consulted during the development of policy documents.

(20) For policies, endorsement must be obtained from each of the following prior to submission to the approval authority:

- a. policy owner
- b. University Policy Manager
- c. Chair of the Academic Board or relevant standing committee for Academic policies.

## **Stage 3 - Approve and Implement**

### **Policy Approval**

(21) Draft policies and any associated procedures must be submitted together where reasonable to the approval

authority.

(22) The policy owner may nominate an effective date when seeking approval from the approval authority.

(23) The approval authority for policy documents is set out in the [Policy Governance Procedure – Schedule 1 – Policy Proposal and Approval](#).

(24) The approval authority must inform the University Policy Manager of all approved policies and procedures.

(25) Where ambiguity arises, the University Policy Manager may determine whether a policy document is in effect or requires approval.

### **Procedures and Resources**

(26) Procedures developed for approved policies must follow the same process described for policy proposal and development (Stages 1 and 2).

(27) The policy owner may delegate ownership of a procedure to a policy author by:

- a. express delegation in the relevant policy; or
- b. nomination in the form prescribed by the University Policy Manager as part of the initial approval of the procedure.

(28) The policy owner will determine the process for proposing, developing and approving policy resources, including assigning a policy author as the owner of resources.

(29) Resources must be registered with the University Policy Manager if they are mandatory and are to be published with headlining policies and procedures.

### **Communication and Implementation of Policy Documents**

(30) All policies, procedures and resources that are to be submitted to the University Policy Manager must be emailed to [policy@rmit.edu.au](mailto:policy@rmit.edu.au).

(31) Communication and implementation plans must be developed prior to the policy document being registered and coming into effect. The implementation plan should include education and awareness program, transition arrangements or roll-out schedule, systems or process requirements, and identify affected stakeholders including controlled entity and partner locations.

(32) The University Policy Manager will support group-wide communication of approved policy documents.

(33) The University Policy Manager can at any time request information to determine the implementation status of policy documents.

## **Stage 4 - Review and Revise**

### **Reviewing Policy Documents**

(34) The University Policy Manager must inform the policy owner of the requirement for review of policy documents within a reasonable time prior to the review date or effective end date, whichever comes first.

(35) In addition to the requirement for review of policy documents under the [Policy Governance Framework](#), the policy owner may commence review of any policy document at any time. In this case, the policy owner must inform the University Policy Manager of their intention to review.

(36) The policy owner must review policy documents at least every five years from the date of first approval or last major review where they have not been reviewed through other mechanisms such as internal or external audits, and compliance assurance activities.

(37) Reviews must consider:

- a. any concerns which have arisen during operation
- b. the level of compliance
- c. whether the intended effect has been achieved
- d. any changes to legislative or regulatory requirements
- e. the impact of any consequential amendments to related policy documents

(38) Policy documents continue to be in force while review is underway except for where the policy includes a sunset clause that might be adopted from time to time.

(39) The policy owner determines whether reviewed policy documents are to be amended, replaced or rescinded.

(40) Where a policy document under review has not been transitioned to this Framework, it must be replaced as an outcome of the review.

(41) The approval authority must be notified of review outcomes.

(42) New policies and procedures proposed as an outcome of review must follow the same process as described for policy proposal and development (Stages 1 and 2).

(43) The University Policy Manager must be notified on completion of the review for monitoring and reporting, and to ensure currency of the Policy Register.

### **Amending Policy Documents**

(44) The policy owner determines the timing, nature and scale of required amendments to their policies and procedures.

(45) Minor amendments are changes to a policy document that do not change the intent of the policy or significantly affect the content or application of the policy. Examples include changes that clarify existing details, align the document with legislative or regulatory changes, or include processes for new systems, a new campus or controlled entity.

(46) For minor amendments:

- a. The policy owner may implement minor amendments at their discretion and must notify the University Policy Manager of the change and the reason for the change so that this can be noted in the Policy Register.
- b. The University Policy Manager has authority to review amendments to ensure they are minor and do not change the intent of the policy document.
- c. Reasonable notice must be given to the University Policy Manager to register the minor amendments prior to them taking effect.
- d. The policy owner must notify the relevant approval authority of any minor amendments implemented in any calendar year.

(47) The University Policy Manager can initiate minor amendments and notify the policy owner, where required, to ensure currency and clarity of the Policy Register.

(48) Amendments that are not deemed to be minor must proceed through the same process as described for policy development (Stage 2).

(49) Clerical amendments to a document to update a title, formatting, weblink, spelling, grammar or references to law or other policy documents, or for clarity of language, are considered administrative changes and do not require approval to be sought from the policy owner to change. These administrative changes are managed by the Central Policy Team .

### **Rescinding Policy Documents**

(50) The policy owner must identify policy documents to be rescinded as required, and must advise the:

- a. University Policy Manager
- b. approval authority.

(51) The approval authority rescinds policies and procedures on the advice from the policy owner at its discretion.

(52) For the avoidance of doubt, rescission of a policy automatically rescinds all underpinning policy documents in the hierarchy.

(53) Rescinded policy documents may be accompanied by a sunset date to support transition where the effective date of new policy documents is to be delayed for any reason.

(54) The University Policy Manager must update the Policy Register and communicate changes accordingly.

### **The Policy Register**

(55) The University Policy Manager maintains the Policy Register in accordance with information management policies.

(56) Policy documents are only registered on approval by the approval authority. The University Policy Manager will register the policy document within 28 days of approval.

(57) The secretariat for an approval authority must provide the University Policy Manager with an extract of the meeting minutes where a policy document is considered, approved or rejected, as soon as is feasible after the relevant meeting, in order to ensure the accuracy and currency of the Policy Register.

(58) Approved or amended policy documents do not take effect prior to registration by the University Policy Manager.

(59) If the policy owner has not nominated an effective date at the time of submission to the approval authority, it will be taken to be the date it is registered by the University Policy Manager.

### **Policy Document Templates**

(60) Policy documents, including any schedules, must conform to any templates which are published by the University Policy Manager and form part of the Policy Governance Manual.

## **Section 5 - Schedules**

(61) [Policy Governance Procedure – Schedule 1 – Policy Proposal and Approval](#)

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	8th March 2023
<b>Review Date</b>	18th June 2023
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Senior Policy Advisor
<b>Approval Date</b>	20th September 2020
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Alec Cameron Vice-Chancellor
<b>Policy Author</b>	Briony Lewis Executive Director, Governance, Legal and Strategic Operations
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Central Policy

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"RMIT Group"** - The University, its controlled entities and strategic investment vehicles (known as the RMIT Group).

**"Controlled entity"** - One that satisfies the test of control in section 50AA of the Corporations Act 2001 and includes: an entity which the University wholly owns ("wholly owned subsidiary"); or an entity in which the University holds an interest of any kind (including a shareholding interest or membership interest) and the University has control of the entity.