



# Policy Management Framework

University Secretariat

Approved by UMT 08/11/2016  
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## 1. Purpose

The Policy Management Framework establishes a standard and principles for policy development, approval, implementation and review across the University. The Framework ensures consistency and compliance and sets down a transparent process with reflexive stakeholder consultation and appropriate approval pathways.

## 2. Scope and compliance

The Policy Management Framework consists of:

- The principles and standard for policy development and review
- Operational procedures
- Policy template
- Policy proposal template and impact statement
- Document Management Protocol
- Support tools for policy development and review

The framework applies to any person, unit or committee responsible for the development, approval, implementation or review of university policy; and to all policy documents, including the Policy Framework.

University employees are required to understand their responsibilities and comply with university policies under their contracts of employment. Students are required to understand their responsibilities and comply with university policies under the UCD Registration Terms and Conditions.

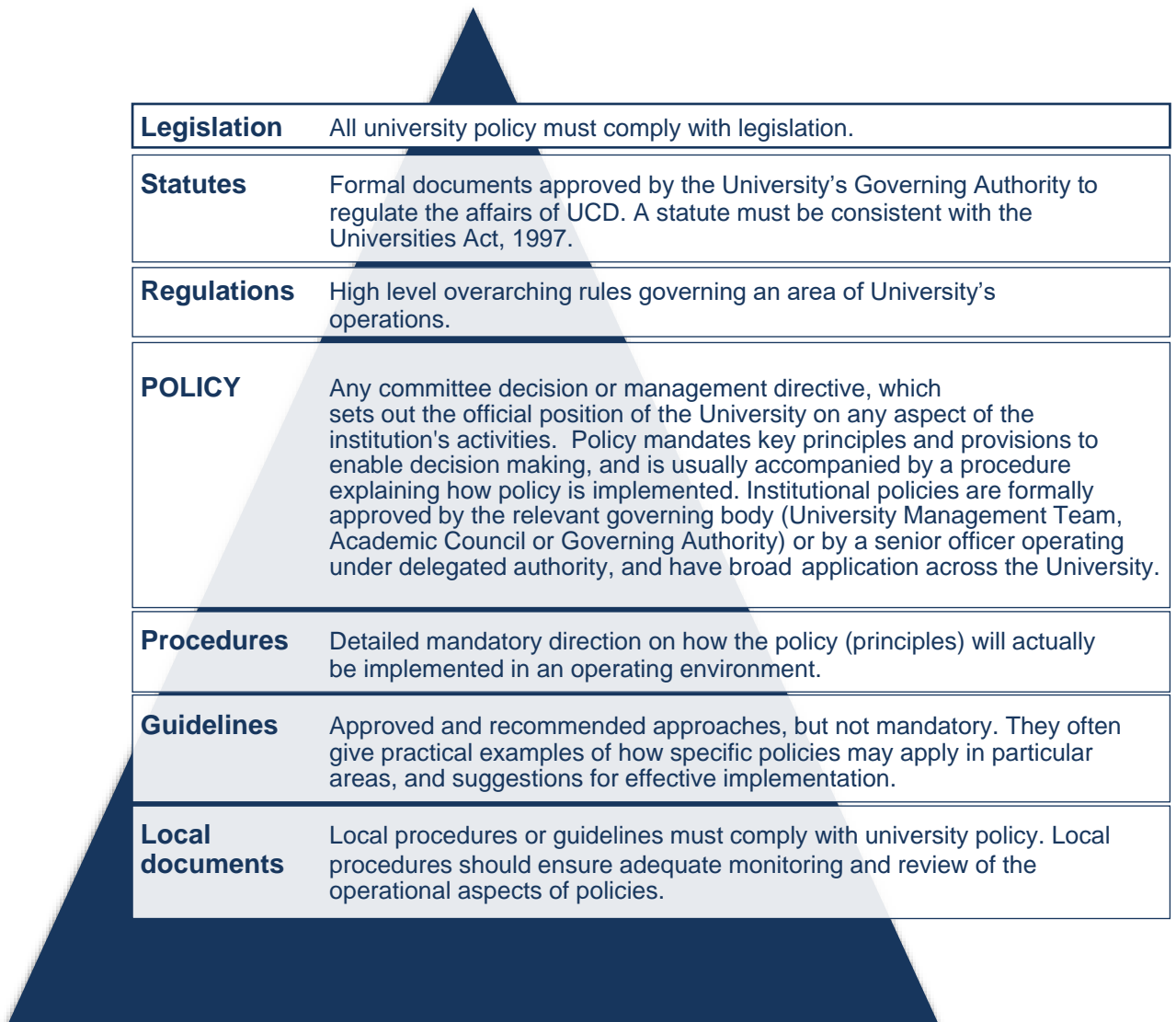
## 3. Principles

Policies must:

- Uphold the University's core values, mission and strategic objectives
- Be consistent with existing University Statutes, Regulations and other Policies
- Comply with legislation and Codes of Practice
- Be guided by national and international best practice
- Be informed by continuous review and improvement
- Be developed only where there is a justifiable need; with long term application to the University
- Apply and be binding across the University

## 4. Policy instruments

Policies exist within a hierarchy of broader regulatory instruments, which includes:



## 5. Other definitions

<b>Approval body</b>	Relevant university governance body - Governing Authority, University Management Team or Academic Council - which approves the proposal for policy development or review and the final policy or any amendments to policy.
<b>Approval pathway</b>	The approval steps which a policy document must go through in order to be approved.

<b>Editorial amendment</b>	Amendment to correct document formatting, spelling, grammar, or clarity of language, which does not otherwise affect the document intent or content.
<b>Major amendment</b>	Amendment that substantially alters the intent or content of the policy.
<b>Minor amendment</b>	Amendment to correct or update a title, name, numbering, web link or a reference to law, another policy document, a delegation or other relevant document; or otherwise modify it in a way that does not significantly change the intent or content of the existing version of the policy document.
<b>Policy developer</b>	Person or group responsible for the development or review of the policy.
<b>Policy owner</b>	Person or unit responsible for the successful implementation and application of policy, and communications about a new policy or revised policy. The policy owner should always be identified at the outset of policy development.
<b>Policy proposal</b>	A document to be submitted for endorsement by the relevant governance body in advance of a policy development or review.
<b>Policy template</b>	Provides structure for policy information and ensures consistency across the University from one policy document to another. It contains major sections representing information required in every policy document.

## 6. Operational procedures for policy development and review

Any policy development initiative, should follow a pre-defined cycle of initiation (policy proposal), drafting, consultation, approval, communication, implementation and ongoing monitoring and review (please see Diagram 1 on page 6). In circumstances, where the following criteria are met, an approval body may accelerate the approval of a new policy or amendments to a policy:

- a) A new policy, or amendment to an existing policy, is required to facilitate a timely and appropriate response to unprecedented or exceptional circumstances, as deemed by the approval body; or
- b) An amendment to an existing policy, is required to align with changes in relevant legislation or to meet government or health and safety guidelines.

The process timelines and suite of approaches to consultation, proofing, approval and implementation may be adapted to meet local business needs, subject to any overarching governance and/or compliance requirements.

### 1. Initiation

A policy development can be triggered, for example, by legislative changes, strategic objectives or restructuring of the University or identified institutional risk or gap. A policy proposal should be submitted to the relevant governance or management body to assess the need for a policy development or review. The proposal should be submitted using the Policy Proposal Template and should include an impact assessment (equality and other relevant impact assessments). The approval of the policy proposal should involve an initial discussion and stated preferences on the policy principles.

## **2. Drafting and Development/Review**

The Policy Developer/Reviewer should consider the policy issue, conduct an initial discussion on policy principles with stakeholders, carry out any relevant research including review of international good practice, formulate a draft policy document, undertake consultation with appropriate stakeholders, address any gaps highlighted by the policy impact assessment, and submit a final draft of policy for approval.

Policy should:

- Contain language that is plain English and appropriate for the audience
- Comply with the UCD Policy Template to ensure consistency across all policy documents
- Record the policy owner, approval body and approval date of the policy

## **3. Consultation**

Informal consultation with interested parties is strongly recommended throughout the development of a new policy or a major policy review. The Policy Developer/Reviewer should seek to engage decision making groups on the character of policy problems to be addressed as a prior to step to developing policy solutions. Once a policy has been drafted, it needs to be made available for formal consultation with the relevant governance/approval body.

## **4. Approval**

Approval of policies shall follow an agreed approval pathway which must be established at the outset of policy development or review. Policies are formally approved by the relevant governing body (University Management Team, Academic Council or Governing Authority) or by a senior officer operating under its delegated authority. Policy will be effective from the date of approval, if not otherwise specified.

## **5. Communication**

All policies are published in the online UCD Governance Document Library in line with an approved Document Management Protocol. A policy published in the Document Library is considered the only authorised version. The Policy Owner is responsible for communications about a new or revised policy. A communication plan should be an essential part of successful implementation and application of a new policy.

## **6. Implementation**

Implementation should be planned from the very start of a policy development process. It is important to ensure the oversight of policy implementation, in particular where the implementation spreads across different areas of the University. The Policy Owner should discuss policy implementation with relevant stakeholders to agree a timeline for all required implementation activities and to assign responsibilities for each activity.

## **7. Monitoring and Review**

It is essential that, once approved, policies remain relevant, fit for purpose and consistent with the University's mission and objectives. Policy compliance can be monitored by recording issues arising from implementation, gathering feedback and by monitoring decisions taken under the policy. Information collected through monitoring activities is used during the formal review of the policy.

All approved policies are subject to periodic review. Reviews normally take place after 3-5 years of operation. Where necessary, policies may be reviewed outside the review cycle. Editorial or other

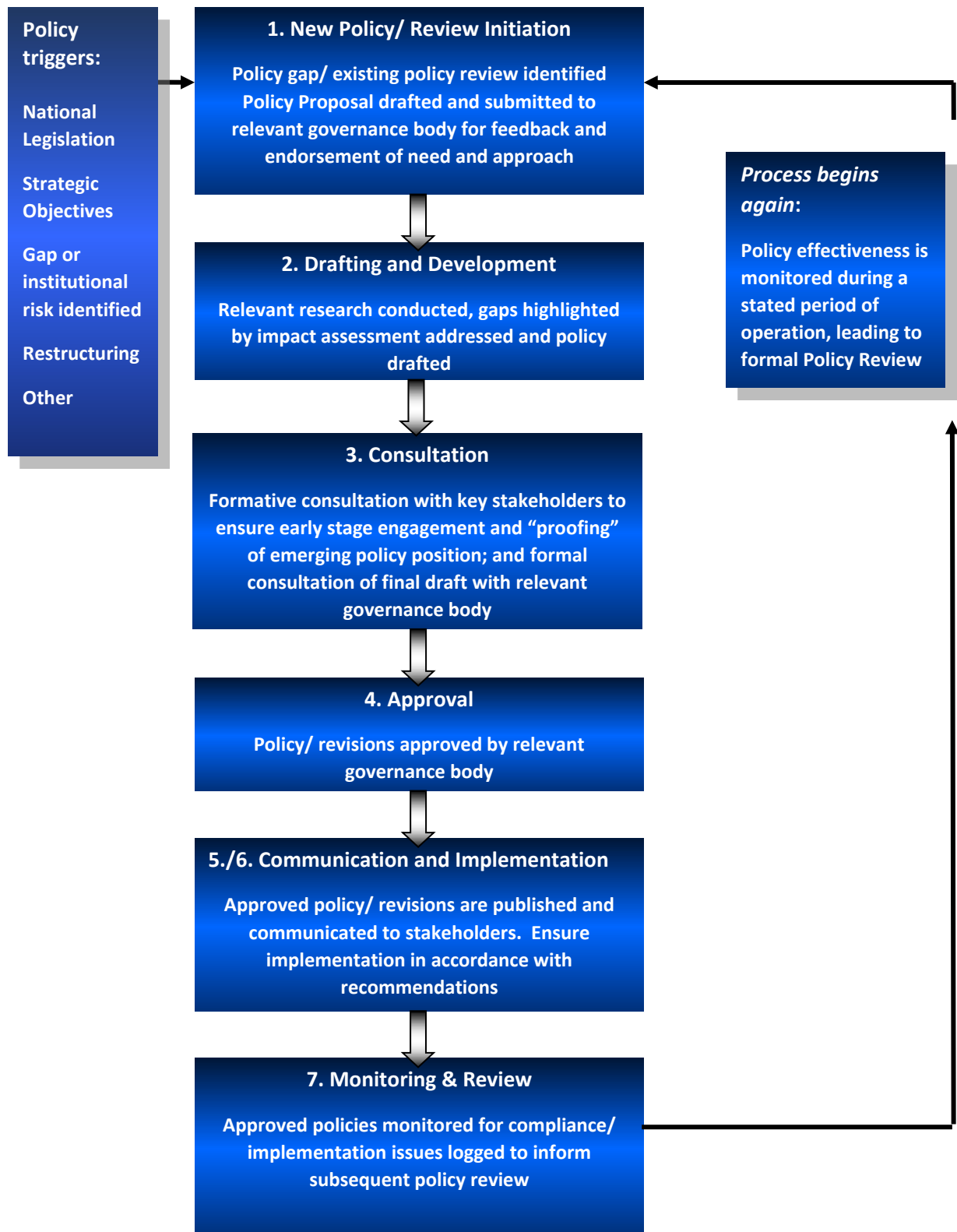
minor amendments to policy may be made outside a formal review. Minor amendments to policy require the approval of the relevant governance body. Major amendments to policy can be approved and implemented only as a result of a formal policy review with appropriate stakeholder consultation. A review should consider whether the policy:

- Remains consistent with best practice and the strategic direction of the university
- Continues to meet stakeholder needs
- Complies with any existing related policies, and supports university statutes and regulations
- Works well on an operational level
- Could be enhanced

## 7. Related documents and references

<a href="#">Universities Act, 1997</a>
<a href="#">University Statutes</a>
<a href="#">Online Document Library</a>
<a href="#">Policy Toolkit</a>

Diagram 1: Policy development process at a glance



Appendix 1:



# Policy Proposal

*This form should be completed and submitted for approval to the relevant governance body in advance of any policy development or major review of existing policy.*

Policy title:	
Policy developer/reviewer:	
Policy owner:	
Approval pathway:	
Proposed approval date:	
Proposed effective date:	
Date of latest review if applicable:	

## 1. Purpose of policy

[Briefly outline the background and factors driving the policy development/review.]

## 2. Policy scope

[What groups does the policy apply to? Provide an overview of the policy content where applicable (new policies). What will be included in and excluded from the policy?]

## 3. Impact of policy

[What is the impact of the policy on the University? What is the expected impact of the policy on different stakeholder groups? Complete also the separate equality and other relevant impact assessment forms.]

## 4. Resource needs

[What resources are needed for the development/review of the policy? What resources are needed for implementation and monitoring?]

## 5. Compliance with national legislation, University Statutes and policies

[What impact does the new/revised policy have on other university policies? What national legislation needs to be considered as part of the policy development/review (if any)? List all related policies and other university governance documents.]

## **6. Supporting documents**

[List the expected supporting documents, such as procedures, forms and user guides, the policy will require and outline the plan for their development and approval.]

## **7. Communication and training needs**

[Who/What groups will need training in relation to policy implementation? What groups are key to communicating about policy/policy amendments?]





## Policy Development/Review – Pilot Equality Impact Assessment Form

*Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a systematic and evidence-based process which verifies that the University's policies and practices are non-discriminatory, and are fair and inclusive in meeting the legitimate needs of the diverse groups that make up the University community. The key purpose of the Pilot Form and Toolkit is to help identify any Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) impact (positive or negative) associated with new or updated policies, along with any potential discrimination or gaps in policy development.*

*This form should be completed, in conjunction with the EIA Toolkit Guidelines, and submitted for approval to the relevant governance body in advance of any policy development or major review of existing policy. Equality impacts should continue to be considered throughout the policy drafting process (please see EIA Toolkit Guidelines for details) and the final Equality Impact Assessment Form (with revisions, if required under Outcomes 1-4 below) should be submitted again with the final policy for approval by the relevant governing body.*

Policy title:	
Policy developer/reviewer:	
Policy owner:	
Approval pathway:	
Proposed approval date:	
Proposed effective date:	
Date of latest review if applicable:	

EIA Date:	
Membership of Policy Group (including EDI Group member):	
Scope of Policy:	
Policy Development Phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed new policy</li> <li>• Undertaking a review of an existing policy</li> <li>• Other (please state):</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Please identify any opportunity to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the University or any potential adverse impact that the development of this policy could have, on any of the equality grounds identified below.	
<b>Equality Ground</b>	<b>Identified Impact</b>
Race	

Disability	
Gender (including gender identity)	
Age	
Sexual Orientation	
Religion	
Civil Status	
Family Status	
Membership of the Travelling Community	
Socio-economic Status	
<p>Select one of the four outcomes below to indicate how the development/review of the policy will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision.</p> <p>Outcome 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy is/will be robust and/or promotes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the University. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Outcome 2: Adjust the policy – this involves taking steps to address any adverse impacts before the policy has been developed. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Outline these steps:</i></p> <p>Outcome 3: Continue the policy while mitigating against any potential adverse impacts. <input type="checkbox"/>  <i>Outline how these adverse impacts can be mitigated against:</i></p> <p>Outcome 4: Stop the policy or practice, as there are adverse effects which cannot be prevented or mitigated against. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
In case of option 2 or option 3, if policy adjustment or mitigation is required, please indicate recommended timeframe before policy requires a further EIA review to ensure it is non-discriminatory and upholds UCD's public sector equality duty.	

The form should be signed by the Chair of the Policy Development/Review Group:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair



# Policy Template

**Policy owner**

**Approval date and body**

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## 1. Purpose

[Provide a brief summary outlining the reasons for the policy. What area is it related to? What issues does it aim to address?]

## 2. Definitions

[Define any important terms and/or key concepts used in the policy.]

## 3. Scope

[Outline to whom/what the policy applies. The scope should also identify any exceptions to the policy.]

## 4. Principles

[What are the guiding principles of the policy? What are the standards this policy aims to uphold? This section can include a policy statement or a list of policy principles.]

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

[List the major responsibilities each party has in connection with this policy.]

## 6. Related documents

[List other documents, policies or legislation that support the interpretation of this policy or are linked to this policy.]

## 7. Version history

[Provide details with regard to any updates/amendments made to the policy.]