

Policy Framework Policy (draft 0.17)

Purpose

This Policy describes the UNSW Policy Framework and the process for developing University-wide Codes and Policies and related Standards and Procedures.

Scope

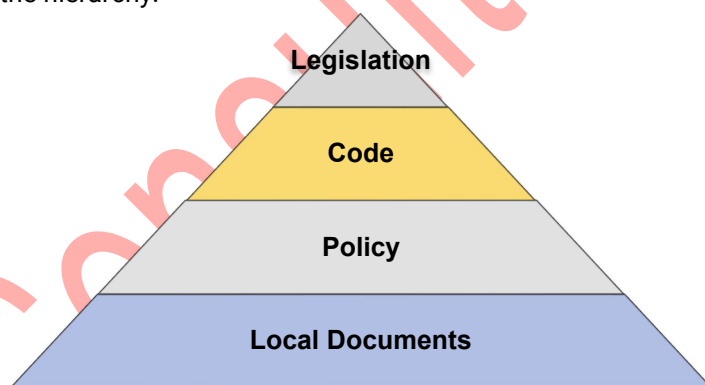
The *Policy Framework Policy* applies to staff and students. The [policy framework procedure](#) applies to authors and staff responsible for developing, approving and reviewing UNSW Codes and Policies.

Principles

1. UNSW commits to the establishment of a Policy Framework to manage and maintain the Codes and Policies that reflect our core values and obligations.
2. The Policy Framework enables a culture of integrity, accountability and trust. Policies developed at UNSW support our compliance with legislative obligations and encourage consistency with community, discipline and professional expectations.
3. UNSW is committed to adopting a standardised accessible digital first approach to the development, approval and review of Codes and Policies and University-wide Standards and Procedures.
4. All staff and students must comply with all relevant Codes and Policies.

1. Policy Hierarchy

- 1.1. Documents that are included in the UNSW Policy Framework are depicted in the Policy Hierarchy below in order of precedence. A document lower in the hierarchy must be consistent with a document higher in the hierarchy:



- 1.2. **Legislation** includes Commonwealth, NSW and ACT laws with which UNSW must comply, including regulations and by-laws made under the *University of New South Wales Act 1989* (NSW).
- 1.3. **Codes** express the behaviour that is necessary to meet the core values and obligations of the University. Codes are approved by Council and are University-wide documents.
- 1.4. **Policies** are mandatory documents that:
 - detail University-wide requirements
 - contain principles and objectives that govern and guide conduct and decision making

- authorise staff to implement the policy on behalf of the University
- are authorised by the Vice-Chancellor
- may contain **Procedures** that:
 - describe the processes and actions required to implement the policy
 - contain flow-charts and other illustrations to communicate processes
- may contain **Standards** that:
 - mandate and direct behaviour
 - provides an operating standard for a product, service or system
- **may link to** Standards and Procedures that:
 - apply University-wide (or to a cross-divisional/faculty group)
 - are authorised by a person with the authority to do so under the [*Delegations Policy*] or another Policy
 - are developed for subject-matters that require additional control.

1.5. Local Documents:

- mandate and direct behaviour by specifying actions that must be followed by, and apply specifically to, a Division, Faculty or School as authorised by a Divisional Head, Dean, Head of School, Director or 'Head of' positions
- must be consistent with Codes and Policies
- must be published where they can be accessed by every person required to comply with the Local Document.

Further information is provided in the [[Local Document checklist](#)].

2. Policy Framework

This Policy is part of the UNSW Policy Framework which also includes:

- 2.1. A digital solution that will automate the policy development cycle and include workflow from the initialisation of a policy project through to consultation, approval, publication and reporting.
- 2.2. An online Policy [handbook] managed by Governance that is the source of truth for Codes and Policies. This handbook will address the range of topics that are relevant to UNSW and for which compliance is important. All areas of the University must link to the Codes and Policies published by Governance so that they are well integrated and consistent.
- 2.3. Policy delegations which authorise staff to establish and implement Codes and Policies. Policies may also contain, or be linked to, Standards and Procedures that are developed by staff with authority expressed in the [*Delegations Policy*] or another Policy.
- 2.4. Policy resources, including templates and forms, that support a standard approach to the development of Codes and Policies and ensure staff can write and review these documents.
- 2.5. Training and policy implementation that supports staff and students to find, understand and apply Codes and Policies.

3. Codes and Policies support compliance with legal obligations

- 3.1. UNSW is committed to conducting its operations in accordance with its legislative obligations and our Codes and Policies must be written so they are consistent with these obligations to enable a culture of integrity and compliance.
- 3.2. Codes and Policies designed as an internal compliance control for relevant legislation are included in the UNSW Legislation Register managed by the Compliance Manager.
- 3.3. Compliance with relevant Codes and Policies is mandatory for all staff and students. UNSW has zero tolerance for non-compliance with obligations in Codes and Policies.

4. Codes and Policies reflect our values and trust in our people

- 4.1. Codes and Policies should reflect our values and trust in our staff and students within a system of accountability and transparency.
- 4.2. Subject to the risks involved, staff should be able to fulfil their responsibilities and make decisions without Codes and Policies being overly directive or prescriptive.
- 4.3. Staff must act with fairness and integrity within their area of responsibility and level of authority.

5. Policy Development

- 5.1. The steps required when developing a University-wide Code or Policy and any related Standards and Procedures are included in the Policy Framework Procedure section below.
- 5.2. Amendments to the Procedure are approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Planning and Assurance.
- 5.3. Templates, Guides and resources associated with this Policy are authorised by the Director of Governance & University Secretary.

Policy Framework Procedure

The Policy Development Cycle depicts the steps you must take when developing a University-wide Code or Policy and related Standards and Procedures. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Planning and Assurance, or delegate, may exempt Codes and Policies from steps in this procedure. A reference to a Policy in this policy framework procedure is intended to cover all University-wide documents. The Policy Development Cycle applies to linked Standards and Procedures and Local Documents, but the requirements for each stage require a local process.



Figure 1, Policy Development Cycle

1. Identify & Scope: why do we need this Policy?

- 1.1. Identify the reason why you think your subject matter requires a new Policy. Use the [Stage 1 checklist](#) to gather evidence which may include:
 - changes in legislative requirements
 - a new or revised higher education standard or government policy
 - an audit or risk assessment finding that has identified a policy gap at UNSW
 - a new strategic direction for UNSW.
- 1.2. Check the [UNSW Policy \[handbook\]](#) and consider if an existing Policy can be amended to address your subject matter. Refer to Section 6 for the amendment process.

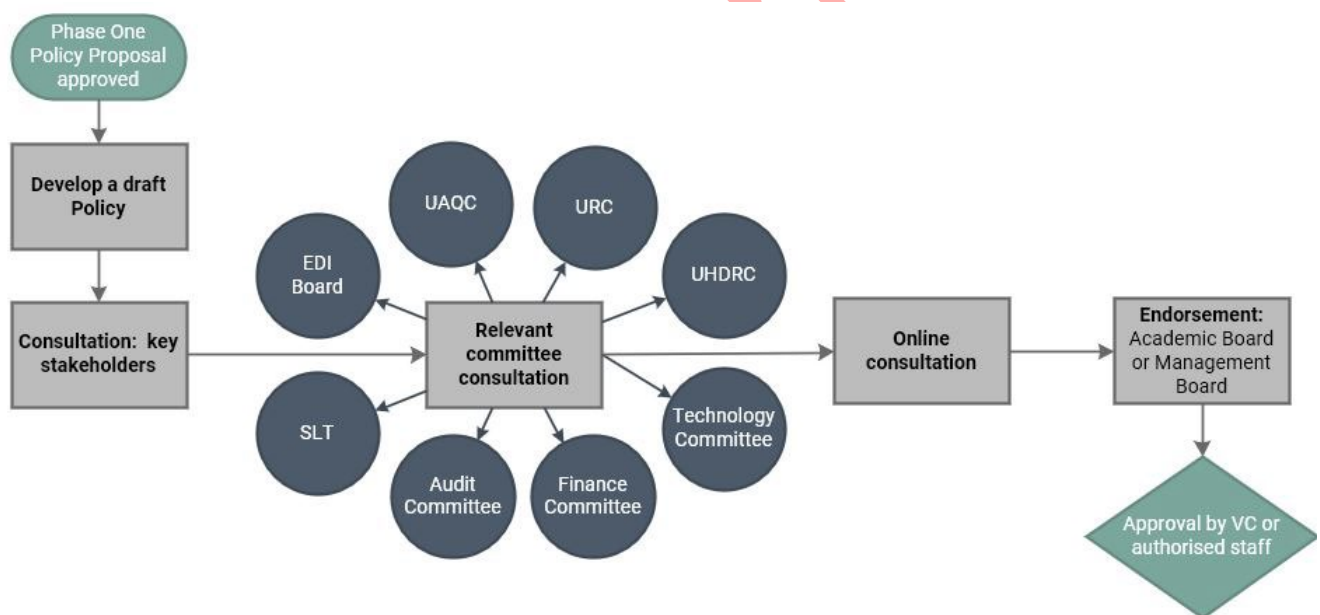
- 1.3. Secure endorsement from the Director of Governance & University Secretary that a new Policy is required. They will assist you to complete a [Phase One Policy Proposal] for the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Planning and Assurance.

2. Draft and Consult

- 2.1. Develop a draft using the Policy template. Write the Policy so that it outlines the principles and elaborates upon these by explaining the procedures, standards and mandatory behaviour that is required at UNSW. When you draft a Policy:

- use plain English and avoid using jargon so that people do not need technical or expert help to understand the content
- draft using second-person language (e.g. you will, your form, your Supervisor) and adhere to the UNSW Writing Style Guide for clear, concise and inclusive language
- ensure consistency with related UNSW Codes and Policies, or meet with the relevant Policy Contact to discuss areas of discrepancy
- assign responsibilities and authority to people or committees consistent with delegations in the [Delegations Policy] and other UNSW Policies
- ensure the principles align with goals expressed in the UNSW 2025 Strategy.

- 2.2. Identify the key stakeholders for consultation (people, groups and committees). Determine what consultation methods you will use, and the endorsement and approval pathway that is required for your subject matter. Consultation resources are available on the Governance website. A typical pathway will include:



- 2.3. You will be required to communicate the draft Policy to all staff and students for feedback. A three-week period of online consultation on the Governance website is necessary for all new or fully revised Policies.

- 2.4. Governance will communicate the consultation draft via Inside UNSW, myUNSW and the policy distribution list. You will be responsible for communicating with your stakeholder groups.

3. Approval

At this stage you will prepare a [Policy Approval Form] to describe the background, consultation, and feasible implementation actions. A Policy Officer will check this form before it is forwarded with the final draft Policy to the relevant approver:

- 3.1. Codes are approved by Council.
- 3.2. The Vice-Chancellor must approve all Policies.

- 3.3. Standards and Procedures that are contained in or linked to a Policy may be approved by a person specified by position in the *[Delegations Policy]* or in a Policy approved by the Vice-Chancellor.

4. Communication and Implementation

- 4.1. Once you have approval a Policy Officer in Governance will publish the approved Policy in the online Policy [handbook] and communicate the published version via:
- the Author and Policy Contact listed on the approved Policy
 - Inside UNSW and myUNSW
 - email to Faculty and Divisional Executive Directors and the Compliance Manager.
- 4.2. Information about new Policies will be included in online training modules for staff and students.
- 4.3. The Responsible Officer and Policy Contact must communicate the Policy to the relevant stakeholders and assign activities to people and groups within UNSW to ensure change (a [Communication and Implementation Plan](#) is required). Implementation activities must be dynamic and relevant to the subject-matter to ensure that staff and students understand their obligations. This may include:
- on-going training and awareness information delivered through online learning modules or in-person
 - securing funding for resources that are necessary to implement the Policy
 - answering questions about the Policy and monitoring and recording feedback.

5. Review

- 5.1. Policies will be due for full review 5 years after the effective date, or earlier when specified in the Policy or if this is required due to legal or other changes to ensure the Policy remains fit for purpose.
- 5.2. Every 2 years the Policy Contact must determine if related Procedures and Standards are up-to-date and fit for purpose, and if not must seek amendment (refer to section 6).
- 5.3. Governance will provide annual review reports to the relevant Policy Contact. The Policies due for review each year will be communicated to Management Board and Academic Board.
- 5.4. Every 5 years the Responsible Officer or authorised staff member will determine which of the following review outcomes applies:
- a) No change**
If a Policy does not require amending, the Responsible Officer or authorised staff member must notify Governance to ensure that this is recorded. Governance will report these outcomes to the Vice-Chancellor periodically.
 - b) Amendment**
Refer to section 6 for the amendment process. Refer to section 7 for administrative updates.
 - c) Full review of the Policy**
If a full review of the content is required, the Policy Development Cycle will recommence from section 1.
 - d) Retire**
A Policy may be retired if it is no longer required, for example, because of legislative, strategic or compliance changes. To retire a Document, the Policy Contact must follow the steps in [the retirement checklist].

6. Amendment

- 6.1. Amendments to an approved Policy may be required as part of a 5 year review, or before.
- 6.2. **Amendments** are changes, outside the scope of an administrative update, that do not significantly affect the meaning or application of the Policy. These changes may be endorsed by the Policy contact and authorised by [the delegated person].

6.3. **Major amendments** require the Policy Development Cycle to recommence from section 1 if they:

- are contentious or complex
- significantly affect the meaning or application of the Policy
- require a substantial change to current practice
- significantly impact on roles and responsibilities.

6.4. Major amendments may follow an expedited policy development process in the following circumstances:

- Academic Board has passed a resolution regarding academic governance and quality which must be immediately addressed in a Policy
- a University Compliance Officer or other authorised person has made a decision that is a binding commitment on behalf of UNSW and this impacts on a UNSW Policy
- the Vice-Chancellor must respond to an emergency or urgent circumstance by amending the relevant UNSW Policy.

The Director of Governance & University Secretary will seek approval from the authorised staff member to amend a Policy upon receiving a written notification or resolution. Fast-tracked amendments do not impact on the 5-year review cycle unless specified by the Vice-Chancellor.

7. Administrative updates

7.1. The Director of Governance & University Secretary may authorise administrative updates including:

- updating content to align with decisions that have been made by an authorised staff member or University Compliance Officer and endorsed by the Responsible Officer.
- changing the name of a position, unit, document, publication, address (including URL), legislation or entity
- updating an Appendix attached to a Document that does not affect the meaning or application of the Document
- correcting grammar or spelling.

Effective: [XX Month] 2022 **Responsible:** Deputy Vice-Chancellor Planning and Assurance

Contact: [Policy Officer](#)