

Policy Toolkit

Frequently Asked Questions



1. *What is a "Policy Framework"?*

A Policy Framework encompasses both the coordinated, formal review and renewal process, and the goal of integrating policies across various operational and functional areas. The review and approval process adopted by the Policy Steering Committee (PSC) supports a regularized and accountable system for the development, approval, implementation and review of University Policies. This process will promote consistent decision-making across the University, and ensure that University activities are compliant with standards set by the University and external legislation or agencies. The requirement that the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and the Policy Steering Committee endorse policies before approval by the appropriate Executive is a quality assurance mechanism.

2. *My department completed the UCOP Policy Inventory last year. Will policies in that inventory be subject to the new formal process?*

Yes. As of July 1, 2011, all policies are subject to the new process. As of March 31, 2012 all policies will be submitted for approval through the SharePoint Policy Approval System.

3. *Do we follow the same process for standalone procedures?*

Yes. Historically, some UC policies and procedures are intertwined within a single document. To support the Policy Framework, we would like departments to submit procedures through the new process so that we can reduce redundant information.

4. *We have many policies under review, and this new Framework thing seems complicated...*

Putting policies through this formal review process encourages Policy Owners to focus on consolidating policies when possible, reducing the overall number. As previously stated, our goal is to separate policies from procedures, but also to make it easier for policy users to navigate the procedures linked to policies.

5. *What is the role of a Policy Owner?*

The Policy Owner's role is to be responsible for developing the policy, obtaining the required approvals, and ensuring the policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed. This position may also be the departmental contact for questions about the policy

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6. *What is the purpose of the Administrative Policy Development Worksheet (APDW)?*

The (APDW) enables the PSC to monitor the strategic implications of policy proposals at an early stage, and to promote cooperation and consultation during the development phase. It also steers the Policy Owner through a critical analysis of the policy proposal.

7. *What information goes in the APDW?*

The APDW itself provides guidance on what is required. It asks you to give details on the purpose, rationale, and a consultation plan and development process for the new or revised policy. The APDW acknowledges:

- a. the history of the issue;
- b. legislative, regulatory, contractual or similar drivers;
- c. the interaction of the proposed policy with other policies, and with the processes and responsibilities of other organizational units within the University.

The UPO can provide advice on completing the APDW.

8. *Who needs to be consulted during the development process?*

Writing and consultation is often an alternating process, with the consultation informing the writing. Consultation is an important tool:

- a. For testing whether a proposed policy adequately addresses an issue and whether it is practicable.
- b. For identifying the competing interests of different people or groups.
- c. For building consensus and a commitment to compliance with the eventual policy.
- d. For supporting transparency in the policy development process.

Consultation includes notifying stakeholders through newsletters and bulletins; communications to senior leadership; discussions with formal committees, working groups, employee representatives and student associations; and working with Labor Relations and/or Academic Personnel to formally notify employee organizations as required under the Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA).

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9. *I have completed a minor revision of a policy managed by my department. Can I just make the change without going through this process?*

Unless it is merely a change to a position title or a change in dollar amount, every new or revised policy must follow the process described in the Policy Framework. This involves completion of an Administrative Policy Development Worksheet.

10. *How does a Procedure differ from a Policy?*

See “Determining Whether a Statement is a Policy or a Procedure” in Section II of the online Policy Toolkit.

11. *Do Guidelines have to go through this Process/System?*

Yes, the purpose of the Policy Project is to publish all the information employees need to know to do their jobs. Likewise, UC has a responsibility to the public to be accountable and transparent on our business operations. Therefore, we want to publish any and all information – in one place – to give a full picture of how things work.

12. *What’s the difference between a Guideline and a Policy?*

At the University of California, an Administrative Policy is defined as:

- A governing principle that mandates or constrains actions
- That applies across the University of California.
- That helps ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, University policies and Board of Regents Bylaws, Standing Orders or Policies (governing documents), enhances the University’s mission, promotes operational efficiencies, or manages University risk.
- That endures from one administration to another and sets a course for the foreseeable future.

A guideline is a statement by which to determine a course of action. A guideline aims to streamline particular processes according to a set routine or sound practice. By definition, following a guideline is never mandatory. Guidelines are not binding and are not enforced (per U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs).

13. *How does a policy writer cite Delegations of Authority (DOAs) in UCOP Policies?*

Please check with the Policy Office. We are trying to incorporate authorities into policies whenever possible. Incorporate letters or similar forms of communication into the policy itself

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14. Should we have a Communications and Implementation Plan?

Yes. Getting the new policy approved and published online is not the end of the policy development process. The policy may require new business processes in one or more areas. It needs to be communicated to those directly affected by it, and other University constituencies may need to be made aware of it. Education and training may be needed to accommodate new requirements.

15. Why is UCOP moving to publishing policies on a single website? Can't I keep my policies on my own website, which suits my constituency group?

We have received increasing complaints about the difficulties in finding policies. Having one authoritative website is a good way to solve the issue of accessibility and version control – which is both a reputational and legal risk.

16. The Working Smarter report to the Regents on the Policy Project talks about having a single Glossary for Policies. What is that about?

It is an alphabetical list of definitions for terms, acronyms and abbreviations used in policies. We intend to ensure consistency in the definition and use of terms frequently used in policies, for example 'academic program', 'student' or 'part-time staff'. The Glossary of Terms will replace such definitions in individual policies.