Athabasca University

Policy Framework - Procedures			
Parent Policy	Policy Framework – Governing Policy		
Policy Sponsor	President	**Category**	Board
Policy Contact	Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel	**Effective Date**	May 25, 2018
Procedure Contact	Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel	**Review Date**	May 25, 2023

1. **Purpose**

   This document is to be read in conjunction with the Policy Framework – Governing Policy. It sets out steps to operationalize the Policy Framework, and outlines processes for the management of the policies and procedures throughout their lifecycle.

2. **Scope**

   These procedures apply to all University policies and procedures developed under the Policy Framework.
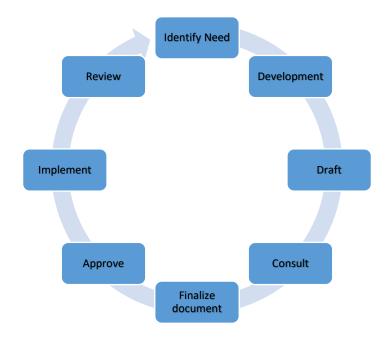
3. **Definitions**

Approval Authority	Governing body or position with authority (or delegated authority) to approve a policy within this Policy Framework.
Policy	A published statement that reflects the University's strategic direction, governing principles and institutional goals. Policies are statements of expectation, outcome or conduct that comply with relevant legislation, regulation and institutional requirements. Policy normally does not include operational procedure, except in very specific circumstances where policy and procedure cannot be appropriately separated.
Policy Contact	The individual who has responsibility for operationalizing the policy and/or procedure.
Policy Coordinator	The designated individual in the Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel, who provides planning, co-ordination and facilitation support for the policy sponsor in the development and maintenance of policies and procedures.
Policy Sponsor	The executive officer or director of the department, centre or office who is responsible for the implementation of policies and procedures and is accountable for ensuring staff compliance with established policies and procedures. If the executive officer or director delegates the implementation of the policies and procedures to another person, a written delegation will be kept on file in the working policy file with the Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel.

Procedure	The established operational steps to be followed in order to ensure that the outcomes and values expressed in legislation, collective agreements or a policy are achieved.
Stakeholders	Individuals or groups for whom the policy and procedures have an operational impact.

4. Guiding Principles

4.1 Policy/procedure development and lifecycle

This section outlines the steps in a normal lifecycle of a policy/procedure.

The development or review of University policy and procedures may result from:
- recognition of a need (such as legislation)
- the regular cycle of the policy development and lifecycle
- issues in implementing or interpreting policies or gaps in policy coverage

Policy development needs to:
a) provide broad direction rather than try to address all details
b) support operational efficiency
c) be aimed at reducing or managing institutional risk
d) be relevant and clear in its intent and meaning
e) be sufficiently researched
f) be developed with consultation
g) assign responsibility and accountability for decisions required under the policy
h) comply with legislation and collective agreements
i) identify desired outcomes

4.2 Steps in the policy/procedure development and lifecycle:

a) Identify Need
- A member of the University community identifies a need or issue that may require a policy.
- The appropriate policy sponsor is notified of the need or issue that may require a policy.

b) Development
When the need for a policy and/or procedure is confirmed, the development process commences.
- Gather background information on the issue to determine whether a policy or procedure is required
- Review existing legislation and collective agreements
- Check existing policy and procedures which may cover the issue and could be amended to address the change
- Complete the Policy and Procedure Development Form (Appendix A)
- Consult with the Policy Coordinator to prepare a development plan, including consultations to be conducted and required approvals
- Consult with key stakeholders/advisory groups regarding the content of the document
- Consider operational practicalities
- Identify resources needed to implement the policy
- Specify communication requirements for the policy
- Specify actions required for staff to implement the policy

c) Draft
- Use policy and procedure templates to ensure consistency
- Be clear about actions required, ensure actions are practical and can be implemented
- Prepare a draft communication plan and liaise with staff who will be responsible for communication/implementation tasks to establish a timeframe and mechanism for completing the tasks
- Consult with the Policy Coordinator for feedback on draft

d) Consult
- Make draft policy/procedures available for comment by stakeholders affected by the policy/procedure
- Make draft policy/procedures available for comment by committees and advisory groups if appropriate

e) Finalize document
- Revise draft document based on feedback received
- Revise communication/implementation plan where required

f) Approve
- Consult with Policy Coordinator regarding approval process
- Submit proposed draft and supporting documents to the appropriate approval authority

g) Implement
- Advise relevant stakeholders of the new policy and the impact including any related publications and information

- Communicate and implement the policy as per communication/implementation plan
- Publish approved document in the central repository

h) Review
- Policy is to be reviewed every five years
- Following implementation of a new policy, a review earlier than five years may be undertaken
- Procedures are to be reviewed and revised regularly, to ensure currency and relevancy with operational needs

Procedures will proceed through the same development process as policies, however rather than proceeding to the Board, General Faculties Council or Executive Team for approval, procedures are put into place under the direction of the policy sponsor or delegate to ensure that institutional processes and practices comply with policy, legislation or collective agreement.

4.3 Templates

Templates for policy and procedure have been developed to ensure all policies and procedures follow a standard format. The templates are available on the Policy and Procedure webpage.

4.4 Policy and procedure management

a) The Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel is responsible for managing processes identified in the Policy Framework and the policy development and lifecycle.

b) The University's central repository for policies and procedures is managed by the Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel to ensure the integrity of the University's policy information management.

c) The Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel will prepare an annual status report on policies and procedures for the Board, General Faculties Council and Executive Team.

d) The Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel may make the following type of minor editorial changes to policies and procedures without requiring formal approval:

Type of minor editorial change	Example
Position Title	Vice President Academic **>** Provost and Vice President Academic
Organizational	Library Services **>** Library & Scholarly Resources Advancement **>** University Relations
Legislation Title	Workplace Health and Safety Act **>** Occupational Health and Safety Act
Government Ministry Name	Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education **>** Alberta Advanced Education

e) No editorial changes shall be made without approval if they alter the scope, purpose or intent of the document.

f) While the Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel is responsible for publishing approved policy and procedures, the Policy Sponsor is ultimately responsible for the policy and/or procedures.

4.5 Roles and responsibilities

The following outlines roles and responsibilities of officers under this procedure:

Role	Responsibilities

Approval Authority	• Approval authorities for policies are outlined in section 4.4 of the Policy Framework – Governing Policy
	• Has authority to approve policies in accordance with the requirements of the Policy Framework
	• Approves policy on condition that the policy:
	   o is lawful and consistent with any internal or external compliance requirements
	   o is consistent with other existing policies
	   o has suitable arrangements in place for implementation
	• Approves an effective date for the policy as recommended by the Policy Sponsor

Policy Sponsor	• Has overarching responsibility for the policies and procedures within their portfolio • Ensures that all policies and procedures for which they are responsible are developed, approved and implemented within the requirements of the University's Policy Framework • Ensures that appropriate consultation has taken place before seeking formal approval • Ensures that reviews of policy and procedures in their area are conducted as required by the Policy Framework to ensure that policies and procedures are accurate, widely understood and achieving their intended purpose • Determines the effective date of the policy taking into account formal approval and the activities outlined in the Communication/Implementation Plan • Determines the need for an implementation review and any interim reviews as required. • Submits the proposed policy to the appropriate Approval Authority for approval as identified in the Policy Framework • Approves all procedures associated to the policy, unless otherwise indicated • Ensures that all approved policies and procedures are submitted to University Secretariat
Policy Contact	• Has responsibility for operationalizing the policy and/or procedure • Develops and implements the policies and procedures on behalf of the Policy Sponsor within the requirements of the University's Policy Framework

	• Undertakes appropriate consultation before submitting the policy or procedures to the Responsible Officer for formal endorsement/approval • Conducts reviews of policy and/or procedures in their area, as required by the Policy Framework, to ensure that policies and procedures are accurate, widely understood and achieving their intended purpose • On behalf of the Policy Sponsor, ensures that the all approved policies and procedures are submitted to University Secretariat
Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel	• Monitors the consistency between high level policies and their associated procedures • Provides advice and support in policy development • Provides a quality and compliance check against the Policy Framework and other University governing policies • Manages the central repository for policies and procedures policy webpages • Manages the policy and procedure website • Maintains the currency and availability of policy and procedure templates • Makes minor editorial changes, as set out in Section 4.4(d) • Prepares an annual status report on policies and procedures

5. Applicable Legislation and Regulations

6. Related Procedures/Documents
Appendix A – Policy and Procedure Development Form
Policy Template
Procedure Template

History

Date	Action
May 25, 2018	Board of Governors (associated policy approved)