

## Draft Policy for Consultation

### Development, Approval and Administration of University Policies

Feedback can be sent to [Policy@Mun.ca](mailto:Policy@Mun.ca)

#### Purpose

To define a coordinated and consistent process for the identification, development, approval, dissemination, administration, revision, and rescindment of all non-academic University policies.

#### Scope

All University policy and related procedures except:

- academic policies and regulations, which are contained in the University's Academic Calendar and policies intended to guide the operation of the Senate;
- the Board of Regents' policies which are intended to guide the operation of the Board.

#### Definitions

**Sponsor** — A senior administrator, normally a Vice-President, with overall responsibility for an assigned policy, including, but not limited to, research and drafting of the policy; carrying out appropriate consultation/assessment; evaluating implications of the policy, including risks and costs, strategic considerations, legislation compliance, and seeking legal advice, where appropriate; developing and carrying out the communications and the implementation plans; writing any related procedures; monitoring compliance through regular review of the policy. The Sponsor may designate a delegate, who must be named.

**Unit** — Academic or administrative unit as defined in the University Calendar.

**Responsible Unit** — for the purposes of this policy, the Responsible Unit refers to the academic or administrative unit assigned by the policy Sponsor to administer, oversee, and review University procedures associated with a policy under the Sponsor's responsibility. More than one Responsible Unit may be designated for a particular University Policy.

**Unit Head** — the term Unit Head refers to Deans, Heads of Departments, Schools and Divisions, Directors, Executive Directors, University Librarian, University Registrar, and other senior administrators at a comparable level; Associate Vice-Presidents, Vice-Provosts, Vice-Presidents, and the President as applicable.

**ELT** — the Executive Leadership Team refers to the senior administrative body of the University that normally comprises the President and the Vice-Presidents of the University. It is a decision-making body with responsibility for University operations and affairs. This is a functional description, not a formal title.

**PAG** — the Policy Advisory Group is an advisory body to ELT on policy development, serving as a representative body for the University's various portfolios and campuses and administrated by the Office of the Board of Regents - Policy Office. This is a functional description, not a formal title.

**University** — Memorial University of Newfoundland.

**University Members** — any person who teaches, conducts research, studies, or works at or under the auspices of the University and includes, without limitation, all employees, all students, and any other person(s) while they are acting on behalf of or at the request of the University.

EDI-AR — Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism.

## **Policy**

### **University Policies**

Policies exist to ensure that the University's processes and practices align with the University's vision, mission and values, strategic direction, and regulatory and governance environment. They describe the University's position on a particular issue.

A University policy:

- states the University's position on issues which have University-wide application;
- upholds the University's governing principles and reflects the University's strategic direction;
- identifies and prescribes compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and other policies;
- establishes key requirements, responsibilities, and delegations of authority;
- promotes operational efficiencies;
- enhances the University's mission and institutional plans and/or reduces institutional risk;
- provides decision-makers with guidance;
- changes infrequently.

University Members engaged in developing, revising, or rescinding non-academic policies and procedures must follow the requirements outlined in this policy and its related documents to ensure a transparent, accessible, and accountable process.

The policy Sponsor is accountable for ensuring that the policy development and review processes meet the requirements of this policy and its related documents.

ELT is responsible for the oversight of implementation and adherence to the Policy Framework, approving policy proposals and endorsing policies for the approval of the Board of Regents, and it has the authority to make incidental amendments to University policies.

The Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office is responsible for the administration of the policy development processes, coordination and maintenance of the policy portfolio and is available throughout the policy development and review process to provide expertise, assistance, and advice.

Non-academic University policies require the approval of the Board of Regents.

### **University Procedures**

Procedures for implementation, communication, and compliance monitoring should be developed for each policy. Each procedure is assigned a Responsible Unit for administration and oversight.

For new policies, the relevant procedures shall be developed and approved concurrently with the new policy development so that the policy can be implemented once approved.

For revised policies, any new relevant procedures, as well as any revisions to existing relevant procedures, shall be developed and approved concurrently with the policy revision.

Revising or introducing new procedures, independent of revising the linked policy(ies), requires the approval of the Sponsor and appropriate consultation, normally through the Policy Advisory Group.

Procedures, when published, will be appropriately linked to relevant policy(ies) to ensure coordination.

### **Unit-Level Documents**

Units may develop operating standards, protocols, internal regulations or guidelines that have applicability within their units to support their operational responsibilities as long as these documents are consistent with University-wide policies and procedures. Where there is a contradiction, the University policy or procedures will take precedence. The development of local guiding and/or operational documents should follow the same general principles for developing University-wide policies: development, consultation, approval, dissemination, and review.

## **Process for the Development, Approval and Administration of Policy and Procedures:**

### **1. Approval of Concept**

Any Member of the University community may propose a new University policy or revision to an existing policy.

University Members initiating the development or revision of a University policy shall inform and consult with the Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office.

The policy proposal must contain a well-crafted rationale, recommend a Sponsor for the policy, outline a timeline for development and approval, and have the support of the appropriate Unit Head, who will submit the proposal for approval to the appropriate Vice-President.

The Vice-President will submit the proposal to PAG for review, who then will forward it, with any recommendations, to ELT for approval. Following an assessment of need, ELT will determine whether policy development proceeds and, if so, will assign a Sponsor.

### **2. Drafting and Consultation**

The Sponsor has the responsibility for research and drafting of the policy, including ensuring the use of a common format, making the needed changes, drafting relevant procedures, if any, and developing a communications plan and an implementation plan. The Sponsor is also responsible for carrying out appropriate consultation/assessments for evaluating the implications of the policy, including potential risks and costs, strategic alignment, EDI-AR considerations, legislation compliance and, where appropriate, seeking legal advice.

Prior to conducting public consultation, the Sponsor will submit the first draft to PAG for review, who then will forward it, with any recommendations, to ELT for endorsement for public consultation.

### **3. Recommendation for Approval**

After public consultation, the Sponsor will forward the draft policy/policy revision (and relevant procedures) to ELT for final review and endorsement for the approval of the Board of Regents. ELT will forward the draft policy/policy revision to the President, who will submit it to the Board of Regents for approval. Where appropriate, the Senate may be asked to review and assess a policy submission.

### **4. Implementation**

Once approved by the Board of Regents, the Sponsor may proceed with the implementation of the new policy/revised policy, including communicating the approval to

all relevant units and employees, arranging and delivering appropriate training, monitoring compliance, etc.

## **5. Review of Policies**

The policy Sponsor shall conduct a review of their policies every four years or earlier if needed. A review involves assessing an existing policy to monitor the effectiveness of the ongoing administration of the policy and ascertain its alignment with its intended purpose, relevance, inclusivity, adherence to best practices, alignment with the University's strategic objectives, and compliance with legislative requirements, among others. This evaluative process aims to identify opportunities for improvement, replacement, rescindment, amendment, or combining with other policies as necessary.

The Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office will establish a review schedule of existing policies and notify Sponsors at least six months before a review is required. The schedule will ensure that policies are subjected to a review at least once every four years.

## **6. Review of Procedures**

The Responsible Unit shall conduct a review of its assigned procedures when technological, operational, and/or organizational changes occur, or at least as often as the parent policy is reviewed, to ensure the procedures are current and relevant.

## **7. Administration, Coordination and Maintenance of the Policy Portfolio**

The Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office has responsibility for the administration of the processes in the Policy and Procedure Frameworks, the coordination of the policy portfolio, and the curatorial aspects of all policies and procedures (i.e., keeping a directory of the approved policies and ensuring that they are available on the University's website). The online version of policies and procedures will be the official version, and there will be only one online version.

The Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office will provide the Board of Regents and ELT with an annual report about University policies due for review within that year and the status of all policies identified for review and any policies developed in the preceding year in addition to any policy recommendations.

## **Incidental Amendments**

ELT has the authority to make incidental amendments to policy documents which do not alter the meaning of the policy or change roles and responsibilities, such as grammatical/editorial corrections, adding definitions or language changes for clarity or consistency, updating references to organizational structures, programs, or positions, the inclusion of gender-neutral language, and making secondary changes resulting from other related policies and governance decisions being adopted.

ELT, in consultation with PAG and the policy Sponsor, collaboratively decides if proposed changes to a policy can be considered incidental and do not require the Board's approval.

### **Related Documents**

Policies and Procedures Framework

Framework Toolkit (Templates and Guidelines)

The Policy Advisory Group Terms of Reference

### **For inquiries related to this policy:**

Office of the Board of Regents – Policy Office: 709-864-2350.

**Sponsor:** The President

**Category:** Governance

## **Memorial University's Non-Academic Policy and Procedure Frameworks**

Memorial University's non-academic policies and procedures are governed by the policy on Development, Approval and Administration of University Policies or the "Policy on Policies" (adopted September 2007, revised March 2010, July 2011, May 2015, [*Enter the new date*]).

The main features of the "Policy on Policies" are:

- The Board of Regents has authority over non-academic, University-wide policy. The administration has authority over related procedures through the parent policy Sponsor.
- Any University Member, with the support of the appropriate Unit Head, may propose the creation of a new policy or changes to an existing policy.
- The designation of a "Sponsor" for every policy (i.e., a senior administrator with overall responsibility for the development of a policy) its implementation and its periodic review.
- The designation of a "Responsible Unit" for every related procedure, which is responsible for administration and oversight.
- The requirement for consultation, an implementation plan, a communications plan, and compliance monitoring.
- The requirement of a formal review of policies every four years.
- The online version of the policy and procedure is the official version, and there will be only one online version.
- Procedures must be associated with the relevant parent policy(ies).
- A provision for local or unit-level operating standards, protocols, regulations, or guidelines.

In addition to these features, the senior administration adopted principles (February 25, 2008, updated January 23, 2018):

- Policy and procedures development, approval and administration must follow the Policy Framework Process and the Procedures Framework Process.
- All policy and procedures will use a common format and style.

The "Policy on Policies" is implemented through the Policy Framework Process and through the Procedures Framework Process.

## **Policy Framework Process**

The Policy Framework Process sets out the various steps to follow for policy formulation or revision, approval, administration, and rescindment in accordance with the policy on *Development, Approval and Administration of University Policies*. The goal in following the Policy Framework Process is to develop new or revised policies that will:

- Not overlap or contradict each other
- Be sufficiently researched, legislation-compliant, and align with best practices
- Align with the University's vision, mission and values, and strategic objectives
- Foster transparency and engagement by seeking input from relevant stakeholders
- Promote Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism when relevant
- Ensure clarity and accessibility through plain language and user-friendly formats
- Be inclusive of the multi-campus model
- Prioritize sustainable practices to contribute to environmental responsibility when relevant
- Integrate and consider the needs of their users
- Be available and searchable through the online database

To achieve this goal, the policy development must be planned, respect due diligence and follow the four phases:

### **Concept Approval**

**Step 1.** Any Member of the University community who would like to suggest that an existing policy be revised or that a new policy be created completes the Proposal for a New or Revised Policy Template, stating the name of the policy, listing existing related policies, providing a rationale for the proposal and identifying considerations for consultation.

University Members who elect to begin developing or revising a University policy should inform and seek guidance and advice from the Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office.

**Step 2.** That person, the proposer, obtains the approval of the appropriate Unit Head through the usual approval route within that unit.



**Step 3.** Once approved, the Unit Head submits the Proposal for a New or Revised Policy, using the applicable approval route, to the appropriate Vice-President (or President), requesting their support and that the proposal be submitted to the Policy Advisory Group for review and for subsequent forwarding to the Executive Leadership Team.

**Step 4.** Upon reviewing the proposal, the Policy Advisory Group may provide feedback to the Vice-President, as appropriate, and then it forwards the proposal with any recommendations to the Executive Leadership Team for approval. The Executive Leadership Team reviews the proposal and determines whether policy development or revision will proceed. If so, it will assign a Sponsor in the case of a new policy.

#### Draft Approval

**Step 5.** Once Concept Approval is received, the policy Sponsor, where appropriate, names a delegate to conduct the necessary research and drafting of the policy text using the Policy Statement Template. The delegate may be an individual or a working/drafting group. The delegate(s) should have knowledge of the policy development process. Working/drafting groups should include individuals with subject matter expertise, with due consideration given to incorporating multi-campus representation. It is recommended that the names of the individuals on the proposed working/drafting group be communicated to the Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office for feedback.

The policy Sponsor or delegate(s) should strive to engage with key stakeholders throughout the University, individuals who can provide advice and those who will be most directly affected by a policy or a policy change for comments and consultation during the drafting stage, as appropriate.

**Step 6.** Once a policy draft is sufficiently researched and drafted, the first draft is submitted to the Policy Advisory Group for review and for subsequent forwarding to the Executive Leadership Team. Upon reviewing the draft, the Policy Advisory Group may provide feedback to the policy Sponsor, as appropriate, and then it forwards the draft with any recommendations to the Executive Leadership Team for endorsement for public consultation.

**Step 7.** Upon the Executive Leadership Team's endorsement, the draft is made available for public consultation for a minimum of four weeks, with the Sponsor (or delegate) and/or the Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office collecting and recording evidence of the consultation. No changes are made to the draft documents during the public consultation period. Consultation may occur in a number of ways based on the scope of the policy, implications associated with the policy, etc.

**Step 8.** After the close of the public consultation period, the Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office forwards all feedback that was received to the policy Sponsor (or delegate). The Sponsor (or delegate) considers the feedback and makes refinements to the draft documents, as appropriate. While the consultation must consider and integrate the needs of users, the policy statement must not overlap or contradict existing policy and collective agreements, and it must be legislation-compliant. As well, the policy must remain consistent with the University's vision, mission and values and aligned with its strategic objectives.

**Step 9.** Once the policy statement is written, the Sponsor (or delegate) writes the implementation plan and the communications plan and completes the Policy Development Report.

**Step 10.** The Sponsor submits the completed Policy Development Report and the Policy Statement to the Executive Leadership Team for endorsement, who then forwards it, with any comments, to the President. A suggested Executive Leadership Team submission document is available [here](#).

**Step 11.** The President forwards the submission to the Board of Regents through its applicable Committee for final approval.

**Step 12.** If approved by the Board of Regents, this approval is communicated as described in the Publication phase. As well, the Sponsor (or delegate) ensures execution of the implementation plan, which may include training, systems development, development and introduction of new procedures, programs, staff, equipment, forms, etc.

Publication

**Step 13.** The Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office posts the policy to the database on the policy website at <http://www.mun.ca/policy/>.

**Step 14.** The policy Sponsor executes the remaining sections of the communications plan. The communication should be formal and may include announcements through Newsline, training session (open or by invitation), inclusion in employee or student orientation sessions, etc.

#### Policy Review

**Step 15.** Every policy should be subject to review by the policy Sponsor every four years unless otherwise specified. Policy reviews are coordinated through the Office of the Board of Regents — Policy Office, which establishes a review schedule of existing policies and notifies Sponsors at least six months before a review is required. Any policy may be reviewed sooner than four years if needed. An earlier review may be prompted by various factors, including but not limited to:

- the identification of inconsistencies or ambiguities;
- adapting to changes in relevant laws and regulations;
- responding to shifts in the University's strategic objectives and priorities;
- addressing emerging circumstances that require timely updates;
- a consistent need to deviate from the policy, prompting a reconsideration and review;
- or when the Board of Regents or the Executive Leadership Team deems it necessary or desirable to do so.

**Step 16.** The policy Sponsor submits a proposal for revision of an existing policy to the Policy Advisory Group for review and for subsequent forwarding to the Executive Leadership Team, completing the Proposal for a New or Revised Policy Template, stating the name of the policy, listing existing related policies, and identifying considerations for review.

**Step 17.** The Executive Leadership Team, upon the recommendation of the Policy Advisory Group, decides the extent of the review and how to proceed.

If, in the view of the Executive Leadership Team, in consultation with the Policy Advisory Group and the policy Sponsor, a policy needs substantive revision due to institutional or legislative changes, complexity, significant implications, major inconsistencies, contradiction with other policies, among others, the policy process begins again at Step 1 of the Concept Approval phase. A substantive review will follow the same process for new policies and will be conducted by a working/drafting group.

If, in the view of the Executive Leadership Team, in consultation with the Policy Advisory Group and the policy Sponsor, a policy needs non-substantive revision, the policy process ends in Step 6 and does not require public consultation. The Sponsor reports the results of the review to the Executive Leadership Team. Non-substantive reviews usually end with incidental amendments, which do not require the Board of Regent's approval.

Policies cannot undergo consecutive non-substantive reviews; this is to ensure rigorous evaluation, relevance, and alignment with best practices.

### **Procedures Framework Process**

The policy on Development, Approval and Administration of University Policies separates the authority for approval of non-academic policy from the authority for approval of related procedures, the former resting with the Board of Regents and the latter with the administration, through the policy Sponsor. The framework which governs the approval of University procedures is:

- a. A Responsible Unit is assigned to every procedure to ensure oversight and review of the procedure.
- b. Since procedures facilitate the implementation of policies, and forms are used to operationalize the actions, any related forms must be developed, accessible and maintained as new or revised procedures are approved.
- c. For new policy development, any related procedures are developed (or revised) at the same time and are approved by the Board of Regents as part of the policy submission to ensure completeness with respect to implementing the new policy.

d. Responsible Units are required to review the procedures and the related forms for which they are responsible when technological, operational and/or organizational changes occur, or at least as often as the parent policy is reviewed, to ensure the procedures are current and relevant.

e. Changes to existing procedures may be made independent of changes to the parent policy(ies). As well, new related procedures may be introduced, as required.

When changes to existing procedures or the introduction of new procedures occur independently of changes to the parent policy(ies), these occur as follows:

- The Responsible Unit submits the request for change(s) to an existing procedure or introduction of a new procedure, in writing, to the Sponsor of the parent policy. To ensure that the principles of consultation are honored in changing or introducing procedures, the Sponsor asks the Policy Advisory Group to consider the changes or the new procedures and submit recommendations to the Sponsor, in writing.
- In cases where there are advisory committees or boards affiliated with a particular policy, their feedback is sought in addition to that of the Policy Advisory Group. The Sponsor makes the final decision on the proposal, based on the original submission and the feedback received from the Policy Advisory Group (and applicable consultative group). One exception is the University-Wide Procedures for Sexual Harassment Concerns and Complaints for which the Sexual Harassment Board has the authority to approve changes.
- When a proposal for changes to an existing procedure or the introduction of a new procedure is accepted, the updates are made to the policy database and are communicated using methods similar to communicating policy approvals.

## **Terms of Reference – the Policy Advisory Group**

### **Authority**

The Policy Advisory Group (PAG) is established under the authority of the President and administered by the Office of the Board of Regents – Policy Office.

The PAG has an advisory and coordinating role rather than a decision-making role. It does not have the authority to approve policy proposals or drafts.

The PAG will be advised and supported by its Steering Committee.

### **Purpose**

The PAG advises the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) on policy development and policy Sponsors on procedures development guided by the following principles:

- Central coordination and consistency in developing, approving, administering, and reviewing University non-academic policies and procedures.
- Adherence to the University's Policy and Procedures Frameworks.
- Operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Alignment with best practices within the post-secondary education sector.
- Inclusive representation of all University campuses in developing University-wide policies and procedures.
- Consistent adherence to the University's vision, mission and values, and strategic direction.
- Incorporation of diverse perspectives, including, but not limited to, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism (EDI-AR) lens, in the policy development process.

### **Mandate and Responsibilities**

The PAG reviews proposals and drafts for new or revised University non-academic policies and advises ELT and policy Sponsors on these proposals and drafts.

The PAG vets new or revised University non-academic procedures and advises the Sponsors on these procedures.

Its mandate is

- To receive proposals for a new or revised policy from policy Sponsors prior to submission to ELT, give feedback to policy Sponsors, and make recommendations to ELT for initial approval and how to proceed.
- To evaluate the implications of the policy, such as potential risks, costs, strategic considerations, legal requirements, and infrastructure needs and advise ELT accordingly.
- To assess whether a policy needs substantive or non-substantive revision and provide recommendations to ELT accordingly.
- To advise ELT about the consultation process, including the need for legal review and who ought to be consulted.
- To make recommendations to ELT regarding the need to create new policies or the revision of existing policies.
- To review new or revised procedures and advise the Sponsors on them.

- To undertake any tasks or responsibilities assigned by ELT or the President to enhance the University's policy development processes.
- To build policy capacity across the University portfolios.

## **Composition**

### Chair:

The Manager of the University Policy Framework

### Steering Committee Members:

One Senior Administrator for each Vice-President's Office, the President's Office, and the Labrador Campus.

### Members:

Other than those in the Steering Committee:

One member appointed by the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

One member appointed by the Office of the Vice-President (Administration, Finance, and Advancement)

One member appointed by the Office of the Vice-President (Research)

One member appointed by the Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous)

One member appointed by the Office of the Vice-President (Marine Institute)

One member appointed by the Office of the Vice-President (Grenfell Campus)

One member appointed by the Office of the Vice-Provost (Labrador Campus)

One member appointed by the Vice-Provost, (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion)

The Chair may invite other members to attend specific meetings to provide expertise or information as needed.

The appointment of the Chair is permanent (ex-officio), and the other members are appointed on a two-year basis with renewable terms.

## **Operations**

The PAG Steering Committee shall meet once a quarter upon the call of the Chair to discuss policy objectives and be updated on the Committee's regular work.

The PAG shall normally convene on a regular monthly basis or more frequently as needed. Additional meetings, if required, will be held at the call of the Chair.

The quorum will be six members, constituting a two-thirds majority.

The PAG shall operate collaboratively and on a consensus-based decision-making model. The Chair will preside over meetings, facilitating discussions and ensuring equitable participation among all members. All recommendations forwarded to ELT or policy Sponsors must be reached through consensus and shall be communicated in writing.

The Committee may meet about or discuss other matters related to policy and procedures beyond reviewing proposals.

This Terms of Reference does not preclude ELT and policy Sponsors from soliciting advice from other institutional bodies within the University, including, but not limited to, the Office of General Counsel, Unions, and various University standing committees.

The PAG does not supplant internal consultation or policy working groups.

**Approved by the President on .....**

