

# Policy Handbook

April 2018

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## Administration

### Approval Details

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## Revision History

Version	Approval date	Effective date	Description of changes	Author
V 3.0	09 March 2018	30 April 2018	Minor amendment to Responsibilities Map to reflect organisational structure and new University Plan	Quality, Standards and Policy Officer
V 2.0	21 April 2017	21 April 2017	Revised Approval Authority arrangements approved by Council 21 April 2017	Manager QSP
V1.0			Handbook established	Quality, Standards and Policy Officer

## Introduction to policy

The policy handbook has been developed to help James Cook University policy sponsors and their nominated authors to create policies and procedures that are necessary, transparent, relevant, current, and that are developed and presented in a consistent way. This introduction presents an overview of the University's policy framework and the procedures that should be followed for the development, review, amendment, implementation or disestablishment of all university-wide policies and procedures.

The handbook contains all the definitions, templates and planning documents required to write good policy. These tools have been developed to embed best practice in policy writing at JCU and should be used in conjunction with the definitions and principles outlined in the Policy Development and Review Policy, and the approved procedures for developing, reviewing, approving, communicating and disestablishing policy, all of which are contained within the handbook.

The procedures, controls and tools contained in the handbook represent best practice, as identified by the JCU Future Taskforce Policy and Delegations Framework Project, following a sector scan of Australian universities and consultation with the Association for Tertiary Education Management's policy network.

## University policy and its operational context

Policies and procedures operate across governance and management domains. They provide the essential link between the University's governance framework, its managerial decision-making processes and its operations. This section provides an overview of the wider governance framework and the relationship between governance instruments and the policy framework.

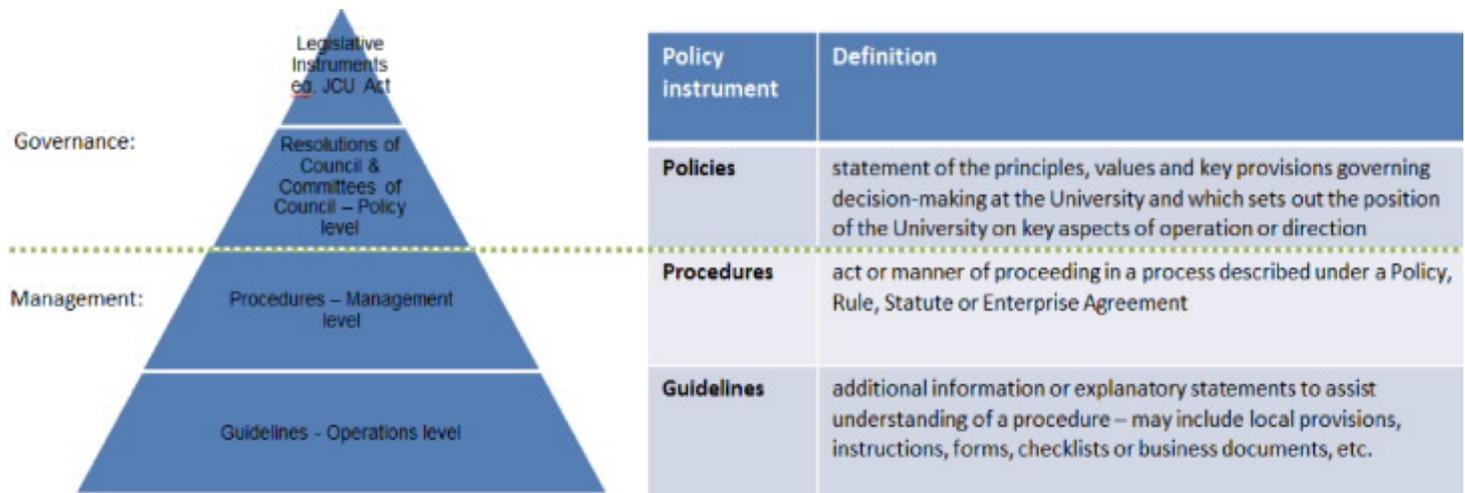
The governance of the University takes place within a framework which exists to regulate and guide the conduct of Council members, staff, students and members of the public accessing the University's services. Key instruments in the governance framework include:

- James Cook University Act 1997 (Queensland)
- JCU Enterprise Agreement 2016
- University statutes and other legislative instruments
- University rules
- Council and committee approved policies
- Management approved procedures

## How policy and procedures should be used

Consideration must be given when developing or reviewing policy content to the distinction between policy and procedure.

The definitions found in the following diagram have been agreed by the University Council and the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee to provide the necessary distinctions between policy and procedure, to allow for the timely application of strategic levers at policy level, while maintaining an appropriate level of executive control and management accountability at procedural level.

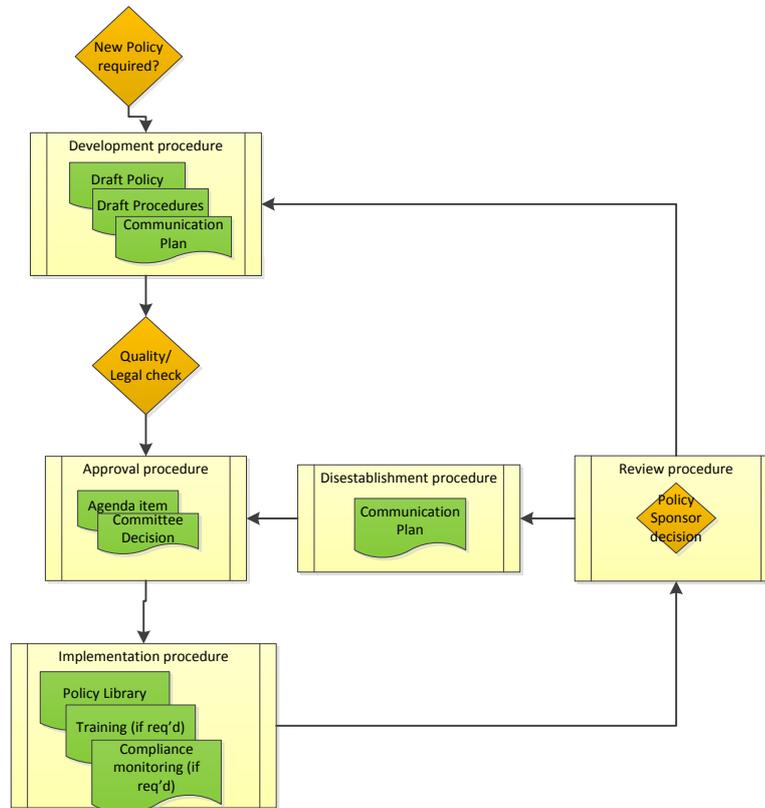


In addition to the hierarchy of policy instruments, the University Council has approved the [Policy and Delegations Framework](#) (page 6) which outlines who is responsible for developing, reviewing and approving policy for each section of the University Plan.

Legislative and policy instruments are located within a hierarchy. The diagram above demonstrates the policy framework hierarchy as it applies to JCU, in order of precedence. A document lower in the hierarchy must not be inconsistent with a document higher in the hierarchy. Where two documents in the hierarchy conflict, the document higher in the hierarchy takes precedence.

## Policy lifecycle

Each phase of the policy lifecycle is required to ensure the university's policy and procedural content remains up to date and fit for purpose. It is the responsibility of each Policy Sponsor to ensure their respective domains are well documented by both policy and procedure, and that their nominated authors adhere to the following lifecycle:



Each phase of the policy lifecycle is documented in a procedure. Detailed instructions (including roles and responsibilities) are clearly documented in this handbook:

- How to write a policy – [Development Procedure](#)
- How to have a policy approved – [Approval Procedure](#)
- How to implement a policy change – [Implementation Procedure](#)
- How to review a policy – [Review Procedure](#)
- How to remove a policy that's no longer required – [Disestablishment Procedure](#)

### Quality Check

A Quality check of all materials provided for approval is conducted by the Quality, Standards and Policy Office. This provides the Policy Sponsor with assurance that, policies:

- are fit for purpose;
- have been aligned with the Policy Framework;
- are easy to understand;
- are developed using the procedures in this Policy Handbook with particular application given to the Style Guide.

## Policy and Delegations Responsibilities Map

Approved: JCU Council 09 March 2018

Policy Domain	Policy & Delegation Domain Sponsor(s)	Delegations Register	Approval of Delegations	Approval of Policy	Approval of Procedure
Learning & Teaching	DVC Student	Academic & Student	Council	Academic Board	DVC Student
Student Services					
Research Management	Provost	Academic & Student			Provost
Research Education					
Community, Marketing & Alumni	VC	Governance & Administration		Council	VC
Professional & Industry					
International					
Academic Governance	Chair, Academic Board	Governance & Administration		Chair, Academic Board	
Corporate Governance	VC	Governance & Administration		VC	
Quality and Planning	DVC S&R	Governance & Administration		DVC S&R	
HR & Staff Development	DVC S&R	Human Resources		Human Resources Committee	DVC S&R
Equity				Health, Safety and Environment Sub-committee	
Health, Safety and Environment					
Estate & Facility Management	DVC S&R	Governance & Administration	Estate Sub-committee	DVC S&R	
ICT					
Financial Management	DVC S&R	Finance	Finance Committee	DVC S&R	

## Policy Development and Review Policy

### Intent

James Cook University is committed to developing and maintaining relevant, clear, consistent, up-to-date and fair policies as a vital part of good governance and to assist decision making bodies and officers to effectively discharge their responsibilities and statutory obligations.

### Scope

This policy applies to approval authorities and officers, including the University Policy Custodian, Policy Sponsors and Policy Authors responsible for the development, maintenance and review of all policies, procedures and guidelines. This policy must be read in conjunction with the Policy Development and Review Procedure.

### Definitions

**Policy** - is a statement of the principles, values and key provisions governing decision-making at the University and which sets out the position of the University on key aspects of operation or direction.

**Procedure** – the act or manner of proceeding in a process described under a Policy, Rule, Statute or Enterprise Agreement.

**Guideline** – a document which provides additional information or explanatory statements to assist understanding of a procedure.

**Policy Framework** – is the clear, consistent, coordinated and enforceable system for the development, approval, implementation and review of University policies.

**Approval Authority** – is the University Council or the appropriate committee, individual or member of the Vice-Chancellor’s Advisory Committee who is delegated authority to approve the establishment of, amendment to, or disestablishment of a policy. The Policy Sponsor of the related policy shall be the approval authority for procedures.

**Major amendment** – a change to policy which will impact on the intent of the policy and/or related policies, stakeholders, aligned procedures or systems. Major amendments include changes to policy title, scope, structure, content (unless deemed an administrative “minor amendment” only) or references linked within the policy such as schedules or appendices.

**Minor amendment** – an administrative amendment only e.g. changes to nomenclature, position titles, policy sponsor, review or expiry date.

**Policy Author** – an officer of the University nominated by the Policy Sponsor and responsible for the development and review of policy, procedures, guidelines or other policy related documentation under the direction of the Policy Sponsor. In some cases, the sponsor will also be the author. Wherever possible, the Policy Author should be the head of the academic or business unit responsible for implementing or controlling operations governed by the policy.

**Policy Custodian** – an officer of the University acting as the custodian of University policy and has responsibility for the management of the Policy Library.

**Policy Sponsor** – an officer of the University who is responsible for ensuring policies and associated documents are developed, approved and implemented in accordance with the Policy Framework.

## **Policy**

The following principles apply in relation to all University policies and procedures:

University staff are required under their contracts of employment to understand their responsibilities and comply with University policies and procedures when carrying out their duties.

Students of the University are required under their terms of admission to understand their responsibilities and comply with University policies and procedures when carrying out their studies.

All JCU policies will be developed in accordance with this policy and associated procedures and drafted consistent with:

- applicable legislation and subordinate legislation (including local, state, commonwealth and international laws);
- enabling legislation (the *James Cook University Act (1997) and statutes*);
- the University Plan and the Statement of Strategic Intent; and
- relevant quality standards (e.g. TEQSA).

Policies will only be approved if developed using the Policy Development and Review Policy and associated procedure and templates. Policies must be approved by an appropriate approval authority.

Policies will be reviewed by the Policy Sponsor every three years or earlier if new legislation or circumstances render it appropriate. It is expected that procedures and guidelines will be updated frequently and not later than when the associated policy is due for review.

## **Policy approval**

A single approval authority is authorised to approve new policy, make major amendments to policy and disestablish policy, as outlined in each section of the University's Policy Framework, unless otherwise requested by the Policy Sponsor or the Vice-Chancellor. Where approval is required urgently, the Vice-Chancellor is authorised to grant interim approvals which are valid for up to 6 months from the date of approval. The Policy Sponsor is authorised to approve minor amendments, procedures and guidelines.

## **Policy responsibilities – Policy Sponsor and Policy Custodian**

Policy Sponsors are responsible for ensuring:

- their policies, procedures and other relevant documentation are appropriately developed, maintained and regularly reviewed to ensure currency, relevance, consistency, fairness and compliance with current legislation;
- nominating a Policy Author that is an appropriately qualified member of the University's staff with expertise and responsibilities in an area directly relevant to the application of the policy
- approval of new procedures or changes to procedures
- they determine whether or not the policy has application to international students and take appropriate action to address this consideration
- whether or not the policy has application to JCU Singapore and take appropriate action to align, integrate or consolidate with JCU Singapore policy;

- they consult with appropriate stakeholders during policy development, review and implementation;
- amendments and disestablishment of policies are referred to the Policy Custodian for review prior to forwarding to the relevant approval authority.

The Policy Custodian will have overall custodianship of University policies, with specific responsibility for ensuring:

- clarity, currency, consistency, fairness, regular maintenance and review of policies;
- the review of new policy proposals, development, amendment and disestablishment of policies and policy communication plans prior to recommendations being made to the relevant approval authority;
- appropriate approval and timely implementation/promulgation of all new, significantly amended or disestablished policies as planned; and
- management of the Policy Library and compliance with recordkeeping requirements as outlined in the Records Management Policy and associated framework.

### **Management of the Policy Library**

The Policy Library, under the control of the Policy Custodian, will contain officially approved policies and serve as the sole location for their storage, maintenance and retrieval. Associated procedures, guidelines and other relevant documentation will be stored on the business unit/policy author's website and the webpage linked to the policy library.

The Policy Library will be publicly accessible according to section 20 of the *Right to Information Act 2009 (Queensland)*.

The Policy Library will not serve as a storage area for procedures and guidelines that do not support policy and will not include management plans, strategic plans or localised operational procedures. These documents should be stored on Division, College, or other relevant websites.

### **Schedules/Appendices**

James Cook University Policy Framework

#### **Related policy instruments**

Policy Development and Review Procedures

#### **Related documents, legislation or JCU Statutes**

*James Cook University Act 1997 (Queensland)*

*Right to Information Act 2009 (Queensland)*

University Plan

James Cook University Statement of Strategic Intent

**Administration**

## Approval Details

Policy Sponsor:	DVC Services and Resources
Approval authority:	Council
Date for next review:	1 June 2017

**Revision History**

Version no.	Approval date	Effective date	Description of changes	Author
18-1	09/03/2018	34/04/2018	Minor amendment to Policy and Delegations Responsibilities Map to align with organisational structure and University Plan 2018-2022	Quality, Standards and Policy Officer
V15-1	9 July 2015	25 July 2015	Revised Policy Framework (Appendix A) including the introduction of 4 delegations registers within the framework retitled: Policy and Delegations Framework-approved by Council 9/7/2015 (5/15 Minutes)	Quality, Standards and Policy Office
V1.0	29 May 2014	30 May 2014	Policy established	PMO/Policy Officer

## How to write a policy – Development procedure

The Policy Development Procedure is required when a new policy is written or existing policy is to undergo such major amendment that it effectively becomes new policy, when:-

- New policy is needed to ensure compliance with new or changing government policy, legislation or JCU strategic direction;
- An existing policy will be amended so extensively that it effectively becomes a new policy;
- Gaps in the existing policy framework are identified; or
- Changes to the JCU environment, such as new systems or ways of working, necessitate policy development.

Policy Sponsors must endorse any proposal to develop new policy.

### Step 1 - Needs analysis

Identify and confirm the need for a new policy.

Investigations should be undertaken to confirm the proposed policy content is not already documented elsewhere. The investigation may involve:

- Review of existing policies and procedures, business unit webpages and JCU databases
- Research in collaboration with the Policy Custodian/Quality, Standards & Policy Officer
- Dialog with Policy Sponsors and stakeholders.

### Step 2 - Roles and responsibilities

Identify a Policy Sponsor for the proposed policy and discuss the need for a new policy.

**Note:** Refer to Approval Authorities in the [Policy and Delegations Framework](#) (page 6).

Policy Sponsors will nominate Policy Authors and determine the level and nature of stakeholder consultation required (including relevant committees and guidance and advice from Legal & Assurance) prior to submitting for approval.

When a Policy Sponsor deems a new policy is necessary, they will communicate the responsibilities and objectives of the new policy with the author.

The Policy Sponsor will also confirm the appropriate Approval Authority for the policy with the Policy Author.

### Step 3 - Drafting

Refer to the [Style Guide – Writing Policy](#) (page 13) for best practice policy writing. Access the Policy Template and draft the initial policy.

#### **Policies should state no more than is necessary to direct decision-making**

During policy development, consult with representatives from each of the stakeholder groups identified by the Policy Sponsor to obtain and incorporate their input and feedback.

Consideration must be given to:

- Aligning policy content and intent statement and supporting the University Plan, mission and values
- Operational compliance and risk
- TEQSA Threshold Standards, Higher Education Standards Framework and AQF
- Appropriate language, style, terminology and structure
- Comparison to and benchmarking against other Australian Universities
- Development of procedural support or guidelines to accompany the policy -

Refer to the [Style Guide – Writing Procedures](#) (page 15) for best practice procedure writing. Access the Procedure Template and draft any procedures required to support the policy.

(Guidelines are able to be developed to meet the needs of the audience and do not have a mandatory template).

- Amendments to existing policy and/or procedure(s) as a result of this new policy. Obtain a copy(s) of the documents to be amended from Quality, Standards & Policy Officer and update as required. Refer to [Policy Review Procedure](#) (page 17) or procedural support
- Disestablishment of existing policy(s) and/or procedure(s) as a result of this new policy. Refer to the [Policy Disestablishment Procedure](#) (page 21).

**Note:** It is recommended that consultation takes place in a group forum involving all key stakeholders to ensure that input can be captured in a single session, avoiding multiple policy amendments and subsequent reviews.

#### Step 4 - Consultation

Once the policy and procedure(s) have been developed, circulate to stakeholders for review along with a marked up copy of policy and/or procedural amendments and details of policy(s) and/or procedure(s) to be established or disestablished. Consideration should be given whether the policy and procedure(s) should also be submitted to Legal & Assurance for review, comment and/or advice.

Collate feedback and update the documents as required to prepare the final drafts.

#### Step 5 - Communication Plan

Access the [Communication Plan Template](#) and draft the *Communication Plan* in consultation with the Policy Sponsor with consideration to:

- Who will be impacted by the new policy and/or any amended or disestablished policy documents?
- What information do they need to know?
- How will this information be shared?
- When will the policy take effect?

Policy Authors are required to complete the [Pre-implementation Checklist](#) (page 23) before the Communication Plan and to ensure any reporting or compliance measures are documented in the Communication Plan.

Policy Authors will be required to sign off on Communication Plans when they have been implemented and forward to the Quality, Standards & Policy Officer for archiving and as evidence that the policy cycle has been completed.

#### Step 6 – Quality review

All drafted policy and/or procedure(s) must undergo quality review prior to approval by the relevant Approval Authority.

The Policy Author or Sponsor will submit the following documentation to the Quality, Standards & Policy Officer for quality review:

- draft of the new policy and any supporting procedures or guidelines;
- marked up copy of any amended existing policy(s) and/or procedure(s);
- any policy(s) for disestablishment;
- draft agenda item; and
- [Communication Plan](#)

Where necessary, the Quality, Standards & Policy Officer will work in consultation with Legal & Assurance and the Policy Sponsor to finalise all documents in preparation for approval. This includes managing further revisions to documents.

#### Step 7 – Policy approval

Go to the [Policy Approval Procedure](#) (page 20).

## Style Guide – Writing policy

<p><b>Policy</b> - is a statement of the principles, values and key provisions governing decision-making at the University and which sets out the position of the University on key aspects of operation or direction.</p>
<p><b>Procedure</b> – the act or manner of proceeding in a process described under a Policy, Rule, Statute or Enterprise Agreement.</p>

### Naming a policy

Give the policy a concise name which immediately identifies its subject matter. Do not begin a title with ‘The’, ‘University’, ‘James Cook University’, ‘Policy on’, ‘Procedure for’ or ‘Guidelines on or for’.

Using the word ‘requirement’ in a policy title should be avoided as the policy will stipulate the requirements.

Including the word ‘Policy’ in the title of a document does not necessarily render the document official Policy unless it meets the definition and requirements outlined in the Policy Development and Review Policy and has been formally approved by the relevant approval authority as outlined in the associated procedure.

The title of an associated procedure should be named identically to the policy, with ‘Procedure’ placed at the end of the title.

### Layout and formatting

A policy should be no longer than 2 pages (excluding the Administration section) and must align with the Policy Template.

The inclusion of headings, styles or formatting that do not conform to JCU’s standard template must be discussed prior to policy development with the Quality, Standards & Policy Officer.

Additional information necessary for carrying out or complying with the policy must be detailed in a separate procedure, guideline or schedule.

### Numbering

Use the numbering provided as an example in the approved templates.

Keep numbering to a minimum. Use sub-headings and bullet points rather than resorting to over numbering e.g. 1.1.13. Remember the audience for whom you are writing. Keep it simple.

### Using capitals

Use capitals for the first letter of the heading or title, along with any proper nouns, acronyms and references to “the University”. Only use capital letters for position titles, names of workgroups, organisational units, degree titles (e.g. Bachelor of Art) and publications.

### Definition

A definition should be included to explain the meaning of a term (including acronyms) which appears in the document when:

- the term (word or phrase) may not be commonly known;
- the term may be used by multiple business areas in different ways or with different implied meaning;
- the term may be open to interpretation; or
- a technical term is used.

The definition should be simple and easy to understand by the general reader.

## Language

- Make sure the document ‘speaks with a single voice’. When possible, have one author work on the draft, even if they are incorporating other people’s ideas and feedback.
- Draft in the third person (‘they’) rather than the second person (‘you’).
- If an action is mandatory, use ‘will’ or ‘must’.
- Avoid the use of ‘should’ in policies and procedures as it does not make a definite statement about what will/will not be done.
- If an action is permitted but not required, use ‘may’.
- Avoid the terms ‘normally’, ‘usually’ and ‘generally’.
- Use one main idea per paragraph, section or subsection. Keep paragraphs short and avoid slabs of unbroken text.
- Use clear, concise and grammatical plain English. Wherever possible, use everyday words over technical ones and clearly define any technical terms which are required.
- Be sparing in your use of adjectives and adverbs.
- To avoid ambiguity, use the same words for the same concepts throughout the document.
- Avoid passive or indirect language. Wherever possible say who will do what, rather than that something will be done.
- Use gender neutral language. For example, use ‘they’ or ‘their’ instead of ‘he/she’ or ‘his/her’.
- When referring to ‘who’ use generic terms such as ‘staff, students, Managers’.
- The following phrases should be used to reference roles:
  - Staff member
  - Line manager
  - Head of work unit
  - Senior staff
- Refer to people by title/role only if generic terms are not applicable. Avoid referring to individuals by name.
- Avoid listing specific contact details where possible and refer to websites or other sources that provide this information and can be easily updated.

## Hyperlinks and referencing

Avoid the use of hyperlinking within the Policy section as links require ongoing maintenance and often point to sources that are not under the control of JCU.

When absolutely necessary, links should be placed in the Related Policy Instruments or Appendix / Schedule sections only, ie. not within the Policy section.

Ensure all links contain the name of the document being referred to. This will enable the reader to conduct a web search if links break.

Where the document, site or content is not owned or controlled by JCU, for example a legislative document located on a Queensland Government website, ensure the name of the organisation that owns the document is clear to the reader.

[Link to policy template](#)

## Style Guide – Writing procedures

A procedure states what will be done to implement the policy. The procedure identifies what will be done and how including:

- the precise actions required
- who is required to complete the action
- when the actions are to occur
- the sequence of events

### Planning for procedure

Identify and understand your audience. Procedures should be written for the uninformed user with all acronyms, abbreviations and jargon explained or referenced in the Definitions section.

Consider what is needed before starting the task, any actions which precede the task or any materials needed and how they are to be used.

Document or draw the high level process or prepare an outline of the procedure to get the sequence of events right from the start. Changing a procedure is more time consuming than getting it right from the beginning.

Ask questions to understand the actions required by all users.

Walk through the procedure to identify all steps and who should be involved in each step.

Identify when there are multiple options or actions which could be taken and the subsequent path each procedure should take including situations where actions should be done in parallel by different users.

Consider the transition points of the procedure – for example, is there a point when the user is required to handover to another user or manager to complete the procedure and if so, how will this happen and are there service delivery timeframes which should be agreed?

### Developing the procedure

#### *Steps*

Procedure should be written as structured instructions:

- Steps should be clear, short imperative statements
- Each step should begin with an action verb to describe what should be done, examples include “click” “type” “identify” “collect” “confirm” “document” “provide”.
- Limit the number of steps. Longer procedures have a higher failure rate because users tend to lose their place or accidentally skip over steps

#### *Sections*

Use sub headings for logical sections of the overall activity and apply appropriate formatting cues such as numbering, indents and sections to outline the steps logically

Hyperlink to tools, templates or checklists which exist to support the procedure so users can easily navigate to these resources

Use **Note:** to reference any important considerations, requirements or supplementary information which apply when completing the step.

### **Testing the procedure**

Test the procedure(s), particularly any which were long, complex or difficult to write, where possible, use a resource who is not already familiar with the procedure as they will be able to easily identify missed steps, assumed knowledge or where the procedure has been over complicated with unnecessary detail.

### **Procedure Approval**

Any procedure(s) developed to support policy implementation must be approved by the Policy Sponsor prior to publication and implementation.

Procedures directly related to a policy must be placed on the relevant business unit website and linked to the related section of the policy library.

Please contact the Policy Custodian/Quality, Standards & Policy Office for any further information or advice

[Link to procedure template](#)

## How to review a policy – Review procedure

The Policy Review Procedure is required when a policy reaches its expiration date from the previous review. It must also be applied for out-of-cycle policy review in the following circumstances: -

- Changes to government policy, legislation or JCU strategic direction
- New or changing initiatives, systems or operational activities
- Minor or major amendments identified and required
- The establishment of new policies or amendments to other JCU policies which impact on associated policies
- Improvement opportunities have been identified for the policy or its associated procedures.

Access the [Policy Review Checklist](#) to complete the policy review to identify any required amendments.

If no amendments are required, update the revision history to confirm that the review was completed and no amendments were required. Provide the updated version to the Quality, Standards & Policy Officer, along with evidence of Policy Sponsor agreement.

If amendments are required, determine whether the amendment is classified as minor or major amendment or a disestablishment:

If:	Do this:
Minor amendment	<p>Complete the minor amendments, marking up the changes, in consultation with the Policy Sponsor and update the revision history.</p> <p>To have the amended policy published to the Policy Library, the Sponsor must provide the Quality, Standards &amp; Policy Officer, the amended documents and their approval to publish.</p> <p>No other actions are required.</p>
Major amendment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine whether the required amendments are so significant that a new policy will effectively be developed. If so, the same research, risk and impact assessment and consultation activities which are completed during the new policy development procedure will be required.</li> </ol> <p>Go to the <a href="#">Policy Development Procedure</a></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. If the amendment won't result in a significantly changed policy, identify all impacts of the major changes to policy and/or procedure including any impacts to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other policy and/or procedures</li> <li>• Stakeholder groups and individuals</li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities (checking for any existing delegations within the policy being reviewed, removing them from the policy, appropriately recording them and ensuring they are understood).</li> <li>• Reporting, compliance and audit mechanisms</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Draft the required amendments to policy and/or procedure and update revision history before circulating the documents to stakeholders (including Legal &amp; Assurance) for review if required.</p>
Disestablishment	Go to <a href="#">Policy Disestablishment Procedure</a>

Access the [Communication Plan Template](#) and draft the *Communication Plan* with consideration to:

- Who will be directly or indirectly impacted by the policy changes?
- What information do they need to know about the changes to policy and/or procedures?
- How will this information be shared?

All amended policy and/or procedure(s) must undergo a quality review. The following Policy Sponsor agreed documents are provided to the Quality, Standards & Policy Officer for quality review:

- marked up copy of the amended policy;
- marked up copy of any amended procedures or guidelines;
- or in the case of major re-write: current published version and revised clean copy to compare;
- any policy(s) for disestablishment;
- draft agenda item; and
- [Communication Plan](#)

Go to the [Policy Approval Procedure](#) (page 20).

## Policy review checklist

**Date:**

**Policy title:**

- Policy is named in accordance with the Policy Handbook Style Guide – Writing Policy
- Policy content is aligned with the policy intent statement
- Policy intent is aligned with the University Plan
- Policy references (where applicable) relevant and current internal and external legislation including the *James Cook University Act 1997* and University statutes and regulations?
- Policy content does not conflict with, or is duplicated in the Enterprise Agreement?
- Policy contains policy content only (no embedded procedures). Associated procedures are to be documented in a procedural document and if required, supporting guidelines.
- Policy does not contain references to delegations of authority?
- Definitions included are appropriate and complete
- Language and terminology used throughout the policy is appropriate to the audience and simple to understand?
- Policy is drafted using the policy template standard headings: Intent, Scope, Definitions, Policy, Related policy instruments, Schedule/Appendix, Related documents & legislation, Administration
- Policy is consistent with other JCU policies and procedures (i.e policy does not contain information which opposes, is conflicting or duplicates content in other policies)
- Appropriate Consultation (including Legal Review where required) has been occurred?
- Check all hyperlinks are working correctly and are at the end of the document only (hyperlinks to pages only, not individual documents)
- Titles, names and organisational units are accurate and correct
- Links to related procedures are clear in the 'Related Documents' section
- Administration section is up to date:
  - Correct Approval Authority
  - Correct Policy Sponsor
  - Appropriate Revision history
- Communication plan completed
- Agenda item (cover sheet) completed
- Policy Sponsor agrees to final draft

## How to have a policy approved – Approval procedure

The Policy Approval Procedure is required for new policies, major amendments to existing policy or requests to disestablish policy.

### Has the draft policy been quality reviewed by Quality, Planning and Analytics?

YES	NO
<p>1. Quality, Planning and Analytics will progress the following Policy Sponsor agreed documentation to Secretariat and Records staff for inclusion on the relevant agenda item (cc Policy Sponsor/Author):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• marked up copy of the amended policy;</li> <li>• marked up copy of any amended procedures or guidelines;</li> <li>• or in the case of major re-write: current published version and revised clean copy to compare;</li> <li>• any policy(s) for disestablishment;</li> <li>• draft agenda item</li> </ul> <p>2. Secretariat and Records staff (GSU) to only receive policy items from Director, Quality, Planning &amp; Analytics or Manager Quality, Standards &amp; Policy.</p> <p>3. If it is not certain that a policy item received by Secretariat and Records staff (GSU) has been quality checked by QSP, the item is to be returned to the Policy Sponsor and the Quality, Standards and Policy Officer, QSP notified.</p>	<p>1. Send draft documents (as listed in the Review Procedure (p 19) to Quality, Standards &amp; Policy Officer (cc. Policy Sponsor)</p> <p>2. Quality, Standards and Policy Office to quality check draft documentation. Addition of text to agenda item: <i>'Quality checked by QPA in accordance with the Policy Framework procedures'</i>.</p> <p>3. Quality, Planning &amp; Analytics to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• forward Policy Sponsor agreed documentation to Secretariat and Records staff (GSU) for inclusion on the relevant agenda with cc to relevant Policy Sponsor/Author).</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> if items are deemed not ready for committee review, they will be returned to the Policy Sponsor/Author for action. Return to <a href="#">How to review a policy – Review procedure</a>. (p 17)</p>

### Has the Policy been approved?

YES	NO
<p><b>YES (without conditions)</b></p> <p>1. Secretariat and Records staff (GSU) to provide Policy Sponsor and Quality, Standards and Policy Officer with an Action Item from the committee's minutes .</p> <p>2. Quality, Standards and Policy Officer will publish policy in the Policy Library and communicate to the Policy Sponsor/Author that this has occurred.</p> <p>3. Policy Sponsor to activate Communication Plan and provide Quality, Standards and Policy Officer with evidence that implementation of the Communication Plan has occurred.</p>	<p>Return to <a href="#">Policy Development procedure</a></p>
<p><b>YES (conditional)</b></p> <p>1. If a policy has been conditionally approved (requiring an agreed further amendment), all conditions will be documented in the minutes of the relevant committee and communicated by Secretariat and Records staff as an Action Item from the committee's minutes to the Policy Sponsor and the Quality, Standards &amp; Policy Officer (<a href="mailto:policy@jcu.edu.au">policy@jcu.edu.au</a>).</p> <p>2. Quality, Standards &amp; Policy Officer to confirm with Policy Sponsor that conditions have been met before publishing/implementation can occur.</p>	
<p>When the policy has been published go to the <a href="#">Policy Implementation Procedure</a>.</p>	

## Minor amendment approval

Minor amendments to policy are approved by the Policy Sponsor and sent to the Quality, Standards & Policy Officer for updating in the Policy Library as required.

Changes to supporting policy instruments, procedures or guidelines will be approved by the Policy Sponsor and updated as required.

## Policy publication

A policy will be published or disestablished in the Policy Library by the Policy Officer Quality, Standards and Policy, as soon as action item arising from the committee minutes, has been received.

Existing policies will remain in place and operational until such time as the new or reviewed amended policy is published, or disestablished and removed from the policy library.

## How to remove a policy that's no longer required – Disestablishment procedure

The Policy Disestablishment Procedure is required when it is identified that a policy is no longer required. The circumstances leading to policy disestablishment may include: -

- New policy has been created which supersedes existing policy
- Policy is no longer required, possibly as a result of changes to government policy, legislation or JCU strategic direction
- Policy review has identified requirement for disestablishment

**Note:** Policies **must not** be disestablished without written approval from the approval authority.

### Step 1 - Needs analysis

- Identify the need to disestablish existing policy
- Assess risks associated with the proposed disestablishment of existing policy and, conversely, the risks to the University of not disestablishing the policy. Risks relating to policy disestablishment are to be captured and reported in Riskware
- Obtain the Policy Sponsor's endorsement to disestablish the policy

### Step 2 - Consultation

- If the disestablishment of the policy has potential to cause significant impact to stakeholders, consult with representatives from each of the impacted stakeholder groups to confirm that disestablishment is required
- Policy Sponsor to decide if Legal & Assurance advice/review is required

### Step 3 - Drafting

- Review and amend existing policy or procedure to remove references and/or links to the policy proposed for disestablishment
- Check that any existing delegations within the policy remain appropriately recorded elsewhere and are understood
- Check other related documentation which may exist outside of the Policy Library that may also require amendment as a result of the proposed disestablishment, i.e. business unit webpages
- Arrange for other University policies which reference the disestablished policy, to be updated to remove links or references (contact the Quality, Standards & Policy Officer for assistance).
- Arrange for any content from the proposed disestablished policy which is to be retained, to be transferred to the appropriate location, i.e. another policy amended

### Step 4 – Communication Plan

Policy Author will complete a [Communication Plan](#) with consideration to:

- Who should be notified about the policy disestablishment?
- Who will be impacted by any amendments to existing policy and/or procedure?
- What information do they need to know about the policy changes?
- How will this information be shared?

### Step 3 – Policy disestablishment approval

The Quality, Standards & Policy Officer will work in consultation with the Policy Author to finalise all documents in preparation for approval to disestablish.

The Policy Author will provide the following documents to the Quality, Standards & Policy Officer for quality review:

- Agenda item
- Policy for disestablishment
- Policy/s updated with content from proposed disestablished policy (if required)
- Communication Plan

Go to the [Policy Approval Procedure](#).

## How to implement a policy change – Implementation procedure

The policy implementation date is the date the policy is published in the policy library. This is the date the policy takes effect.

The Policy Implementation Procedure is required when:-

- New policy has been developed and approved
- Major amendments to policy have been approved
- Policy disestablishment has been approved

Policy Communication Plans are expected to be activated immediately after policy approval has been confirmed.

Communication about changes in the policy environment is necessary to keep staff and students informed about policies and procedures which affect them. The type of information that the audience will need to know about new, amended or disestablished policy(s) will vary depending on the situation. The *Communication Plan* provides a matrix of information which identifies:

- Who will be impacted directly or indirectly by the policy changes
- How the impacts will be addressed and the approach that will be taken to communicating this information
- When the policy will take effect (implementation date)

### Step 1 – Communication Plan

Policy Authors will draft a *Communication Plan* as part of the Policy Development Procedure. Policy Authors are required to complete the [Pre-implementation Checklist](#) before the [Communication Plan Template](#) and ensure any ongoing reporting or compliance measures are also recorded in the *Communication Plan*.

### Step 2 – Policy training

Policy Authors will prepare any communications, training materials or other documentation as necessary as directed by the Policy Sponsor. This includes creating any procedures required to monitor compliance of the new policy.

**Note:** The Quality, Standards & Policy Officer will be supplied a copy of all final approved policy documents during the approval process so these do not need to be provided again.

### Step 3 – Policy library update

The Quality, Standards & Policy Officer will update the Policy Library with the new, amended or disestablished policy(s) and/or procedure(s) as required by the Policy Sponsor on the implementation date(s).

#### Step 4 – Records management

The Quality, Standards & Policy Officer will file all documents related to the policy development, approval and implementation in accordance with recordkeeping guidelines.

If policy is to be disestablished, follow these steps:

Contact the Quality, Standards & Policy Officer [policy@jcu.edu.au](mailto:policy@jcu.edu.au) and request a copy of:

- the published policy to be disestablished; and
- copies of supporting instruments such as procedures or guidelines which are linked or referenced in the policy which are also to be disestablished; and
- any policy(s) and/or procedure(s) which will require updating as a result of the disestablishment.

Update the revision history of the disestablished policy (and any associated procedures or guidelines) stating:

- policy has been disestablished
- effective date of disestablishment (the date the Approval Authority *approved* the disestablishment)
- brief explanation of the reasons for disestablishment
- title of new policy or changes to existing policy which supersede the policy, where appropriate

Complete amendments to the remaining policy(s) and/or procedure(s) in consultation with the Policy Sponsor and update the revision history of each document before circulating to stakeholders for review if required.

Refer to the [Policy Review Procedure](#) for procedural support.

#### Pre-implementation checklist

- Has the new policy been approved by the relevant Approval Authority?
- Have any supporting procedures and/or guidelines been approved by the Policy Sponsor?
- Have the resources required for implementation been sourced?
- Have the appropriate communication channel(s) and key messages been identified?
- Has the current environment, including volume of change impacting stakeholders, been considered in the scheduling of any communications or training?
- Have communications been drafted and reviewed?
- Has a method or procedure for measuring compliance with the changes to policy and/or procedure been developed if required?
- Has the final, approved policy and all supporting policy instruments (or policy to be disestablished) been provided to the [policy@jcu.edu.au](mailto:policy@jcu.edu.au) Quality, Standards and Policy Officer along with the effective date of the change?