

Policy Governance

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1.0 Purpose

This policy describes the University's governance arrangements, objectives and principles for policy development and review to ensure high quality, consistent policy documents that comply with legal requirements, support quality assurance, reduce risk and which are readily accessible and understood by the University community.

2.0 Scope

This policy is approved by University Council and applies to all University policies and subordinate policy documentation. (See 3.1 Policy document hierarchy.) Only the [Griffith University Act 1998](#) can override the provisions of this policy.

3.0 Policy statement

This policy is intended to fulfil the following objectives for the University to:

- a. provide staff and students with high quality, accessible and easily understood policy documents
- b. align policy documents with University strategy and comply with legislation and all other legal requirements
- c. reflect and embed our values of fairness, equity, diversity and inclusion
- d. support University business and achieve efficiency in its operations
- e. promote consistency and support quality assurance, monitoring and systemised review of policy documents
- f. reduce risk
- g. address governance, academic and operational needs.

3.1 Policy document hierarchy

Policy documents are organised within a hierarchy. Documents lower in the hierarchy are subordinate to and must align with those higher in the hierarchy.

The policy document hierarchy at Griffith is:

- a. Legislation
- b. Policy and delegations
- c. Procedures, guidelines, frameworks and plans
- d. Local protocol

3.2 Policy document categories

Policy documents are classified into the following categories:

- a. Academic
- b. Governance
- c. Operational

3.3 Approving authority

Council may delegate authority to its Committees, to the Executive Group, an Executive Group member or other responsible officers to approve, amend or rescind University policy and procedures. As detailed in the Council approved [Delegations Policy](#), Schedule B of the [Delegations Register](#) lists the University's policies and procedures and their respective approving authorities.

3.4 Accountability

Each policy is assigned a Policy Advisor, who is responsible for the development, implementation and review of the policy document.

3.5 Policy development and review

The following principles must be adhered to when developing and reviewing policy content:

- a. Ensure policies state clear high-level principles and standards relating to the University's operations and decision-making and identify roles and responsibilities for activities.
- b. Align delegations with decision-making responsibilities.
- c. Incorporate operational detail in procedural documents, which set out the necessary processes, practices or actions to give effect to policy.
- d. Be consistent with legislation.
- e. Support and align with the University's strategy and values and not be unnecessarily burdensome.
- f. Be written using clear, succinct and [inclusive language](#).
- g. Prepared as specified in the Policy Governance Procedure and using the prescribed policy document templates.

3.6 Publication and promulgation

Publication and promulgation of policy documents will be undertaken as approved by the relevant approving authority and in accordance with section 3.12 of the Policy Governance Procedure.

3.7 Reviews

The Policy Advisor ensures that all policy documents that fall within their responsibility are subject to a major review in accordance with the review cycle detailed in the policy, usually every three years but every five years at most.

3.8 Policy Library

The University maintains a Policy Library where all policy documents are published and accessible. In some instances, policy documents such as Plans, Guidelines and Frameworks may be published on University websites.

4.0 Roles, responsibilities and delegations

Schedule B of the [Delegations Register](#) provides a list of University policy documents and their approving authorities. As outlined in the [Delegations Policy](#), the Vice Chancellor may approve changes to Schedule B except where Council or a University Committee is listed as the approving authority, in which case authority is reserved to Council.

5.0 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

Academic policy documents relate to the academic business of the University including all matters relating to teaching and learning, programs and courses, student administration and support, research and research training.

Approving authority means the Council or Committee, Executive Group, responsible Executive Group member or responsible University officer with prescribed delegated authority to approve, amend or rescind a policy document. (Refer to policy document categories for approving authorities: academic, governance and operational.)

The University's **Delegations Register** is a searchable online database of sub-delegations formally assigned by the Vice Chancellor to University officers. Variations to the Delegations Register (excluding Schedule A and Schedule B as defined in clause 3.2 of the Delegations Policy) are approved by the Vice Chancellor.

The General Counsel will review the Delegations Register at least biennially to ensure ongoing relevance, appropriateness and consistency with University strategy and policy.

Framework is a structure for management and operational activities that brings together policy documents.

Governance policy documents are those for which the Council, and Committees of Council, are responsible as the governing authority (which have not otherwise been delegated) including all matters of which the Council cannot delegate its power under the Act. This covers the University's strategic direction, budget, policies, delegations of authority and ensuring effective overall management of the University. For example, [Code of Conduct](#).

Guidelines means advisory and explanatory statements that provide detail, context or recommendations for good practice, and where relevant support policies, and must be followed unless there is a justifiable operational reason not to.

Local protocol means operational-level procedures or practices that apply within a particular Academic Group or Division and that must be consistent with all policy documents above them in the policy document hierarchy.

Operational policy documents relate to mandatory practice and decision-making principles for areas of University business and operations that do not fall within the definition of academic or governance. For example, [Emergency Management Plan](#).

Plan is a document that states the University's strategic directions across its core activities, it may also give effect to legislation or other regulatory requirements.

Policy is a high-level document that states the key principles and standards that apply to and direct the University's governance and decision-making and the conduct of its operations or activities. Policies also assign roles, responsibilities and delegations.

Policy Advisor means the officer who has been assigned responsibility for the policy document.

Policy document describes collectively any document that is a policy, register, schedule, procedure or guideline of the University.

Policy Library refers to the repository for all current and expired University policy documents.

Procedure is a document that sets out the necessary processes, practices or actions to give effect to a policy, and must be followed unless there is a justifiable operational reason not to.

Register means an official list or record associated with a policy or procedure.

Responsible Executive Group member means a member of the University Executive with relevant portfolio responsibility and to whom the Policy Advisor reports.

Responsible University officer refers to a staff member of the University who has been delegated the authority to approve a policy document.

Schedule means the same as register.

INFORMATION		Printable version (PDF)	Downloadable version (Word)
Title	Policy Governance Policy		
Document number	2020/0000053		
Purpose	This policy describes the University's governance arrangements, objectives and principles for policy development and review to ensure high quality, consistent policy documents that comply with legal requirements, support quality assurance, reduce risk and which are readily accessible and understood by the University community.		
Audience	Staff		
Category	Governance		
Subcategory	Corporate Governance		
Effective date	12 December 2019		
Review date	2020		
Policy advisor	Head, Corporate Governance		
Approving authority	University Council		

RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Legislation	Griffith University Act 1998 Register of Compliance Obligations
Policy	Delegations Policy Delegations Register Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Procedures	Delegations Procedure Policy Governance Procedure Policy Approval Information Sheet Policy Development Flowchart Quick Guide to Inclusive Language and Accessible Content
Local protocols	
Forms	Policy template Procedure template