Athabasca University

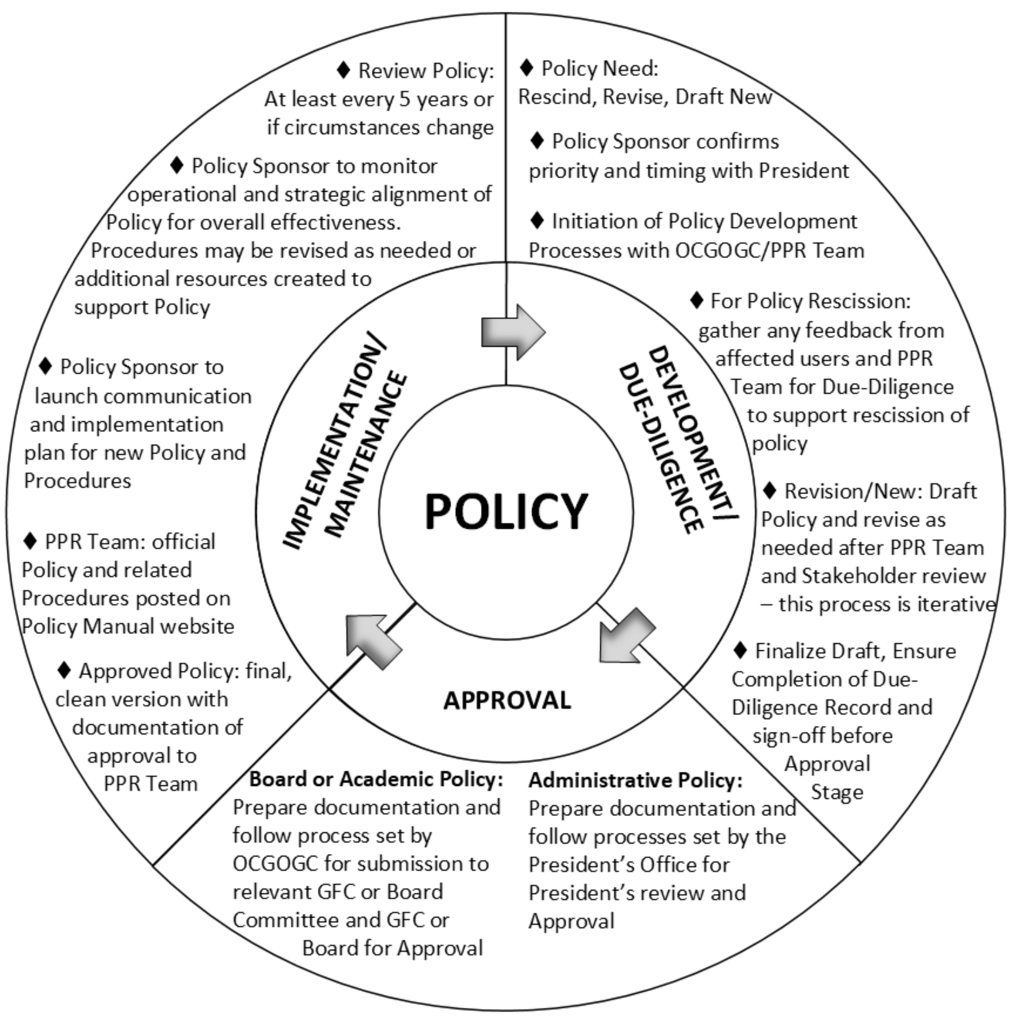
Policy Framework Guidelines

POLICY DEVELOPMENT – PROCESS

This Guideline outlines the stages and steps required for the development, approval and maintenance of policy at AU in alignment with the Policy Framework – Governing Policy and its Procedures.

What are the steps for developing and maintaining policy?

1. Development and Due-Diligence
2. Approval
3. Implementation and Maintenance



Development and Due-Diligence

In this stage, policy needs are identified and processes for drafting, consulting, obtaining feedback and ensuring due-diligence are completed prior to the policy moving forward for approval or rescission. The process is supported by the Policy, Privacy and Records Management Team within the Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel. The process is iterative; drafting and consultation may need to be completed in several steps. Also important is validating the final draft with those who provided feedback and input before moving forward with approval.

The following outline the main steps that need to be done before moving a policy forward for approval or rescission.

- Identify Proposed Need:
    - Rescind
    - Revise
    - New Policy
- Policy Sponsor to confirm with the President that timing and direction is appropriate in consideration of other strategic projects, alignment with strategic goals and initiatives of the University, and is the priority or does not impede priorities identified for the Policy Sponsor and their team.
- Once President is aware of and approves the timing of moving forward with policy development or rescission, Policy Sponsor/Policy Contact will initiate the process by completing the Policy Development Intake Form (online) and book a meeting with the Policy, Privacy and RIM Team to plan out the development processes.
- **For Rescission:**
    - Identify affected stakeholders and teams and confirm that rescinding the policy will not have unintended impacts or consequences.
    - Confirm with the Policy, Privacy and RIM Team that there are no dependencies in other policy that would be affected by rescission.
    - Complete the Due-Diligence Record and obtain all required sign-off to complete this stage and move on to preparing for approval of the rescission.
- **For Revising Existing Policy or Drafting New Policy:**
    - Fill out the Policy-Procedure Intake Form.
    - Connect with the PPR Team to set up initial deliverables and a high-level project plan and timeline.
    - Policy Sponsor to designate lead to draft revisions and move policy through development and due-diligence stage

   - Connect with PPR Team to review initial draft and provide feedback prior to moving forward with consultation and feedback gathering. This may be iterative and require some back and forth with the team.
   - Seek input on the Draft Policy with relevant stakeholders and users of the policy, which may include individuals, consultative bodies, committees, and senior leadership. This will likely be an iterative process and include validating final edits with those stakeholders to ensure there are no unintended impacts. Feedback should be summarized into the Due-Diligence Record.
     - Policy Sponsors must include consultation and collaboration with Nukskahtowin and the EDI team to ensure that policy aligns with and supports AU's Indigenous Cultural Framework, and EDI principles and expectations.
   - The PPR Team will review the final draft, Due-Diligence Record, and will sign-off that all steps in the Development and Due-Diligence Stage are complete and the Policy is ready for approval. This includes confirmation that the Policy revisions are in alignment with any applicable legislation, collective agreements, and other related policy.
     - Where there are accompanying procedures, any revisions should be done in concurrence with the Policy revision and be included as part of the consultation, review and approval package.
     - **Changes to Procedures ONLY:** Where Procedures require revision that **do not** change or misalign with Principles set out in the parent policy, drafting processes and consultation should be followed as set out for revisions to Policy, however, approval is by the Policy Sponsor.

Approval

In this stage, policy is brought forward to the relevant Approval Body for approval. All due-diligence must be confirmed including:

- Compliance with policy development processes (sign-off by Director, PPR)
- Confirmation that Policy complies with applicable legislation, collective agreements
- All necessary stakeholders and groups with relevant insights on this policy as it relates to the university as a whole have been consulted. This may include but is not limited to:
  - Business Units or Individual Team members
  - Faculties
  - SLT, Administrative Council, GFC or Board Committees
  - CGOGC, Legal Services

- Approval by the Policy Sponsor

Policy will be brought forward to the respective Approval Body as delegated in the Policy Framework – Governing Policy.

- Policy Sponsors are responsible for moving the Policy forward for approval.

For Administrative Policy

- Policy Sponsors will work with the Office of the President and follow any required processes for bringing a matter forward for the President's approval.
- In addition to any briefing materials and documentation required by the Office of the President's processes, Policy Sponsors should include:
    - Clean version of the Policy
    - Red-line version or Table of amendments if the Policy is a revised version of an existing policy,
    - Due-Diligence Record
    - Related Procedures

For Board and Academic Policy

- Policy Sponsors will work with the Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel and follow any required processes for bringing a matter forward for the approval of the Board of Governors, General Faculties Council, or their respective Committees.
- In addition to any briefing materials and documentation required by the Office of the Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel processes, Policy Sponsors should include:
    - Clean version of the Policy
    - Red-line version or Table of amendments if the Policy is a revised version of an existing policy,
    - Due-Diligence Record
    - Related Procedures

Implementation and Maintenance

In this stage, approved Policy and related Procedures are posted on the Official Policy and Procedures Manual, maintained by the OCGOGC. Policy Sponsors and their teams will implement and maintain the policy to ensure it remains current and effective. In this stage:

- Policy Sponsors will provide a clean Word version of the approved policy to the OCGOGC.
  - Documentation showing the approval by the respective Approval Body must also be provided. For example, confirmation that the Motion for approval of the Policy was carried or documentation provided by the Office of the President confirming Presidential approval.
- In the case of a rescission of a policy, documentation showing that rescission was approved by the respective Approval Body will be provided to the OCGOGC
- The OCGOGC will prepare and post the official version of the approved policy and related procedures onto the Policy and Procedures Manual. This will be considered the only official version of the approved policy and procedures.
- Policy Sponsors and Contacts will carry out their post-approval implementation plan including but not limited to:
  - Communication Plan
  - Awareness and Training
  - Roll out or development of further supporting guidance resources to enable the successful implementation of the policy and procedures
- Policy Sponsors will monitor the effectiveness of the policy. Policy will be reviewed a minimum of every five years, however, at any point where need arises, policies may be reviewed and revisions undertaken to address changed circumstances. This must be done in accordance with policy development processes established in the Policy Framework – Governing Policy.

Who can I reach out to if I have questions about this document? You can reach out to policy@athabascau.ca