

University Policy Framework

The attached Policy Framework document is new to the University. It has been a source of questioning for some time given the range and scope of policies in the University, as to where the final approval of certain policies within the University is located.

Heretofore it has been the practice to bring to Governing Body for approval the more onerous policies of the University, particularly with regard to employment, such as the Duty to Respect and Right to Dignity Policy, the Grievance Procedure, etc. Policies with potentially serious outcomes for staff in particular, have been brought to Governing Body for approval in recent years.

The Policy Framework defines some of the terms involved and specifies where final approval for specific policies is to be sought. For those requiring Governing Body approval, the policy includes a tracking section indicating where and by which committees the policy should have been considered before finally being approved by Governing Body.

This is the first version of this document. It is likely that implementation and experience will lead to an early revision. It is important, however, that the University community has a clear view as to the approval levels and types of policies to be finalised by Governing Body, Academic Council, Finance Committee and the University Management Team.

Michael Farrell
Secretary
January, 2017



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

University College Cork – Policy Framework

2017

POLICY FRAMEWORK – UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Policy Framework (the 'Framework') are to:

- (a) govern the development, establishment, amendment and review of policies to ensure relevance, authority and consistency; and
- (b) define the roles, responsibilities and authorities in relation to the development, establishment, amendment and review of policies.

2. SCOPE

This Framework applies to all policies developed for and on behalf of the University.

3. AUTHORITY

This Framework is made with the approval of the Governing Body in accordance with Section 15 of the Universities Act, 1997 ["the Act"].

4. POLICY

4.1 University Policies must:

- (a) be created only where there is a clear and justifiable need, with long-term application to the University;
- (b) align with University objects in the Act, and with UCC's strategic and business plans;
- (c) be consistent with legal requirements;
- (d) be consistent with good governance;
- (e) apply and be binding across the University;
- (f) be developed, established, amended and reviewed in consultation with key stakeholders;
- (g) assign roles and responsibilities to ensure transparency;
- (h) encourage responsible process ownership; and
- (i) be capable of implementation within University resources.

4.2 Policies exist within a broader regulatory framework:

- (a) the Act;
- (b) the University's Principal Statute;
- (c) University Regulations;
- (d) University policies such as the Signing Authority and Approval Policy; and
- (e) approved processes/procedures.

5. PROCEDURAL PRINCIPLES

5.1 A new policy or major amendments to policy must be initiated by a policy proposal.

Approvers of policy proposals must:

- (a) endorse the proposal prior to drafting of the policy;
- (b) assess the proposal against the principles of this Framework; and
- (c) ensure the relevant process owner/s are notified of the endorsed proposal.

5.2 A policy must:

- (a) record the policy approver and policy owner;
- (b) comply with the relevant University policy template which must mandate sections for:
 - (i) policy objectives;
 - (ii) scope of the application of the policy;
 - (iii) policy;
 - (iv) procedure (where applicable); and
 - (v) summarising roles and responsibilities in the policy to ensure transparency
- (c) consolidate content into fewer rather than more instruments based around a broad area of University operations; and
- (d) restrict content to policy and procedures that form the parameters within which day-to-day operational decisions and actions are taken.

5.3 Prior to a new policy or major amendment to a policy proceeding to approval:

- (a) the approval pathway must be set by the policy approver;
- (b) key stakeholder[s] must be consulted; and
- (c) legal advice regarding compliance must be obtained before commencement of drafting if the policy relates to:
 - (i) implementation of a legal requirement; or
 - (ii) a right or obligation established under the Act, University Statute or University Regulations.

5.4 Policy approvers are determined in accordance with this Framework. Policy approvers approve policy content as meeting the objectives of the policy as follows:

- (a) within scope of their authority the Governing Body, the Academic Council, the Finance Committee or the President/UMTO may:
 - (i) approve new policy or major amendments to policy; and
 - (ii) rescind policy.
- (b) the Governing Body, the Academic Council, the Finance Committee or the President/UMTO may authorise an appropriate senior officer to approve editorial amendments.

5.5 New policy and major amendments to policy must be promulgated by the policy owner to areas of the University community affected by the policy.

5.6 At least every five years, or earlier as required, a review must be undertaken of each policy against the principles set in this Framework.

5.7 The policy owner of this Framework must report to Governing Body annually on the policy framework operations and policy reviews. Outcomes of reviews under section 5.6 above must be reported annually to the senior officer appointed under this section 5.7.

5.8 Authorised versions of current policies are only those published in the central policy repository on the UCC website.¹

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

<i>Role/Decision/Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Conditions and limitations</i>
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¹ This will require a decision on how a central policy repository is located and managed

Approves policy proposal for new policy or major amendment to policy	Governing Body Academic Council Finance Committee President/UMTO	Within scope of policy approval.
Sets approval pathway	Governing Body Academic Council Finance Committee President/UMTO	May consult with policy owner or Corporate Secretary on the appropriate pathway.
Policy Owner	<i>Varies with policy –see definition of policy owner</i>	As per definitions of 'policy owner'
Policy approver (editorial amendments only)	Appropriate Senior Officer authorised by either: Governing Body Academic Council Finance Committee President/UMTO	As per definition of 'editorial amendment'

7. DEFINITIONS

approval pathway means the pathway through which a policy must proceed in order to be approved.

editorial amendment means change to nomenclature, correction of errors and hyperlinks or minor changes required to support compliance with law, statute or regulation.

key stakeholders means persons, or a class of persons, whose roles or responsibilities are directly affected by a policy and includes policy approvers and relevant process owners.

major amendment includes a change likely to impact on:

- (a) objectives of the policy; and/or
- (b) any requirement for implementation related to a decision or action of a key stakeholder.

minor amendment includes a change not likely to impact on:

- (a) objectives of the policy; and/or
- (b) any requirement for implementation related to a decision or action of a key stakeholder.

policy is:

- (a) a formal statement of principle that regulates University operations; and

(b) an instrument approved under this framework, and

(c) is binding on staff, students or other members of the University.

policy approver is the relevant approval authority responsible for approving a new policy, a major or minor amendment to an existing policy or the rescission of an existing policy as specified in section 5.4.

procedure means the steps to be taken to implement a policy.

policy owner is a senior officer assigned by the policy approver and recorded on each policy. Each policy is assigned one policy owner. Owners are responsible for:

- (a) providing advice on approved policies under their ownership;
- (b) drafting or overseeing the drafting of policy;
- (c) reviewing policy in accordance with this Framework;
- (d) consulting key stakeholders and obtaining advice from the Office of Corporate and Legal Affairs as required; and
- (e) ensuring new policy and major amendments to policy are promulgated.

process means the group of activities and tasks undertaken by staff to achieve a consistent output.

senior officer means a member of the University Management Team [Strategy].

POLICY APPROVER – THIS POLICY

Governing Body

POLICY OWNER – THIS FRAMEWORK

Corporate Secretary

REVIEW

This Framework is to be reviewed by Governing Body.

VERSION HISTORY

Policy Framework Version	1
Approved By:	Date
UMTO	16/01/2017
Finance Committee	16/01/2017
Audit Committee	27/01/2017
Governing Body	

UNIVERSITY POLICY FRAMEWORK – FINAL APPROVAL

Approval pathway for Policies to be approved by Governing Body – Key

- *UMTO>>>Finance Committee>>>Governing Body
- # UMTO>>>Finance Committee>>>Audit Committee>>>Governing Body
- £ UMTO>>>Finance Committee>>>Academic Council>>>Governing Body
- \$ UMTO>>>Audit Committee>>>Governing Body
- & UMTO>>>Academic Council>>>Governing Body
- + UMTO>>>GB Staff>>>Governing Body

The four categories below are the final approvers for University policy under their remit.

GOVERNING BODY	ACADEMIC COUNCIL ²	FINANCE COMMITTEE	PRESIDENT/UMTO
Change to Principal Statute (&) Changes to Regulations (&) Changes to College Rules (&) Changes to Strategic Policies: - Strategic Plan (£) - Risk Management Policy (\$) - Emergency/Business Cont.[\$] - Data Protection and FOI [\$] - Child Protection ()	Policies on: - Admission - Transfer -Vetting -Health Screening -Deferral -Recognition of Prior Learning	FIXED ASSET POLICIES - Disposal and Acquisition of Fixed Assets as per Fixed Asset Policy & Procedures	All University level policies which are not listed for final approval by the Governing Body, the Finance Committee or the Academic Council should be approved by the President/UMTO

² Where Academic Council is the final approver the track below Academic Council through Colleges and Academic Council Committees is not specified here but should be set down and agreed by Academic Council.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signing Authority & App. [\$] - Whistleblowing [\$] - Research Centre Governance [&] - This Framework Policy [&] <p>Staffing Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff Discipline [Statute][*] - Duty of Respect [+] - Staff Grievance [+] - Probation and Establishment [+] - Progression Across Merit Bar [+] - Capability Policy [+] - Code on Conflict of Interest [\$] - Staff Code of conduct [+] - Staff Charter [+] - Researcher Career Structure [*] - Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy [*] - Sabbatical Research Leave [*] <p>IT Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptable Use Policy [\$] Data Protection and Data Security Policies [\$] Cyber Security Policies [\$] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PhD by Prior Published Work - Examination and Plagiarism -Research Student Supervision -Collaborative Provision -Registration -Progression -Programme Development and --Approval -Degree Awarding -Scholarships and Prizes Polices -Behaviour/Discipline/Dispute -Resolution -IT Policies [Except for those under Governing Body] - Placement - Student Complaints - Fitness to Practice/Study 	<p>BANKING/CASH POLICIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bank Mandate Amendments - Treasury Policy - Borrowings including Borrowings Framework <p>OTHER POLICIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal/Relocation Expense Scheme 	
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APPENDIX 1

Decisions Reserved to the Governing Body

Primary Responsibilities of the Governing Body	Decisions Reserved to the Governing Body
<p>To be the principal financial and business authority of the institution, to ensure that proper books of account are kept, to approve the annual budget and financial statements, and to have overall responsibility for the University's assets, property and estate. [UA S. 39] , [UA S.13] , [UA S. 18(1)(a)] and [UA S. 42(1)]</p>	<p>To approve the annual report and accounts of the University</p> <p>To approve the annual budget</p> <p>To approve reports to the Governing Body from the Finance Committee</p> <p>To approve the purchase and sale of University land and property</p> <p>To set student fees</p> <p>To set the number of academic promotion positions for each round.</p>
<p>To be the institution's legal authority and, as such, to ensure that systems are in place for meeting all the institution's legal obligations, including those arising from contracts and other legal commitments made in the institution's name. [UA,Third Schedule, (1),(2)and (3)]</p>	<p>To appoint the University's Solicitors</p>
<p>To act as trustee for any property, legacy, endowment, bequest or gift in support of the work and welfare of the institution.</p>	
<p>To ensure that the University's Charter, Statutes, Regulations and the Universities Act, 1997, are followed at all times and that appropriate advice is available to enable this to happen.</p>	<p>To make Statutes and Regulations for the good governance of the University as necessary</p>
<p>To approve the mission and strategic vision of the institution, long-term academic and business plans and key performance indicators, and to ensure that these meet the interests of stakeholders. [UA S. 34(2)]</p>	<p>To approve the Strategic Development Plan</p>
<p>To ensure processes are in place to monitor and evaluate the performance and</p>	<p>To approve Key Performance Indicators for the University</p>

effectiveness of the institution against the plans and approved key performance indicators, which should be, where possible and appropriate, benchmarked against other comparable institutions.	
To delegate authority to the President for the academic, administrative, financial, and personnel management of the institution subject to reserving such matters to itself as the Governing Body thinks fit. And to establish and keep under regular review the policies, procedures and limits within such management functions as shall be undertaken by and under the authority of the President. [UA Fourth Schedule (1)]	<p>To delegate authority to the President to manage and direct the academic, administrative, financial and personnel and other activities of the institution</p> <p>Subject to those areas of decision making reserved to the Governing Body or the Academic Council</p> <p>To establish policies, procedures and limits within which such delegation is exercised</p> <p>To approve the number of academic staff promotions</p>
To approve changes to the academic structure of the University in Colleges and Schools in accordance with procedures specified in the Principal Statute	To approve changes to College Rules following consideration by the Academic Council
To ensure the establishment and monitoring of systems of control and accountability, including financial and operational controls and risk assessment, and procedures for handling internal grievances. [UA S.26]	<p>To approve reports from Audit Committee and to review regularly the University's Risk Register</p> <p>To appoint a Dispute Resolution Committee</p> <p>To approve employee relations policies including, inter alia, Grievance, Disciplinary and Duty of Respect Policies</p>
To establish procedures for quality assurance [UA S. 35 (1)] and to prepare a statement of the policies of the University in respect of access to the University and equality, including gender equality. [UA S. 36 (1)]	To approve reports on Quality Promotion, Equality [including gender equality] and Access to the University
To establish processes to monitor and evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the Governing Body itself.	
To appoint the President, and to put in place suitable arrangements for monitoring	To appoint the President [Chief Officer].

his/her performance. [UA S. 18(1)(b)] and [UA S. 24(1)]	
To be the employing authority for all staff of the institution ³ and to be responsible for establishing a human resources strategy. [UA S. 18(1)(b)] and [UA S. 25(1)]	To approve the University's Human Resources Strategy
To appoint a Secretary to the Governing Body and to ensure that, if the person appointed has managerial responsibilities in the institution, there is an appropriate separation in the lines of accountability.	To appoint the Secretary to the Governing Body
To make such provision as it thinks fit for the general welfare of students, in consultation with the Academic Council.	To approve Student Discipline and other significant student-related procedures.

³ This power is delegated to the President by the Governing Body