



UOW ADMINISTRATION

Policy and Governance Unit, Academic Registrar's Division

WHAT IS POLICY?

University policy is important to the efficient and effective operation of the University. It is a tool that:

- Enables individuals to get on with their jobs without needing to discuss issues each time they arise
- Enables participants from different parts of the University to work towards a common goal
- Delivers consistency and predictability throughout the University
- Provides for compliance with legal and other requirements
- Supports quality assurance and continuous improvement.

1. Definition of Policy

At UOW a Policy is

“a statement that outlines non-discretionary governing principles and intentions in order to guide University practice.”

Policies apply to the University as a whole. They comply with all relevant legislation and rules and shall be approved by the highest delegated authority being the University Council and/or Administrative Committee.

The following is a definition from Bridgman, P and Davis, G (2000). The Australian Policy Handbook. (2nd ed). St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, pp. 4, 6).

Policy....can be seen as an *authoritative response to a public issue or problem*. This suggests public policy:

- Is *intentional*
- Is about *making decisions* and testing their consequences
- Is *structured*, with identifiable players and a recognisable sequence of steps
- Is *political* in nature, expressing the electoral and program priorities of the executive.

Public policy is ultimately about **achieving objectives**. It is a means to an end. Policy is a course of action by government designed to attain certain results.

The following elements characterise policy:

- a stated intention

- a considered, authoritative response to a problem
- a way to achieve goals and objectives
- a framework for action

2. Factors Influencing UOW Policy

The following factors may influence UOW policy

Social, Economic and Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural Disasters (locally or overseas) ▪ OHS Risks
Political and Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immigration Laws and Visa Regulations ▪ Government Higher Education Policy
Dominant Value and Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic Standards ▪ Administrative Effectiveness and Efficiency ▪ Governance ▪ Quality
Formal Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Committee Structures ▪ Decision Making Processes ▪ Strategic Plans
Policy Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Policy Development Process

3. Policy Triggers

Resulting in new policy or major changes:

- Changes to Legislation (e.g. DEEWR, EEO, FOI)
- Changes in social, economic, political environment (e.g. funding)
- Continuous improvement (e.g. Academic Reviews Policy)
- Internal or external reviews (e.g. AUQA, Academic Integrity Project)
- Expression of need by faculties or other business units.

Resulting in minor changes

- Consequential changes eg flow on changes from amendments to other policies but that do not change the intent of the policy
- Expressions of need by faculties or other business units