

POLICY FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

University policies reflect an institution's position, principles and values and set out standards and processes related to issues of central importance to the university community. The complexity of university operations necessitates an evidence-based and integrated approach to policy development, implementation and review that informs a prioritized annual policy agenda.

UWinnipeg's Policy Framework provides a standardized process for developing and implementing clear, concise, and well-written policies. The Framework details the policy cycle and defines the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders at each stage. The Framework provides the basis for ensuring compliance with legislative requirements, promoting best practices, mitigating institutional risk, and upholding the integrity of teaching and research scholarship. Further, the Framework ensures that a robust information gathering process with relevant members of the university community is completed, while also identifying the resources, infrastructure, communication, procedural changes, and education required to ensure the successful development and implementation of university policy.

Policies at UWinnipeg require approval from different bodies: Senate; Board; and Administration.

Effective [insert date], university policies will be:

- Developed in accordance with the Framework;
- Presented in a standardized template;
- Formally approved;
- Maintained in a central repository by the Office of Institutional Analysis (hard copy and online electronic database);
- Accessible to all members of the university community; and
- Administered and reviewed by the senior administrative/academic unit(s) with responsibility for the matter that is the subject of the policy.

KEY GROUPS RESPONSIBLE FOR UWINNIPEG POLICY

Board of Regents – the governing body of the University of Winnipeg responsible for the review and final approval of policy that is related to university business in accordance with the Policy Framework.

Senate – the governing body of the University of Winnipeg responsible for the review and final approval of academic policies and procedures, including scholarship, research, and creative activity in accordance with the Policy Framework.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Executive Planning & Priorities (EPP) – the standing committee responsible for reviewing and approving administrative policies, as well as providing direction regarding proposals to develop new policies and revise existing policies.¹

The Office of Institutional Analysis – the office responsible for the overall stewardship of the UWinnipeg Policy Framework process, which involves the following central responsibilities:

- providing evidence-based research to inform policy development;
- ensuring new policies are based on best practices and integrated with existing policies;
- working with General Counsel who provides legal advice related to issues of compliance and consistency;
- ensuring that appropriate levels of approval are in place; and
- working with senior administration to establish criteria for prioritization of policy revision and evaluation to inform the annual policy agenda.

POLICY CYCLE

The purpose of the Policy Framework is to create an evidence-informed and integrated policy development and implementation process at UWinnipeg. This Framework ensures that policies are compliant with the legislative and regulatory framework and congruent with current best practices in the field of higher education (see Appendix A for a diagram representing the Policy Framework).

The Policy Framework is applicable to all university policies developed after [insert date] and the revision of all existing policies going forward.

There are 6 steps in the Policy Framework, detailed as follows:

1) Issue Identification & Analysis

EPP aims to be proactive and responsive to the Board of Regents and Senate. EPP is responsible for identifying an annual policy agenda. Policy-related issues are brought forward by the Board of Regents, Senate, or other members of the university community, and inform the annual policy agenda. The Issue Identification Template

¹ The Executive Planning & Priorities Committee consists of the President & Vice-Chancellor, Provost & Vice-President Academic, Vice-President Student Life, Vice-President Finance and Administration & CAO, Vice-President Human Resources Audit & Sustainability, Associate Vice-President Research & Innovation, Associate Vice-President Indigenous Affairs, Associate Vice-President Finance & Operations, General Counsel and University Secretary, President & CEO UWinnipeg Foundation, and the Senior Executive Officer & Advisor to the President of UWinnipeg.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

(see Appendix B) was developed to guide this process. This form includes the following components: a description of the issue with potential policy implications, a summary of the main points to be included in the policy, the individuals or groups to which the policy would apply, an assessment of the risks of not developing a policy on the issue, a description of required resources, reference to any associated procedures that would need to be developed, a list of other university policies that would be impacted, and a recommendation as to the consultation process to be employed should EPP approve the development of a policy.

Once completed, this form is submitted to the Office of Institutional Analysis who will, after consultation with EPP conduct an evidence-based review of the central issue identified.

2) *Evidence-Based Review & Policy Research*

This review is conducted by the Office of Institutional Analysis with guidance and direction from relevant members of senior administration. Ultimately, this review ensures that a range of policy alternatives and best practices learned from other institutions and academic scholarship are considered. The OIA will work with General Counsel to obtain legal advice regarding issues of compliance and consistency. Specific components of the review can include an environmental scan of how other post-secondary institutions approach the issue, a summary of current research and best practice approaches, an analysis of the issue's relationship to UWinnipeg's legislative framework, Strategic Directions, and existing policy. The review concludes by offering a series of options and recommendations. The Evidence-Based Review Template was designed to structure this review (see Appendix C).

Once completed, this review is forwarded to EPP for consideration.

3) *Policy Development*

EPP provides direction via the Office of Institutional Analysis as to whether the issue warrants development of a policy document. This direction will also include details regarding which stakeholder groups should be part of the consultation process and the appropriate approval body (i.e. Board, Senate, Board/Senate, or Administration).

The member of senior administration who is responsible for the subject matter (or his or her delegate) will lead the development of a policy using the Official Policy Template (refer to Appendix D). Policies should be clear, concise, written in plain language, and

POLICY FRAMEWORK

reflect the outcomes and input from the consultation process. The Office of Institutional Analysis will provide support and feedback on policy drafts, as requested.

Note: Any relevant procedures should be developed, reviewed and approved at the same time as the applicable policy.

4) *Policy Review & Approval*

The Office of Institutional Analysis will track and ensure that new policies receive timely review and approval by the appropriate bodies. Approval indicates an institutional commitment to upholding the requirements articulated in the policy document. If applicable, this approval process revokes outdated or previous policy versions.

Note: Comprehensive revisions to existing policy require the same level of approval as new policy. Editorial revisions can be approved by the relevant member of senior administration.

5) *Communication & Training Plan*

The Office of Institutional Analysis will work with the member of senior administration responsible for the subject matter of the policy to develop a communication and training plan for new (and revised) policies. The Office of Institutional Analysis will ensure that new policies are communicated through a Policy Listserv (electronic mailing list), advertised in the Faculty and Staff Bulletin, and uploaded to the official UWinnipeg Policy Repository. Training may include presentations to committees, staff or student groups, information sessions or workshops.

Senior administration and management who receive information on new or revised policies are also responsible for ensuring that staff receive and understand the information.

6) *Evaluation & Revision*

The regular review of policies is important to ensure that all university policies have been successful in achieving desired outcomes identified during the development phase, as well as ongoing compliance with policy requirements. The purpose of the review process is to determine if a policy is still relevant or if it should be combined with another policy or rescinded, determine if revisions are required to improve the efficacy of the policy, and to ensure that appropriate awareness of the policy requirements exist (see Appendix E for a template to guide the review process).

POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Office of Institutional Analysis maintains a policy inventory and is responsible for tracking and initiating the review of all policies. The reviews are conducted collaboratively between the Office of Institutional Analysis and the member of senior administration responsible for the subject matter of the policy.



APPENDIX A: DIAGRAM OF FRAMEWORK

The following diagram provides a summary of the six steps involved in UWinnipeg's integrated and evidence-based Policy Framework.



APPENDIX B: ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

This form is to be used when identifying an issue with policy implications. The submission of this form initiates a review by the Office of Institutional Analysis in accordance with Step 1 of the UWinnipeg Policy Framework. This completed form should be forwarded to: policy@uwinnipeg.ca.

Proposed Policy Title

Contact Person (name, title, phone & email)

Description of Issue with Policy Implications

Why does UWinnipeg need a policy on this issue?

Provide an overview of the central issue including any developments, events, or conditions that provide a rationale for this proposed policy.

Summary of Proposed Policy

Provide a summary of the main points to be included in the proposed policy.

Scope of Proposed Policy

List the key groups of the UWinnipeg community to which this policy would apply.



APPENDIX B: ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

Preliminary Risk Assessment

Describe the anticipated risks (e.g. financial, legal, reputation, injury, property damage, academic etc.) should this policy not be implemented. Conversely, what positive opportunities might be missed if this policy is not implemented?

Indicate any timing issues to be considered related to the development and implementation of this policy. Include the effective date envisioned to best accommodate implementation.

Resource Requirements

Indicate resources required to implement this policy (e.g. human, financial, physical, technological, etc.). Specifically note whether current resources are sufficient or if new resources would be required.

Associated Procedures

Do procedures related to this issue currently exist? If yes, will these procedures change as a result of this new policy? If no, indicate whether any procedures are required to augment the proposed policy.

Associated Policies

List all policies or other university documents that would be impacted by this proposed policy.

Recommended Consultation Plan

List the primary groups / units that should be consulted in the development of this proposed policy.



APPENDIX C: EVIDENCE-BASED REVIEW

The evidence-based review is conducted by the Office of Institutional Analysis. This form is to be used to guide and summarize the evidence-based review of a proposed policy. This research is completed in consultation with relevant members of senior administration and submitted to EPP for review.

Proposed Policy Title

Summary of Issue

Environmental Scan

Provide an overview of how other post-secondary institutions approach the issue central to the proposed policy.

Literature Review

Summarize current research and best practice approaches to the central issue(s).

Legal Review of Compliance & Consistency

Consult with General Counsel, as required.

Alignment with University's Strategic Directions

Indicate how this policy aligns with and supports the official mission statement and strategic directions of UWinnipeg.



APPENDIX C: EVIDENCE-BASED REVIEW

Review of Related University Policy

Summarize how this proposed policy would complement / conflict with current UWinnipeg policies.

Options & Recommendations

Detail a range of options and recommendations in response to the Issue Identification submission.

APPENDIX D: POLICY TEMPLATE

POLICY TITLE: _____

EFFECTIVE DATE: _____

APPROVAL BODY: _____

POLICY STATEMENT

- *What are the main implications and requirements of the policy for the UWinnipeg community?*

PURPOSE

- *What is the overarching purpose of the policy?*

LEGAL AUTHORITY

- *List the specific acts and regulations that form the legal basis for the policy, if applicable.*

APPLICABILITY

- *Who does this policy apply to? Who is required to comply with this policy?*

RESPONSIBILITY

- *Who is the individual / unit responsible for the administration of this policy?*

KEY DEFINITIONS

- *What are the key terms referenced in this policy?*

POLICY ELEMENTS

- *What are the main principles, conditions and/or requirements of the policy?*

ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES

- *If applicable, list the titles of procedures that relate to the policy that specify the action steps required for the policy's implementation.*

APPENDIX D: POLICY TEMPLATE

RELATED POLICIES

- *List related UWinnipeg policies.*

RELEVANT DATES

Approved: _____

Effective: _____

Scheduled Review: _____



APPENDIX E: EVALUATION & REVISION TEMPLATE

The Office of Institutional Analysis maintains the policy repository and tracks when policies are scheduled for review. The OIA will alert the relevant member of senior administration who is responsible for the subject matter of the policy when a policy is up for review. The member of senior administration (or his or her delegate) will then conduct a preliminary review of the policy in accordance with this form. This completed form should be forwarded to: policy@uwinnipeg.ca. Note: All recommended revisions are subject to approval by EPP, Senate or the Board and will be prioritized within the context of the three-year policy agenda.

POLICY TITLE: _____

EFFECTIVE DATE: _____

REVIEW DATE: _____

SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY: _____

APPROVAL BODY: _____

From the following five options, please indicate which type of revision you recommend:

- No Change**
- Editorial Change – e.g. updated title or department name change**
- Minor Change – requires minimal consultation and analysis**
- Substantial Change – requires a major rewrite which includes an evidence-based review and consultation**
- Rescind or Amalgamate – policies that are no longer relevant or policies that are redundant with other existing policies (or those under development)**

RATIONALE

Based on your selection above, briefly describe the reasons, events or conditions that support your recommendation. If applicable, briefly describe the proposed revision.
