

Policy Framework

Last Modified Nōnahea i Whakarerekē	December 2024
Next Review Date Rā Arotake	December 2028
Approval Authority Mana Whakaae	General Counsel and Registrar
Contact Officer Āpiha Whakapā	Governance and Compliance Manager

Introduction

The Policy Framework ensures that all University policy documents are developed, reviewed, amended and approved in a consistent and transparent way and outline key responsibilities. Policies should be written so that they are clear, consistent, unambiguous and readily accessible in order to enable the University to achieve its objectives.

Policy Principles

All University approved policies must be displayed on the internet in the UC Policy Library, which is administered by the UC Policy Unit.

All University policies must be developed, reviewed and approved in accordance with this policy and the associated procedures.

The default review period for policy documents is four years, from the date of the last full review, or the date of commencement for new policies. A shorter review period may be applied to a policy when required.

Council & Senior Leadership Team Delegated Authority

The University of Canterbury Council ("Council") has governance functions, powers and responsibilities over the University and is responsible for determining the policies in relation to the management of its affairs ([section 280\(d\) of the Education and Training Act 2020](#)). The Council is the Approval Authority for a number of policies.

Council also has authority under [section 284 of the Education and Training Act 2020](#) to issue statutes that cover a range of activities including good governance and discipline.

Council may delegate the authority to approve policies and statutes in accordance with [section 285](#) and [section 286](#) of the Education and Training Act 2020.

The Vice-Chancellor and Senior Leadership Team has been delegated authority to approve, amend or rescind UC policies where they are the Approval Authority (refer to section [G47 & G48 of the Governance Delegation Schedule](#)).

Hierarchy

The following hierarchy applies to University statutes, regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines, with the first taking precedence over those that follow:

1. *Statutes* are formal and binding University laws which apply to staff and/or students and are made by Council in accordance with [section 284 of the Education and Training Act 2020](#).
2. *Regulations* are those regulations made by Council or its delegate.
3. *Policies*, which are approved and published in the UC Policy Library, establish key principles and values that govern decision-making at the University and rules that are mandatory and apply across the University.
4. *Procedures*, included in the UC Policy Library, detail mandatory direction on how a policy is to be implemented.
5. *Guidelines*, if included in the UC Policy Library, provide approved and recommended approaches, but are not mandatory.

University-wide Application

UC policies are held separately to other compliance documents by virtue of having what is commonly described as University-wide application. Policies at this level reflect significant operational and/or strategic value to the University's operations as a whole and will usually disseminate key regulatory or legislative compliance requirements. This is the distinguishing characteristic from common or shared operational and administrative procedures or processes.

Drafting and Development

UC policies must be drafted, developed, formatted and submitted for review and approval in accordance with the Policy Framework Procedures (**Appendix 1**).

Before drafting a new policy, permission from the appropriate Senior Leadership Team member must first be sought. This is to ensure that policies are not created unnecessarily and the Approval Authority endorses the policy from inception.

Consultation

To decide whether a policy needs to undergo consultation will be dependent on the policy in question. Several rounds of consultation may be necessary if the content and/or changes are significant.

The University has specific obligations with regards to policies which deal with academic matters. The Academic Board must always be consulted where academic policies are developed for the UC Policy Library and/or undergo a Major Review. A list of polices which must undergo Academic Board consultation is provided on the [UC Policy Library webpage](#).

Approval Authorities and Contact Officers

A policy owner is stated at the top of the first page of a policy and is defined as the “Approval Authority”.

A policy content manager is also stated at the top of the first page of a policy and is defined as the “Contact Officer”.

Policy Approval

The Approval Authority (policy owner) approves the creation of the policy and any Major Reviews to the policy. Approval Authorities are Council or Senior Leadership Team members.

The Policy Unit can approve any Minor Reviews to a policy without needing to consult the Approval Authority. This includes updating hyperlinks, minor errors, Contact Officer names etc.

If there is any disagreement between the UC Policy Unit and a Contact Officer or Approval Authority, regarding the drafting, content or interpretation of a policy, the matter will be referred to the General Counsel & Registrar for advice.

Responsibilities

The **Approval Authority** (policy owner) is responsible for:

- identifying when new policies are required and ensuring that they do not replicate information from other policies.
- ensuring that policies are reviewed, approved and re-published by the policy review date.
- assigning a relevant Contact Officer to each policy and ensuring that they take responsibility for the appropriate drafting and maintenance of the policy, ensuring that the content is correct, consistent, current and aligned to the [UC Strategic Vision 2020-2030](#).
- ensuring that policy documents conform to legislative and University requirements.

- ensuring that policies are correctly formatted prior to consultation, endorsement and approval.
- ensuring the consultation, endorsement and approval processes are carried out appropriately.
- communicating and educating the University community on policy changes and new policies.
- implementing approved policies.

The **Contact Officer** (content manager) will be the person within the University with the best working knowledge of the policy's content and will be best placed to answer any questions regarding the interpretation of the policy or its implementation. The Contact Officer is responsible for:

- managing policies to ensure that they are consistent, current and supported by relevant additional materials such as guidelines/forms (provided via a link in the policy).
- carrying out scheduled reviews of a policy or making amendments to the policy when required.
- leading the consultation process, as they are the person with the greatest understanding of the policy's content and are best placed to identify who will be affected by any changes.
- liaising with the UC Policy Unit and other content managers, as appropriate, dealing with queries about the content, application and compliance with the policies.

The **UC Policy Unit** is responsible for the overall UC Policy Framework, which includes:

- the UC Policy Library.
- the strategic direction, standardisation and interconnection between UC policies.
- ensuring all policies follow the correct approval process.
- ensuring all policies are uploaded to the UC Policy Library and comply with this policy and the related procedures.

Policy Reviews

Policies should be reviewed and updated by their scheduled review date. When a policy goes over its scheduled review date, as stated at the top of the first page of a policy, or the policy is undergoing an unscheduled review, the policy continues in force until it is updated.

UC Policy Library

Only the version of the policy published in the UC Policy Library can be treated as current and definitive. As the UC Policy Library houses the official current versions of policies, when referencing UC policies in other webpages or in other compliance documents, hyperlinks must be inserted linking the reader to the official version of the policy in the UC Policy Library.

The webpages of the UC Policy Library will also house guidelines, drafting standards and other guidance documents issued by the UC Policy Unit.

Compliance

All University Staff, Students and Visitors must comply and ensure their decisions and actions are consistent with University policies.

Failure to comply with this Policy may equate to misconduct depending on the circumstances. Non-compliance may be dealt with in accordance with the [Employee Disciplinary Policy](#) (if the breach involves a University employee) or as deemed appropriate by the University and/or in accordance with any written contract for breaches by non-employees.

Definitions

Approval Authority – is the owner and approver of a policy.

Contact Officer – is the person appointed by the Approval Authority to develop and/or update the content of the policy and to liaise with the UC Policy Unit.

Council – is the Council of the University of Canterbury constituted in accordance with the [Education and Training Act 2020](#) and is the governing body of the University.

Major Review – revision of a UC policy which substantially alters the substance, management and/or intent of the document.

Minor Review – revision of a UC policy which does not substantially impact the substance, management or intent of the document. For example, a Minor Review would update hyperlinks, correct minor errors and update staff role titles.

Staff or staff member – for the purposes of this policy, the definition of “staff” or “staff member” extends to cover all persons working at, for, or on behalf of, the University (whether paid or unpaid), including but not limited to contractors, subcontractors and their employees, adjunct appointees, Erskine visitors, consultants, guest lecturers, interns and volunteers.

Student – a person who is currently enrolled as a student at the University, either directly or through official arrangements with another organisation.

Visitor – a person other than a University staff member or student who is given access to or use of University resources.

UC Policy Library – UC internet site where UC policies are officially published.

UC Policy Unit – UC team responsible for the UC Policy Library.

Related Documents and Information

Legislation

- [Education and Training Act 2020](#)

UC Website and Intranet

- [UC Strategic Vision 2020-2030](#)

Appendices

1. Policy Framework Procedures and Templates.

Document History and Version Control Table			
Version	Action	Approval Authority	Action Date
<i>For document history and versioning prior to 2014 contact ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz</i>			
1.00	Document created.	Registrar	May 2014
2.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer.	Registrar	Jun 2015
2.01	Amended hyperlinks and removed references to automated workflows.	Policy Unit	Aug 2016
2.02	Minor amendment to the "UC Policy Library website" section regarding the downloading or printing of policies, Appendix B director titles updated to reflect Executive, Deputy VC of Research changed to Research and Innovation in Appendix B	Policy Unit	Nov 2016
2.03	Unscheduled review by Contact Officer, contact "person" changed to "officer" in some places, updated hyperlink to delegations schedule.	Policy Unit	Apr 2017
3.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer, major changes to reflect direction of the website, strategic direction of the UCPL and for consistency	Registrar	May 2018
3.01	Minor changes to Council documents section.	Policy Unit	Sep 2018
3.02	Unnecessary comma removed.	Policy Unit	Oct 2018
4.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer, minor changes to content to reflect existing practices.	Policy Unit	Mar 2019
4.01	Minor amendment to the <i>Consultation</i> sub-heading.	Policy Unit	Mar 2019
5.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer, amended Appendix A.	Policy Unit	May 2019
6.00	Policy name changed from 'Metapolicy' to 'Policy Framework' and major policy rewrite.	General Counsel & Registrar	Dec 2024

This policy remains in force until it is updated.

Appendix 1 – Policy Framework Procedures and Templates

Development of a New Policy - Process

1. Seek approval from your Senior Leadership Team member for the development / drafting of a new policy.
2. Use the policy template provided on the [UC Policy Library webpage](#).
3. Present the new draft policy for review to (in order):
 - a. Approval Authority (Senior Leadership Team member) for initial review.
 - b. Vice-Chancellor.
 - c. Senior Leadership Team.
4. Undertake consultation where appropriate.
5. Consult with the Academic Board if your policy is academic based. If unsure whether this is required, refer to the UC Policy Unit (ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz).
6. Finalise draft policy and present to the Approval Authority for approval.
7. Provide the UC Policy Unit (ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz) with:
 - a. a finalised Word version of the policy;
 - b. confirmation of the review process undertaken;
 - c. written approval (email) from the Approval Authority.
8. The UC Policy Unit will review the format of the policy, finalise it and publish it in the UC Policy Library (UC internet website).
9. The UC Policy Unit will confirm that the policy has been published.

Reviewing an Existing Policy - Process

1. Seek a Word version of the current policy from the UC Policy Unit (ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz).
2. Update the Word version of the policy using tracked changes.
3. If the policy is undergoing a Major Review, present the revised policy for review to (in order):
 - a. Approval Authority (Senior Leadership Team member) for initial review.
 - b. Vice-Chancellor.
 - c. Senior Leadership Team.
4. Undertake consultation where appropriate.
5. Consult with the Academic Board if your policy is academic based (refer to list of policies requiring Academic Board consultation on the [UC Policy Library webpage](#)).
6. Finalise revised policy and present to the Approval Authority for approval.
7. Provide the UC Policy Unit (ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz) with:
 - a. a finalised Word version of the policy, that shows the tracked changes to the current published version of the policy;
 - b. confirmation of the review process undertaken;
 - c. written approval (email) from the Approval Authority.
8. The UC Policy Unit will review the format of the policy, finalise it and publish it in the UC Policy Library (UC internet website).
9. The UC Policy Unit will confirm that the revised policy has been published.