# UNIVERSITY of BRADFORD

# Policy Framework

# Version Control

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# Contents

# 1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of the University of Bradford Policy Framework is to specify the University's approach to the development, authorisation, publication, communication and review of University policies.

1.2 This will ensure the University has consistent standards for all staff to follow when developing and publishing policy documentation.

1.3 The Policy Framework will be monitored on a regular basis by the University Secretary and be further developed, as required, in the light of experience of its operation.

# 2 Scope

2.1 The Framework applies to all University staff members who are involved in the development of the following formal University documents:

- Ordinances
- Regulations,
- Policies,
- Procedures, and
- User guides and Guidelines.

2.2 This Framework refers to 'official policy documents'. The definition of 'official policy documents' is that they:

- state rules and guidance for large proportions of the University population

**and/or**

- have a significant impact on parts of the University other than the originating department

**and/or**

- contain information (rules and guidance) that must be available to an external audience.

2.3 All official policy documents must comply with this policy framework.

2.4 The Related Documentation section includes templates for some of the different official policy documents in order to provide consistency for the author and the reader.

# 3 Official policy documents

## 3.1 Categories of official policy documents

3.1.1 The author should be clear about the type of official policy document they want to develop.

### 3.1.2 Ordinances

Ordinances are specific documents which provide further detail of the exercise of powers as set out in the Charter and Statutes for example distributing authority to committees or key University officers.

The University Charter specifies that the Council may make, amend or repeal Ordinances. Any proposal to amend University Ordinances should be considered by the Executive Board and the Governance and Nominations Committee in advance of being considered by Council.

### 3.1.3 Policies and Regulations

Polices and regulations traditionally set out the University rules, conduct or standards governing an area. Regulations have previously referred to academic rules, while Policy has referred to administrative rules, but this distinction is no longer as clear as was the case in the past.

The University Charter specifies that the Senate may make, amend or revoke regulations relating to:

- teaching, research, programmes of study and the award of degrees and other academic awards;

- the conduct of examinations;

- the requirements for admission to the University and to any particular scheme of study;

- the conditions under which students shall be permitted to continue their studies in the University;

- academic dress, and

- the discipline of students of the University.

Policies and Regulations should generally be authorised by Council or Senate, a Committee of one of these bodies or another delegated authority specified in the Schedule of Delegation. Any proposal to amend a University Policy which is ultimately approved by Senate and/or Council or a committee of Senate and/or Council should be considered by the Executive Board in advance of this.

### 3.1.4 Procedures

Procedures are internal sets of instructions to implement a policy. Sometimes a procedure may include policy elements such as a disciplinary procedure.

Where appropriate, it is acceptable to merge rules and instructions into the same document – it can be labelled as a Policy or a Procedure. Irrespective of the name, however, it must comply with the formal requirements of this Policy Framework.

Where a procedure does not prescribe rules, but rather contains instructions on how to implement a policy, it will be for the relevant Director of a Professional Service or the Dean of Faculty to authorise this procedure.

### 3.1.5 User guides and Guidelines

User guides and Guidelines are advisory and can be subject to the relevant School or Unit's sign-off process.

### 3.1.6 Policy Template

An official Policy Template has been specifically formulated and should be used when creating new official policy documents or when revising existing official policy documents which do not use the template. The Policy Template will be available on the University Polices and Statements webpage.

## 3.2 Policy development

### 3.2.1 Consultation

In developing new policies, the author of the policy must identify the subject matter the policy is intended to address, how the policy aligns with the University's strategic objectives, the relevant stakeholders affected by the policy and any policy impacts that will need to be considered and addressed within the terms of the policy. This requires appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure that the high level policy proposal is sound before the detailed policy documentation is drafted.

### 3.2.2 Assessment

Official policy documents must be appropriately assessed by the originating department to ensure that policy impacts have been appropriately taken into account within the policy draft. This will require consultation with relevant departments. This assessment process will include:

- Strategic alignment: An assessment of how the policy aligns with the University's strategic objectives and priorities. This assessment should be discussed with the Executive lead for the originating department

- Staffing issues: an assessment by the People and Campus Services Directorate will ensure that the document does not infringe employment law or the University's contracts of employment.

- Student issues: where new policies will have an impact on students (including UKVI matters) assessment will ensure that your document is appropriately student focussed.

- Equality Impact Assessment: this will ensure the official document meets the University E&D obligations and objectives and does not discriminate against any of the protected characteristics. Completion of an EIA is mandatory.

- Legal, Compliance and Data Protection review: this is relevant if there is a legal or compliance aspect to the policy that the policy is intended to address, where the policy requires specific legal advice on any element or where the policy relates to a matter that involves the processing of personal data.

- Risk Assessment: the policy must be risk assessed to determine what risks may arise from the implementation of the policy and what existing controls or further planned mitigations exist to appropriately manage any risks.

- Financial implications: Any resource requirements and impacts, both upfront and ongoing, inherent in the policy need to be considered and confirmation received from Finance that there are appropriate arrangements in place to manage any resourcing issues.

3.2.3    Where a policy is being developed which will impact significantly on one of the above areas, engagement with that department at an early stage is recommended as this may prevent delays later in the process if there are unforeseen issues that arise at the assessment stage.

3.2.4    The Executive Summary papers for all new policy proposals will also require that the author provide details of how these impacts have been assessed and the absence of this information may lead to the policy not being submitted for approval until such time as these assessments have been undertaken.

## 3.3    Document control

3.3.1    Clear and accurate version control is necessary when circulating draft documents with amendments and so all official policy documents must include a document control section including information such as authorship, date of approval and the approving body.

3.3.2    The Policy Template contains a document control section which must be completed as part of the policy development process. The author should follow the 'Policy development, approval and publication process' as outlined in the flowchart at Appendix 1 and complete the remaining document control information following approval of the Policy.

## 3.4 Publication

3.4.1 The originating department is responsible for publishing the policy, with any appropriate contextual information and a summary of the main policy principles, on the University website.

3.4.2 The University also maintains a policy directory on the University's website which directs users to all policies:

https://www.brad.ac.uk/governance/policies-and-statements/

3.4.3 This page is administered by Legal and Governance and is a list which directs users to where these policies are located across the university's website.

3.4.4 Policy owners must advise Legal and Governance when a policy has been published in order to ensure that the Corporate Policies and Statements page is kept up to date.

3.4.5 It is essential that the same document is only hosted in one location with all other references to the policy linking to that location, to ensure that there is a definitive version of the policy published on the University webpage.

## 3.5 Communication of new policies

3.5.1 The Author and Owner must communicate any new or updated the official policy document to the relevant target audience and consider what, if any training will be needed for key stakeholders to support implementation of the policy. This can include staff briefings, departmental emails, bespoke training sessions or other communication or training channels.

## 3.6 Policy review

3.6.1 It is essential that existing official policy documents are reviewed, revised and re-published in a timely manner to ensure they are relevant and up to date.

3.6.2 Review dates must be specified within the Document Control information. The Legal and Governance Office will contact the author and/or owner to prompt review (in advance of the specified date). A policy owner is also responsible for maintaining a watching brief on the policy and regulatory environment relating to their policy and bringing forward the review date where internal or external circumstances necessitate such earlier review.

3.6.3 The review should involve an updated assessment as would have been carried out at 3.2.2 of the framework, to confirm whether any changes are required to the policy or if it remains fit for purpose.

# 4 Policy implementation

4.1 The Legal and Governance Office will oversee implementation and adherence to this Policy on behalf of the University Secretary.

# 5 Related documentation

5.1 The following documents can be found on the University's Policies and Statements webpages:

- Policy template

# 6 Appendices

- Appendix 1: Policy development, approval and publication process flowchart.

Legal and Governance          POLICY FRAMEWORK

# Appendix 1: Policy development, approval and publication process

**Author**

- Development
- Assessment
- Consultation

Publish on website

Communications and Promulgation

**Executive Board**

Where EB is not the approving body, EB will consider and submit to authorising body for approval or refer back to the author if further work is required

**Approving Body**

Consider and approve Policy or refer back to the author if further work is required

**Legal and Governance**

Link to policy on Policies webpage

As date approached review date, prompt author to review document