



VUT

Vaal University of Technology

POLICY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Your world to a better future

Table of Contents

1.	Definitions.....	3
2.	Purpose.....	5
3.	Scope.....	5
4.	Hierarchy of Control Documents	5
5.	Principles	6
6.	VUT Philosophy of Control Documents.....	6
7.	Policy Layout	6
8.	Development Control Document.....	7
9.	Policy vs Standard Operating Procedure	11
10.	Control Document development and management process.....	12
11.	Policy Management and Oversight.....	14
12.	Annexure.....	16
13.	References	17

1. Definitions

Business Process	A business process is a set of activities and tasks that, once completed, will accomplish an organizational goal. The process must involve clearly defined inputs and a single output.
Charter	A document embodying a grant of authority from the legislature or the authority itself, in terms of a organization, a charter defines or mandate its functions and lays down rules for its conduct or governance.
Control document	Control document refers to the documents which management uses to ensure that control environment is sound and such management is in control of the affairs of the organization. They include strategy documents, policies, standard operating procedure, forms and templates prescribed for use by management.
Framework	a set of ideas, rules, or beliefs from which something is developed, or on which decisions are based.
Guideline	Recommended practice that allows some discretion or leeway in its interpretation, Implementation or use.
Policies	Policy is a statement of a general course of action designed to achieve a set of stated outcome. It gives effect to strategy and strategic direction by defining the frameworks, standards and plans that establish the scope or spheres, within which judgment is exercised, decisions are made and actions are taken.

Policy Management Framework	Set of principles and long-term goals that form the basis of making rules and guidelines, and to give overall direction to planning and development of the organization.
Policy Number	Unique policy reference depicting abbreviation of policy department, unit and unique number.
Standard Operations Procedure	Standard Operation Procedure' are the formally authorized way of performing a task or set of tasks which people are expected to follow. They usually state how control documents should be implemented in some cases due to legal requirements e.g. 'placement procedure' and 'grievance procedure'
Terms of Reference	Terms of reference are the instructions given to someone when they are asked to consider or investigate a particular subject, telling them what they must deal with and what they can ignore.
Practice note	An explanation published either by the authority or an organisation (sometimes under express statutory provision), indicating how procedures must be conducted or carried out.
Must	In Control Document, "must" is used specifically to indicate a legal obligation.
May	In a Control Document, "may" is used to describe a recommendation that is permissible but not considered essential.
Responsibility	Taking ownership of a duty, obligation or liability.
Strategy	The setting of the organization's short, medium and long –term direction towards realizing its core purpose and values.
Registrar	It is a department in which Policy, Risk and Compliance unit resides.

2. Purpose

The Policy Management Framework establishes a standard and principles for Policy, Business Process and Standard Operation Procedure development, approval, implementation and review across the University. The Framework ensures consistency and compliance and sets down a transparent process with flexible stakeholder consultation and appropriate approval pathways through the Policy Management Committee (PMC).

3. Scope

This Policy Management Framework applies to all the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) staff in all its delivery sites, companies and entities. It sets out the route to be followed when developing or updating written control documents, and distributing them as appropriate within the University.

4. Hierarchy of Control Documents



5. Principles

Policies, Business Process and Standard Operation Procedure must:

- Uphold the University core values, mission and strategic objective;
- Be consistent with existing University Institutional Statutes;
- Comply with laws, rules and regulations and Codes of Practice;
- Be guided by national and international best practice;
- Be informed by continuous review and improvement;
- Be developed only where there is a justifiable need, and
- Apply and be binding across the University

6. VUT Philosophy of Control Documents

University Policy Management philosophy refers to the shared values, beliefs and attitudes of the University staff, governance structures and management. This is evidenced by the identification of the business process that the specific policy seeks to regulate/govern and the operationalization of that specific policy. We believe that it is through policies, business processes and standard operation procedures that the University council and management can demonstrate how University is controlled and directed as required by the Code of Good Corporate Governance.

7. Policy Layout

7.1 All VUT policies must be developed using policy template i.e. **Annexure B** which already been formatted with specific layout requirements. This (**Annexure B**) already prescribed the use of standards template for Standard Operating Procedure, however the policy developers are not prohibited from prescribing other standards template for the implementation of their policy.

7.2 The Format or other requirements that must be adhered to are detailed below:

- 7.2.1 VUT logo must appear on the Policy cover page and it must be 11pt.
- 7.2.2 The name of the policy and the number of the Policy as allocated by the Policy, Risk and Compliance Unit must be printed in 18 pt. font size. The Policy number, as allocated by the Policy, Risk and Compliance Unit, must be printed on the Policy Information page.
- 7.2.3 All policies must be drafted in MS Word, using Arial 12 pt. font and 1" margins.
- 7.2.4 The margins before and after the heading and sub-heading must be 1.5
- 7.2.5 Policies must be clear and concise and written in the third person.
- 7.2.6 Words should be selected carefully. Words such as should and may imply choice.
- 7.2.7 Do not use information that may quickly become outdated such as employee names or web addresses.
- 7.2.8 When using acronyms, spell out the words the first time, then indicate the acronym in parenthesis, e.g., The Vaal University of Technology

8. Development of Control Document

8.1 Policy

The decision as to whether a policy should be developed should rest with the Portfolio Manager i.e. Deputy Vice Chancellor, Chief Finance Officer, Registrar etc. depending on its level of impact at the University.

Policies are statements of basic principles that direct the actions of the University employees toward institutional goals; promote compliance with

laws and regulations; support University operations; and/or reduce Institutional risk.

8.1.1 Benefits of the policy

- They set a framework for delegation of decision-making.
- Create confidence and reduce bias in decision-making.
- Protect staff from acting in a manner that might endanger the safety of themselves and others.
- Increase the accountability of business or organization's and its employees.
- They offer employees protection from breaches of employment legislation.
- Assist employees know what is expected of them with respect to standards of behavior and performance.

8.1.2 Limitations of the policy

Inflexibility - changes in policies may take considerable time to implement, considering the compliance with processes.

8.1.3 Exceptions to the policy

Policies generally have legislative or government policy as a key driver, therefore organizational policies will be modified by the exemptions or exceptions contained in the legislation. As a general rule, there are no exceptions to the policy. However, there are instances where following a policy will not be practical or in the best interest of the institution at that time. Deviation from policy must be motivated for approval prior to implementation (**Refer to Annexure: H**)

8.2 Business Process

A business process refers to a wide range of structured, activities or tasks conducted by employees or equipment to produce a specific service or product for a particular user or consumer. It may also refer to the cumulative effects of all steps progressing toward a business goal. This sequence of steps can be most clearly depicted using a flowchart.

8.2.1 Benefits of the business process

- Employees understand the constraints of their job without using a ‘trial and error’ approach, as key points are visible in well-written procedures.
- They Provide instruction on how to do tasks, enabling employees to clearly understand their responsibilities.
- Clearly written procedures allow managers to exercise control by exception rather than ‘micro-manage’ their staff.

8.2.2 Level of details of business process

The level of details required for the business process depends on how the organization is designed as influenced by the volume of transactions. Attached **Annexure E** summarizes business processes at the top and the detailed standards operating procedures in a table format.

8.3 Standard Operating Procedure

The VUT should only develop and/or adopt a standard operating procedure when it has a related policy and when certain activities have to be practiced in a certain way to avoid the following:

- Risk

- Cost
- Breaches of legislative requirements
- Ethical considerations
- Time wasting

They provide step by step on how a policy is to be implemented or complied with and establishes consistent practice or means of completing a task to meet business, legislative or policy requirements. Interdependence as referred to in **Annexure E** is to be managed through Service Level Agreement (SLA). **Annexure F** (SLA) outline minimum requirements that must be contained therein.

8.3.1 Benefits of the standard operating procedure

- Establish standard that must be adhered to by everyone in the organization.
- It provides the basis for accountability and transparency

8.3.2 Exceptions to the standard operating procedure

A good standard operating procedure will outline a procedure to be followed in case of emergency or crisis. In this instant, staff members are not expected to follow step-by-step procedure that is required under normal situation.

8.4 Guidelines

Guideline provides guideline on the implementation of the policy or legislation, or may establish best practice. It does not require mandatory compliance and the user can apply it entirely or partially. It does not result in step-by-step details of how a task is to be achieved. Thus, the user decides on the level of adherence to the guideline. To be effective, guideline must have requirements that staff members must adhere to and such staff members must have sound reasons for not implementing standard set out in the guideline.

8.4.1 Benefits of the guidelines

- Users are free to choose whether to apply the guideline or not thereby encouraging creativity.

8.4.2 Limitations of the guidelines

- Consistent business practice cannot be established where employees decide on whether to apply the guideline or not.
- Compromises accountability as mandatory compliance is not a requirement.
- Due to its nature cannot be relied upon as the basis for the achievement of organizational strategy.

9. Policy vs Standard Operating Procedure

9.1 Policy is a formal, brief, and high-level statement or plan that embraces an organization's general beliefs, goals, objectives, and acceptable procedures for a specified subject area. Policies always state required actions, and may include pointers to standards. Policy attributes include the following:

- Require compliance (mandatory)
- Failure to comply results in disciplinary action
- Focus on desired results, not on means of implementation
- Further defined by standards and guidelines

9.2 Procedures describe the process: who does what, when do they do it, and under what criteria. They (procedure) represent implementation of Policy.

- A series of steps taken to accomplish an end goal.
- Procedures define "how" to protect resources and are the mechanisms to enforce policy.
- Procedures provide a quick reference in times of crisis.

- Procedures help eliminate the problem of a single point of failure.
- Also known as a SOP (Standard Operating Procedure)

The policy is implemented through a SOP in which the Service Level Agreement is agreed upon to measure the response and resolution times that the service requires for delivery to clients.

SLA has a set structure. Each SLA has:

- A set of conditions that a service must satisfy in order for the SLA to be applied.
- The target time for each desired metric and priority value.
- One or more metrics that you choose to measure.
- Whether targets will be measured in business or calendar hours by priority value.
- Escalation procedure that must be followed (**Refer to Annexure: F**).

10. Control Document development and management process.

Any Policy and Frameworks development initiative, regardless of its origin, should follow a pre-defined management document cycle of initiation, drafting, consultation, approval, communication and implementation and ongoing monitoring and review.

10.1 Initiation

Policy development is triggered, for example, by legislative changes, strategic objectives or restructuring of the University or identified institutional risk or gap.

The policy proposal form should be completed and submitted to the policy owner for signing off, then submitted to Policy, Risk and Compliance Unit. The Policy, Risk and Compliance Unit can be consulted of the initial compilation of the Policy Proposal Form (**Annexure A**).

10.2 Drafting and development/review

The Policy developer/reviewer should carry out any relevant research including review of international good practice, formulate a draft control document, undertake consultation with appropriate stakeholders, address any gaps highlighted by Policy Proposal Document, and submit a draft policy for approval using Policy Template (**Annexure B**).

10.3 Consultation

Informal consultation with interested parties is strongly recommended throughout the development of any new Policy. Once a control document has been drafted, it needs to be made available for formal consultation with the relevant approval structures.

10.4 Approval

Approval of Policy shall follow an agreed approval pathway. Control document are formally approved by the relevant governing body (Executive Management Committee, Senate or Council) or by a senior officer operating under its delegated authority. Policy will be effective from the date of approval, if not otherwise specified. (**Refer to Annexure C**)

10.5 Communication

All control documents are published in the VUT Website, so that VUT community can have reference point regarding what is expected from them (VUT community). A Control Document published in the website is considered the only Authorized Version. The Policy Owner is responsible for communications about a new or revised control document. A communication plan is an essential part of successful implementation and application of a policy.

10.6 Implementation

Implementation should be planned from the start of a policy

development process. It is important to ensure the oversight of policy implementation, in particular where the implementation spreads across different areas of the University. The Policy Owner should develop implementation plan identifying activities, assigning responsibilities and dates for each of those activities.

10.7 Monitoring and Review

It is essential that, once approved, policy remain relevant, fit for purpose and consistent with the VUT's mission and objectives. Information collected through monitoring activities is used during the formal review of the policy.

All approved policies are subject to periodic review. i.e. policy reviews will take place after every 3 years of operation, unless early review is required by law or deemed necessary.

Amendments to policy can be approved and implemented only as a result of a formally approved Policy Proposal Form and with appropriate stakeholder consultation. A review should consider whether the control document:

- Remains consistent with best practice and the strategic direction of the university
- Continue to meet stakeholder need
- Complies with any existing related policies, and supports university statutes and regulations
- Works well on an operational level
- Could be enhanced

11. Policy Management and Oversight

11.1 Policy Management

Below is policy management structure depicted as pyramid, thereby indicating at the bottom a broad range of possible policies to tip of the

pyramid an ownership and accountability within the University.

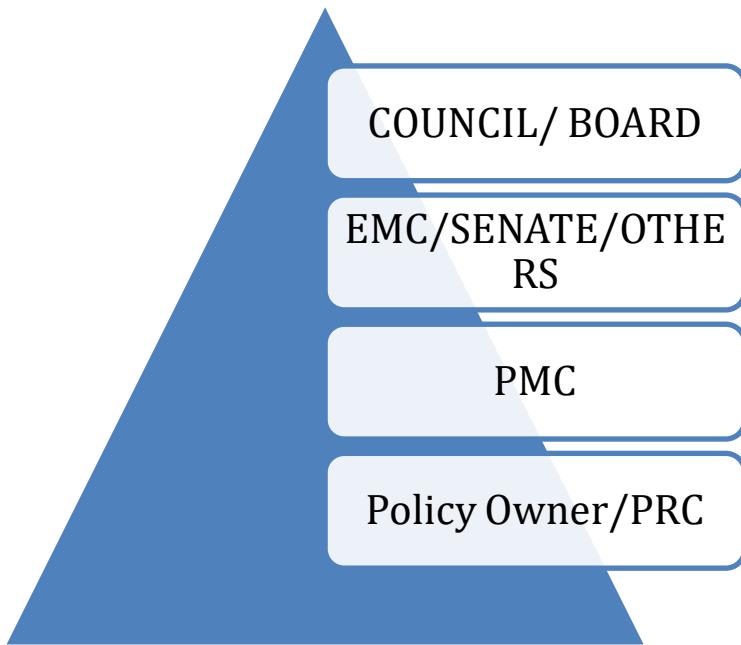


Figure 2

11.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Below is a table outlining some of the roles and responsibilities of the crucial stakeholders in the policy management within the University. Detailed responsibilities are contained in the Terms of Reference for the respective Structures and Committees.

Role	Responsibilities
Council/ Board	Approves all policies or delegate approval of specific policies to its sub-committee Existing VUT policies applicable to the entities will be ratified and adopted by the Entity Board.
EMC/Senate/Others	Endorse recommendation of Policy Management Committee (PMF)
Policy Management Committee	Approve policy proposals

	Recommends endorsement of the policy subsequent to fulfilling its obligation as contained in its Terms of Reference
Policy Owner	Develop and approves Standard Operating Procedure
Policy, Risk and Compliance	(Policy, Risk and Compliance Unit – Unit under the Registrar) Maintain Policy Register and ensures that policy development and review take place in terms of this Framework.

12. Annexures

- Annexure A: Proposal/Business Case



ANNEXURE A VUT
Policy Proposal Form

- Annexure B: Policy Template



ANNEXURE B 1 -
VUT Template Policy



ANNEXURE B VUT
Policy Template.doc

- Annexure C: Policy Certification Document



ANNEXURE C VUT
Policy Certification F

- Annexure D: Policy Implementation and Communication Plan



ANNEXURE D VUT
Policy Implementatio

- Annexure E: Business Process



- Annexure F: Service Level Agreement



- Annexure G: Policy Management Workflow



- Annexure H: Exception to Policy



13. References

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- Policy, Standards and procedures Development and Management Framework, Northwest Department of Social Development, Women, Children and Persons with Disability, January 2011