

Policy and Procedure Development

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how policies and procedures are developed (or amended) and approved.

2. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Centre's Board to ensure that this policy is implemented.

It is the responsibility of the Centre's Board to ensure that the procedures are implemented.

3. Principles

Good policies and procedures are essential for the Centre to function effectively, with consistent 'rules' and approaches which underpin operational management, risk minimisation and quality improvement.

4. Definitions

Policy – a statement of intent, a commitment.

Procedure - a step-by-step sequence of activities or course of action that must be followed to implement a policy.

Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) - a set of written instructions that document a routine or repetitive activity, paying particular attention to meeting Health and Safety requirements. SWMs should provide enough detail so that someone with limited experience or knowledge of the procedure, but with a basic understanding, can successfully reproduce the procedure when unsupervised. SWMs need to be readily accessible in the work areas of those individuals actually performing the activity.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – a set of written instructions that document a routine or repetitive activity. SOPs should provide enough detail so that someone with limited experience or knowledge of the procedure, but with a basic understanding, can successfully reproduce the procedure when unsupervised. SOPs need to be readily accessible in the work areas of those individuals actually performing the activity.

Policy Bank – the official repository of the Centre's current Policies, Procedures and all relevant SWMS and SOP documents are added to each detailed risk matrix and Analysis Assessment for Centre activities and projects/events stored in read-only format.

5. Policy

Policies are written statements that define and clarify both the broad directions and specific limitations of activities carried out by the Centre.

Policies and procedures (or changes to policy or procedure) are necessary:

- when there needs to be certainty and clarity about how people behave (eg. working with children, email and internet policies, mobile phone use),
- when the Centre needs to ensure it can provide consistent and fair treatment and conditions for employees (e.g. recruitment processes, leave entitlements, etc).
- when there is a need for standard guidelines/procedures for various situations (eg. standards of conduct, travel expenditures),
- when there is a need for the Centre to comply with changed legal requirements policies and laws (eg health and safety requirements).

Once approved, all policies will be stored in the Policy Bank. Ready access to the Policy Bank will be provided to Board members, staff, volunteers, facilitators/tutors and Centre hirers and users.

The CDO will maintain a master list of all Policies and Procedures including superseded versions so they are available for historical data review.

6. Procedures

Procedures provide the detail (who, what, when) about how the policy will be implemented.

The triggers for a new policy and/or procedure may include:

- changes to the external operating environment
- changes to Council or Government policy or legislation
- review of the strategic directions of the Centre
- new initiatives within the Centre
- need for consistency across areas of activity.

The Board, a Subcommittee, staff or volunteers will identify the need for a policy document, or for the revision of an existing policy document and the Board will then identify an author or authors.

The author/s will consult with interested members, relevant staff, and persons knowledgeable in the area. Consultation may take the form of casual conversations, formal meetings, policy development workshops etc..

The draft policy should be circulated to interested parties and relevant stakeholders for comment.

The author/s will consider any feedback received and will create a final draft for presentation to the Board.

The usual practice will be that Subcommittees or the CDO or coordinators will draft policies in their areas of responsibility.

All draft policies will be referred to the CDO to ensure consistency of format, language etc. before they are presented to the Board.

In presenting a new policy, the author will provide a copy of the proposed policy to the Board before the meeting and will explain:

- why the policy is required
- whether or not the new policy is intended to replace an existing one
- how the content was developed
- what impact the proposed policy may have on other bylaws/policies/procedures.

The Board will accept the draft policy, defer it, reject it, return it to the authors for amendment, or assign revision to other authors.

In proposing amendments to an existing policy, the author will provide a copy of the proposed amendments to the Board before the meeting and will explain::

- why the amendments are required
- how the amendments were developed
- what impact the proposed amendments may have on other policies or procedures.

The Board will accept the draft amended policy, defer it, reject it, return it to the authors for amendment, or assign revision to other authors.

Following acceptance by the Board, every policy shall be added to the Policy Bank.

The same development and approval process will be followed for Policies excepting that some Procedures will be approved by the CDO under delegation. (Wherever practical, development or amendment and approval of procedure will occur at the same time as development or amendment of policy.)

Policy and Procedure Format

All policy and procedure documents will adhere to a standard policy template (which this document is based on) so they will have the same “look and feel” as this document.

The format of the policy and procedure template will include the following headings:

Heading	Definition
Policy Name	A few words which describe the general subject matter of the policy.
Purpose	Short statement about what this policy seeks to achieve
Responsibilities	Person or position responsible for day-to-day implementation of policy and procedures
Principles	Short statement about beliefs which underpin the policy
Definitions	Short explanation of key terms
Policy	The actual content of the policy; the details of the position

	held by the Centre on the topic. A policy document may include several sub-headings under this topic, depending on the complexity of the policy matter.
Procedures	Outlines how the policy is implemented on a day-to-day basis.
References	Identifies any other documents that are relevant or important to the policy. While all written material within the Centre is related in one way or another, there will often be particular documents that should be read in conjunction with the policy. Examples may include other policies, legislation, the Centre's Constitution etc. Not all policy documents will have References.
Forms or Attachments	Documents which are directly connected to the implementation of the policy
Approving Authority	Identifies who approves the policy and who approves the procedure
Approval Date	The date that the policy or procedure was approved by the Approving Authority
Next Review Due	The date set for review of the policy and procedure. If left blank, the policy will be reviewed two years from the date of approval, or earlier if the Board decides. Reviews will follow the same development and approval procedure as for new policies.

Safe

Work**Method Statement (SWMS) Format**

SWMSs have a particular focus on protecting and promoting health and safety.

SWMSs can be stand-alone documents or posters – ie they do not need to be attached to a policy or procedure.

The format for SWMSs is more flexible than policies and procedures but the information will often be drawn from Approved Codes of Practice or other 'expert' sources.

SWMSs will be written by a person who actually performs the work or uses the process on a regular basis. SWMSs should provide enough detail so that someone with limited experience or knowledge of the procedure can safely and successfully reproduce the procedure when unsupervised. SWMSs may include flow charts and diagrams and other visual aids.

SWMSs need to be readily accessible in the work areas of those individuals actually performing the activity.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Format

SOPs can be stand-alone documents or posters – ie they do not need to be attached to a policy or procedure.

The format for SOPs is more flexible than policies and procedures.

SOPs will be written by a person who actually performs the work or uses the process on a regular basis. SOPs should provide enough detail so that someone with limited experience or knowledge of the procedure can successfully reproduce the procedure when unsupervised. SOP's may include flow charts and diagrams and other visual aids.

SOPs need to be readily accessible in the work areas of those individuals actually performing the activity.

7. References

8. Forms or Attachments

- Blank Policy Template

9. Approvals

	Policy	Procedure
Approving Authority	Board of Management	Board of Management
Approval Date		
Next Review Due		

