

Policy on Establishing University Policies & Procedures

1. Purpose

- 1.1 University Policies are developed in alignment with the University's strategic directions, core values, and the regulatory and legislative environment in which it operates.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Policy is to support good governance and effective oversight of the University by establishing a consistent approach to the development of University Policies and Procedures, to ensure that members of the University community and other users have ready access to well developed and clear policies.
- 1.3 This document defines what constitutes a University Policy and Procedures, outlines the steps for formulating, approving, issuing, amending, and rescinding University Policies and Procedures, and defines the roles and responsibilities of responsible individuals and offices.
- 1.4 Saint Mary's University formally approves, issues, and maintains all University Policies and Procedures using a consistent process and format. Individuals responsible for developing and maintaining University Policies and Procedures must follow the requirements outlined in this document and the related procedures for drafting, approving, revising, and rescinding University Policies and Procedures.

2 Jurisdiction/Scope

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all University employees who are responsible for developing, writing, approving and reviewing policies, procedures and guidelines on issues that have university-wide application.
- 2.2 This Policy does not apply to regulations that are or would be communicated in the Academic Calendar (academic regulations, degree requirements, and regulations about admissions, fees, and financial aid).

3 Definitions

- 3.1 “Act” means the Saint Mary’s University Act, 1970.
- 3.2 “Approving Authority” for a policy, if it is of University-wide application, is the President & Vice-Chancellor on recommendation of the Executive Management Group, and, with respect to governance matters within their respective jurisdiction under the Act that has not been delegated to the President & Vice-Chancellor, the Board of Governors and/or Senate. Policies intended to regulate internal administration, and operations may be approved by an individual Vice-President, depending on the context. The University Secretary will provide advice regarding the appropriate approval authority.
- 3.3 “Framework Documents” means the Act, the By-laws of the Board of Governors, the By-laws of Senate, or the University’s Strategic Plan (as in effect at the applicable time).
- 3.4 “Guidelines” are general statements that:
- 3.4.1 Are not mandatory and are a suggestion of best practice;
 - 3.4.2 Aid when the use of judgment is required for the application of a policy;
 - 3.4.3 Can change frequently and are not subject to the requirements of this Policy or the Procedures for this Policy.
- 3.5 “Policy” is a document that establishes key principles and values that guide the operation of the University. It generally has institution-wide implications, although does not necessarily have application across all University departments. Policies typically advance the University’s mission and strategic plans, manage institutional risk, are enduring in nature and are approved at senior levels of the University. Policies are often, but not always, accompanied by related Procedures or Guidelines. Policies include official University directives that:
- 3.5.1 Provide governing principles to be followed in carrying out the activities of the University;
 - 3.5.2 Establish key requirements and responsibilities;
 - 3.5.3 Ensure compliance with applicable laws;
 - 3.5.4 Promote operational efficiencies, advance the University’s mission, and/or reduce institutional risks;
 - 3.5.5 Have broad application throughout the University and are binding on members of the University Community;

- 3.5.6 Are approved by the designated Approving Authority; and
 - 3.5.7 Do not include Collective Agreements.
- 3.6 “Procedures” are statements that:
- 3.6.1 Articulate the method by which a University Policy is carried out and must be consistent with the related University Policy;
 - 3.6.2 Identify roles and responsibilities; and
 - 3.6.3 Are approved by the Responsible Officer or Approving Authority.
- 3.7 “Responsible Officer” means the senior administrative officer designated to be responsible and accountable for development, implementation, maintenance, review, and communication of a Policy, development of related Procedures, and for monitoring and enforcing compliance. A senior administrative officer is usually a president, vice-president, associate vice-president, dean, senior director, or director. More than one Responsible Officer may be designated for a particular University Policy or Procedures. Not all policies are required to have a Responsible Officer. For example, responsibility for a Policy may be assigned to a Board or Senate Committee.
- 3.8 “Responsible Office” means a department or area of the University that is responsible for developing and administering a University Policy and related Procedures under the direction of a Responsible Officer. More than one Responsible Office may be designated for a particular University Policy or Procedures. In the case of a Policy for which a Responsible Officer is not assigned, there must be a Responsible Office, or responsibility for the Policy must be assigned to a Board or Senate Committee.

4 Policy

4.1 Policy Development and Approval Process

4.1.1 New University Policies or changes to existing University Policies must be developed by Responsible Officers or their delegates in accordance with this Policy and the Procedures set out in Section 5.

4.1.2 University Policies will be presented in common format as prescribed by the Procedures for this Policy.

4.1.3 For a policy to become University Policy, it must be approved by the relevant Approving Authority.

4.1.4 A University Policy becomes operational and enforceable upon approval or at a later date specified by the Approving Authority.

4.1.5 Responsible Officers may develop Procedures for the implementation of University Policies within their purview in accordance with the standards and processes set out in this Policy and its related Procedures. Procedures associated with a University Policy become operational and enforceable upon approval or at a later date specified by the Responsible Officer or Approving Authority.

4.2 Policy Implementation and Review

4.2.1 The office of the University Secretary is the official repository for University Policies and Procedures and will make University Policies and Procedures publicly accessible.

4.2.2 The University Secretary may make editorial changes to a University Policy or Procedures, provided that such changes do not substantively affect the University Policy or Procedures. Editorial changes to a University Policy or Procedures are subject to approval by the Responsible Officer, or where there is no Responsible Officer, by the Approving Authority.

4.2.3 A University Policy must undergo a substantive review at least every five years but may be reviewed at any earlier time as needed.

4.2.4 Procedures associated with a University Policy must be reviewed when the University Policy is reviewed but may also be reviewed independently of the University Policy at any earlier time as needed.

4.3 Policy Amendment or Rescindment

4.3.1 University Policies may be amended or rescinded with the approval of the original Approving Authority in accordance with the process set out in the Procedures for this Policy.

4.3.2 Procedures may be amended or rescinded with the approval of the original Approving Authority or the Responsible Officer in accordance with the process set out in the Procedures for this Policy.

4.4 Other Policies and Agreements

4.4.1 Policies and procedures that are outside the scope of this Policy may not contradict University Policies and Procedures.

4.4.2 Where a University Policy or Procedure conflicts with one or more Framework Documents or any enforceable collective agreement between the University and a group of employees, the provisions of the Framework Document or collective agreement will prevail, as the case may be.

5 Procedures

5.1 Development and Revision of University Policies

5.1.1 All new and amended University Policies must be in a format shown on

the Policy Template attached to this Policy.

- 5.1.2 Proposals for new University Policies or amendments to existing University Policies will be initiated by an Approving Authority, the Responsible Officer, or by the Responsible Office in consultation with the Responsible Officer or Approving Authority as the case may be.
- 5.1.3 Individuals, bodies or groups who perceive the need for the development of a new University Policy or the revision of an existing University Policy should contact the anticipated or named Responsible Officer, who will decide whether to develop or review the University Policy.
- 5.1.4 When the Responsible Officer elects to begin the development or revision of a University Policy, the Responsible Officer will notify the University Secretary.
- 5.1.5 The Responsible Officer will assign an individual or team (usually consisting of or including the Responsible Office) to carry out the development or review of a University Policy, which may include the following steps:
 - a) Identify relevant legislation and policy;
 - b) Collect and analyze pertinent information;
 - c) Determine, in conjunction with the University Secretary, who ought to be consulted and conduct these consultations as appropriate;
 - d) Draft a preliminary University policy, and associated Procedures where applicable, that meet the criteria set out in herein and revise the draft as necessary during the consultation process;
 - e) Submit the draft to the University Secretary, who will provide feedback to the individual or team carrying out the review;
 - f) If appropriate after consultation with the University Secretary, make the draft available to the University community through the University Secretary for comment; and
 - g) Finalize the draft and submit the final draft to the Responsible Officer so that the Responsible Officer may recommend it for approval.

5.2 Final drafts of University Policies must be submitted to the University Secretary, who will confirm that the final draft conforms to this Policy and is consistent with applicable Framework Documents before the proposed new or revised University Policy is submitted for approval to the appropriate Approving Authority.

6 Development and Revision of Procedures Associated with University Policies

- 6.1 When a University Policy is developed or substantively reviewed, the related Procedures, if any, normally will be developed or reviewed simultaneously and the process in section 5 of this Policy will be followed.
- 6.2 University Policies provide governing principles and are intended to change infrequently, whereas Procedures articulate the method by which a University Policy is carried out and may need to change more frequently. When Procedures are developed or reviewed at times other than those described in section 5.1 above, the Responsible Officer will assign an individual or team (normally to include the Responsible Office) to:
 - 6.2.1 Draft the Procedures;
 - 6.2.2 Conduct consultations as appropriate and revise the draft as necessary during the consultation process;
 - 6.2.3 Submit a draft of the Procedures to the University Secretary for review; and
 - 6.2.4 Submit the final draft of the Procedures to the Responsible Officer so that he or she may approve them.
- 6.3 The Responsible Officer will submit the final draft to the University Secretary who may notify the Approving Authority of the change(s) to Procedure.

7 Approved University Policies and Procedures

- 7.1 Once a University Policy and associated Procedures, if any, have been approved, the University Secretary will:
 - 7.1.1 Advise the Responsible Officer of the Approving Authority's decision;
 - 7.1.2 Assign the University Policy a number and classification according to the following functional classification system:
 - Academic
 - Administration
 - Advancement
 - Governance
 - Operations
 - 7.1.3 Maintain a record of the current version of the University Policy and Procedures;

- 7.1.4 Publish copies of the University Policy and Procedures and make those records available to the university community; and
- 7.1.5 Maintain a record of the initial approval of a University Policy and Procedures and of all subsequent substantive and editorial changes.
- 7.1.6 Communicate the approval of new or revised University Policies and associated Procedures to the University community as appropriate.

8 Rescindment of University Policies and Procedures

- 8.1 A University Policy or Procedure may be rescinded at any time, subject to approval by:
 - 8.1.1. The Approving Authority, in the case of a University Policy; or
 - 8.1.2. The Responsible Officer, in the case of Procedures.

9 Mandated Periodic Review of University Policies and Procedures

- 9.1 The University Secretary will set a cyclical schedule for the mandated review of all University Policies and Procedures.
- 9.2 The University Secretary will advise the Responsible Officer of the schedule for mandated review of a particular University Policy and related Procedures.
- 9.3 In cases where a University Policy undergoes a substantive review outside the regular review cycle, the mandated review date should normally be reset at the standard number of years following the review.
- 9.4 The Responsible Officer for a University Policy will:
 - 9.4.1. Initiate and direct the mandated reviews according to the steps set out in these Procedures;
 - 9.4.2. Recommend revisions when warranted; and
 - 9.4.3. Report to the President, through the University Secretary, on the outcomes of the review.
- 9.5 As part of a review, the Responsible Officer and Responsible Office may be examined in order to determine if it is still the correct place for the policy to be housed. If it is determined that the Responsible Officer or Responsible Office should change then both the new area, and the old area will be included in the review process as described in section 5.1.4 of these Procedures.

Additional Approval Information

Policy Number: 12-001
Approving Authority: President & Vice-Chancellor
Approved: November 13, 2020

Responsible Office: University Secretariat
Responsibility: University Secretary
Revision Date(s): October 11, 2024
Supersedes: N/A
Next Review Date: October, 2029

POLICY TEMPLATE



<Policy Title>

1. Preamble

<This section is optional. High level statement providing context and examples.>

2. Purpose

2.1 <Reasons that the policy exists.>

3. Jurisdiction/scope

3.1 <An outline of the specific case(s), areas of the University, or constituency to which the policy applies.>

4. Definitions

4.1 <Define relevant terms contained in the policy.>

5. Policy

5.1 <A clear and concise statement of the policy. This section should not include procedures. It may include sub-headings such as roles and responsibilities, exceptions etc. to facilitate quick reference.>

6. Relevant Legislation

6.1 <This section is optional. A list of legislation relevant to the policy if applicable. For example, a policy on workplace health and safety might reference the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Legislation should be hyperlinked whenever possible.>

7. Related Policies, Procedures and Documents

7.1 Policies

- <A hyperlinked list of related (can be both external documents and internal documents).
- Delete if N/A>

7.2 Procedures

- <A hyperlinked list of associated procedures (can be both external documents and internal documents).
- Delete if N/A>

7.3 Guidelines

- <A hyperlinked list of relevant documents (can be both external documents and internal documents).
- Delete if N/A>

7 Additional Approval Information

- Policy Number:** <Assigned by University Secretary>
- Approving Authority:** <Assigned by University Secretary>
- Approved:** <Date policy originally approved>
- Responsible Office:** <The department or area responsible for implementation>
- Responsibility:** <Title of the individual(s) responsible for issue/review>
- Revision Date(s):** < All revision dates (most recent first)>
- Supersedes:** <Name of old policy that new policy replaces (if applicable)>
- Next Required Review:** <Every policy must be reviewed at least once every 5 years. Review date will be established by University Secretary>

Policy on <title>

Effective date <Month, day, year>