



UNIVERSITY DOCUMENT CONTROL POLICY

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University depends on a variety of official documents to manage its operations. Although some of these documents are produced by external entities (Third parties), the majority are generated internally by the University. These documents primarily serve to define, provide guidance on, or regulate specific activities. This document aims to standardize the process of creating internal University documents and to streamline their development.

2. Scope of Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to all University regulations, policies, procedures, and other related documents. A more comprehensive list is included in the 'Definitions' section below. Where a document requires approval by the Council, this will generally not be given unless the requirements of this policy and its associated templates have been followed.

3. Responsibilities

All staff, students and University bodies are required to comply with the terms of this policy.

4. Definitions

This section contains a non-exhaustive list of the types of official documents that are used or produced by the University and their definitions. Generally speaking, types of documents higher up the list are approved by more senior University bodies - such as the Council and the BoT, and types of documents further down the list are approved by less senior bodies. Where there is an inconsistency between two documents, the document approved by the more senior body will usually take precedence. Care needs to be taken when drafting a new document to ensure that its provisions are not inconsistent with those of a document of greater authority.

- 4.1 There is a close interaction between University policies (see 4.9 and 4.10), procedures (see 4.11) and other documents such as guidance (see 4.12). Generally, a policy will set out the University's agreed approach to a particular issue, while a procedure will provide instructions on how this approach will be implemented. Guidance or other documentation may be produced to facilitate use of or explain particular aspects of a procedure.
- 4.2 When producing a new document, a decision will need to be made as to what type it should be (i.e. policy, procedure, etc.). The definitions provided in this Section should be used as a starting point to make this decision.
- 4.3 Variations to the definitions contained in this section, particularly with respect to the appropriate approval body or review date, may be contained in the document itself. It may be necessary to review some documents more frequently as a result of Royal decree or external regulatory requirements.
- 4.4 **Legislation:** External statutory or regulatory documents enacted by a Royal

decree, governmental authorities (or any other legislature) or another external body under delegated authority.

- 4.5 **Governing Documents:** The Private Universities Regulations (issued by the MoE) in combination with the University Regulations (see below) define the duties and responsibilities of senior bodies, including the University Council and its senior staff.

- 4.6 **Strategies:** The University Council and BoT approve an institutional strategic plan of a fixed duration, and this is a principal mechanism by which the Council measures the performance of the University and its management. This University strategic plan is supported by specific action plans, which set out in more detail how the strategic plan will be implemented.

Examples include: Research Strategy, Human Resources Strategy

Body to approve: University Council & BoT

Review frequency: Duration of University Strategy

- 4.7 **Regulations:** There are a limited number of other University regulations, and these are provided for in the University's governing documents. New regulations should not be produced without the prior approval of the University Council.

Examples include: Faculty Regulations, Academic Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Regulations

Body to approve: University Council (unless otherwise provided for)

Review frequency: As specified

- 4.8 **Strategic Policies:** Policies with high-level or strategic implications or those which are impacted by external statutory or regulatory requirements. This includes policies that are specifically defined or governed by the Articles of Association or University Regulations.

Examples include: Risk Management Policy, Accountability Policy

Body to approve: University Council

Review frequency: 3 years or as deemed necessary

- 4.9 **Operational Policies:** Other University policies which refer to a specific area of University activity, or impact on a specific group of University members.

Examples include: Examination and Assessment Policy, Registration Policy

Body to approve: University Council

Review frequency: 3 years or as deemed necessary

- 4.10 **Codes of Practice:** A statement setting out expectations of behaviour, conduct or action in respect of a particular aspect of University activity.

Examples include: Faculty Code of Conduct Policy, Anti-Harassment Policy

Body to approve: University Council

Review frequency: 2 years or as deemed necessary

- 4.11 **Procedures:** Procedures set out the persons responsible and the process or actions required to undertake a particular activity, implement a policy or respond to a breach of a code of practice.

Examples include: Staff Disciplinary Procedures, Registration Procedures

Body to approve: University Council

Review frequency: 2 years or as deemed necessary

- 4.12 Guidance, Handbooks, Manuals, Forms, Standard Operating Procedures, Frameworks etc.: Documents supporting or clarifying a policy, code of practice or procedure.

Examples include: Faculty Promotion Application Form, Guide to LOs Assessment

Body to approve: Policy, Code of practice or Procedure owner

Review frequency: 2 years or as deemed necessary

- 4.13 Templates: templates are used as a tool or a starting point for creating various types of documents.

5. Document control

Document control is essential for ensuring that University documents are current, thereby instilling confidence in our processes. It also plays a crucial role in demonstrating the University's compliance with legal obligations. The University Secretariat manages a comprehensive database of strategies, policies, and procedures, facilitating timely reviews and updates.

To ensure effective document control, the cover page of every University document governed by this procedure should include the following information (refer to Appendix 1 for a template):

- **Name:** The name of the document in question.
- **Owner:** The document owner is the individual accountable for the ongoing management of the document after it has received approval from the approver. This includes reviewing the document before the scheduled review date and obtaining approval for any required modifications. The owner's role should be noted instead of the individual's name (for example, 'University Secretary'). Additionally, the owner serves as the primary contact for any inquiries regarding the document.
- **Approver:** The approver refers to the individual, group, or university body that has granted final approval for the document. This could be, for instance, the University Council or Board of Trustees. Additionally, the date of approval should be noted.
- **Review due date:** The review due date is the deadline by which the review should be completed, any necessary changes should be made, and the document should be assessed and approved by the reviewer. Adequate time should be allocated for conducting the review prior to the due date. Refer to Section 4 above for the typical review frequency for various types of documents.
- **Current Version:** The first version of a document should be marked '1.0'. Minor amendments should be denoted as follows: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 etc. Major amendments or new versions of the document should be denoted as follows: 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, etc.
- **Update history:** The version history section should reflect minor amendments to the current version, and previous full versions. It is not necessary to include minor revisions of previous full versions. The date of each amendment should be included.

- **Document Type:** The document type as set out in Section 4 should be entered on the document cover page.
- **Classification:** Section 6 outlines three categories of documents that are covered by this policy. The appropriate classification should be indicated on the document cover page.

6. Document classification

For the documents that fall within the scope of this policy, there are three classifications that relate to the type of disclosure that can be made:

- **Public:** Should be published on the University website and can be shared with students and third parties. The University Secretariat is responsible for uploading approved public documents.
- **Internal Only:** Should be made available to staff only through the University's Staff Portal. Should not be shared with students or third parties.
- **Confidential:** Prior to the meeting, the information should only be accessible to designated University staff and committee members on a need-to-know basis. It should not be distributed to students, third parties, or other staff members. After the meeting, it may be shared more broadly with the author's consent.
- **Strictly confidential:** Access should be restricted to designated university staff and committee members only, as needed. This information must not be disclosed to students, third parties, or other staff members. After the relevant meeting, it cannot be shared more broadly.

7. Document approval process

- 7.1 The University Council has a range of standing committees and groups that have specialist knowledge of a particular area of activity. The Council will rely on these committees and groups to undertake detailed scrutiny of a proposed document, to consult appropriately and to make any necessary changes before recommending it for approval.
- 7.2 Documents of strategic importance to the University, particularly those with material financial implications, should also be considered by the President's Assistant for Financial Affairs prior to submission to the approving body.
- 7.3 No papers with recommendations should be submitted to the Council without the approval of the President. Agendas of the Council and BoT meetings should be approved by the President.
- 7.4 Documents to be approved by the Council should have first been scrutinized by one or more of the following bodies or individuals:
 - President
 - The President's Assistants (Academic Affairs/Administrative and Financial Affairs)
 - The relevant Institutional Committee

- 7.5 Gaining approval for University documents can take longer than expected. If a document needs to be approved by the Council and one or more of their committees or groups, the author should consider to work out a realistic timescale for approval. Authors should also take into account the time it will take to consult with stakeholders. To avoid unnecessary delays, consultation with different stakeholder groups can take place simultaneously.

8. Cover papers

- 8.1 Any document submitted to the Council for approval must include a cover page (refer to Appendix 2 for a template). The Council will generally not approve documents that do not adhere to this template, unless there is a valid justification.
- 8.2 The cover page should include the following information:
- A summary highlighting the key provisions of the document and the rationale behind its creation (for new documents).
 - An overview of the modifications made and the reasons for these changes (for existing documents).
 - The identification of the body recommending the document for approval.
 - -A list of any bodies or individuals who have been consulted (refer to Section 9 below).
 - A link to the University's strategic plan.
 - Any necessary follow-up actions or implementation steps.
 - Amendments or revisions to a document should be presented alongside the original version for reference.

9. Consultation and risk management

Consultation is a critical component of the document approval process. Engaging key stakeholders early on reduces the likelihood of rejection by approval bodies and minimizes the need for significant revisions later. Additionally, it fosters positive collaboration and engagement among stakeholders.

This section is not exhaustive and prescriptive, and the overriding principle is that consultation should take place with those groups that are likely to be affected by a document. Document authors should always consider whether consultation is necessary with respect to the following:

- **Students:** If a document has implications for students, it should be submitted to the Deanship of Student Affairs for direct consultation with the students, especially those specific groups who may be impacted by the document, before any approval is requested.

If a document is likely to affect the student contract, authors should be aware that changes will not normally be permitted to take effect midway into the academic year and will need to be implemented at the beginning of the next academic year.

If there is an urgent need to alter a document affecting the contractual rights of students and implement it mid-year, advice should be sought at the earliest opportunity from the Deanship of Admission and Registration.

- **Staff:** Documents that are likely to directly affect staff within the university should typically be created in collaboration with Human Resources, especially if they pertain to employment contracts. Additionally, it may be necessary to consult with the President and any relevant groups impacted by the changes. In certain situations, broader consultation might be appropriate, which could involve organizing focus groups or hosting events aimed at engaging a wider range of university staff.
- **Financial Impact:** If approval of the document is likely to have a financial impact, the author should first consult with the relevant budget holder and with the Finance Department. If the financial impact is likely to be significant, or the policy has University wide or strategic financial impact, it should be submitted to the President's Assistant for Financial Affairs for consideration before submission to the relevant approving body.
- **Communications:** If the document is likely to have an impact on staff or students, or will require University wide dissemination, the Public Relation Department should be consulted prior to approval.
- **Health and Safety:** If the document in development is likely to have an impact on the health and safety of staff or students, the author will need to conduct a risk assessment prior to approval.
- **Other Areas:** Depending on the nature of the document being developed, it may be necessary to consult with a range of other University departments, including but not limited to IT Center and Legal Services.

10. Presentation and use of language

- 10.1 University documents should be written in plain English.
- 10.2 Documents should be produced in a generally accessible format.
- 10.3 It is good practice to use hyperlinks to link to relevant information and documentation, but care should be taken to ensure that only permanent, static links are used and that these are regularly checked.
- 10.4 University documents classified as policies (see Section 4) should be formatted in accordance with the University Policy Template (see Appendix 3). This has been designed to ensure that University policies are presented in an accessible way and are consistently formatted. Unless there is a good reason, the Council will not approve new or revised policies that do not use this template.
- 10.5 University documents should not include unnecessary jargon or acronyms. Where necessary, a glossary of terms should be included.

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Document Cover Sheet Template

See Section 5 of the Document Control Policy for guidance on completing this template

DOCUMENT TITLE

Owner:	
Approver (Date):	
Review due date:	
Current Version:	
Update history:	
Document Type:	
Classification:	

Appendix 2 – Council Cover Paper Template

See Sections 7-11 of the Document Control Policy for guidance on completing this template

PAPER TITLE

1. Author

2. Date of paper

3. Summary and recommendations

Please provide a high-level summary of the paper and the decisions that the committee is being asked to make (i.e. to receive, discuss, approve, recommend).

4. Paper history

List the University committees or groups that have already received the paper or item, the date on which it was received and the decision of the committee or group.

5. Link to Strategic Plan

Explain how the paper supports the University's Strategic Plan or specific strategy (i.e. student experience strategy) as appropriate.

6. Consultation

Provide a description of the groups/stakeholders who have been consulted in preparing this paper. Consideration should be given to the advice in Sections 9-11 of the University Document Control Policy.

7. Paper Specific Sections

Insert here any sections specific to the paper. If a particular document needs to be provided to the committee, a copy should be attached to this cover paper as an appendix and referenced in this section. Appendices should use the following style:

- Size 12 Arial font
- Left alignment
- Normal page margins
- Avoid the use of underlining and italics. Instead use bold and different font sizes to identify sections/headings
- Avoid excessive use of tables and text boxes

8. Financial implications

Include details of any financial implications.

9. Risk management

Confirm whether the proposal creates any risk to the University and provide evidence to demonstrate how this will be managed. Ensure that appropriate consideration has been given to the following areas:

- Legal
- Insurance
- Health & Safety
- Environmental Impact
- Due Diligence

10. Attachments

Appendix 3 – University Policy Template



جامعة فهد بن سلطان
FAHAD BIN SULTAN UNIVERSITY

Policy Management System Document Title

Policy Code:			
Policy Name:			
Classification:			
Handler/Owner:			
Approved by:			
Date of Approval:			
Current Version:			
Update History:	Version	Date of approval	File Link
	1		
	2		
	3		
Review due date:			

1. Introduction
 - 1.1 Sub-heading 1 (Use this format throughout)
Text
 - 1.2 Sub-heading 2
Text
2. Scope of Policy
3. Responsibilities
4. Definitions
5. Document Specific Sections