

POLICY FRAMEWORK

The La Trobe **Policy Framework** supports the University’s governance, academic and operational policy requirements. It outlines the structure for developing, approving and managing the University’s policies and procedures found in the publicly available [Policy Library](#).

The University’s Policy Framework is comprised of the University’s policies and procedures, which sit under and must be consistent with the La Trobe University Act, statute(s) and regulations. In addition, all university policies and procedures must meet key criteria and align with the following development principles:

- a. Required by law or regulatory body e.g TEQSA; **or**
- b. Required as part of an institutional membership or accreditation and/or used in audits, grants applications and tender submissions); **or**
- c. Materially supports compliance with legislation and/or the management or mitigation of risk; **or**
- d. Materially improves the standardisation and/or facilitates the efficient and equitable administration of the University’s operations; **or**
- e. Assists the University attain its strategic goals and objectives.



Hierarchy of Governance Documents

UNIVERSITY POLICIES & PROCEDURES – WHAT ARE THEY AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

Policies are formal statements of the high-level principles that apply to and regulate University decision-making. Policies set out the purpose, strategic objectives, roles and responsibilities (including key decision-making powers/delegations) and compliance commitments.

Procedures set out the operational steps to be taken to apply and give effect to the principles set out in the associated policy. They are ‘how to’ instruments and it should be clear who does what, for example: *“any staff member wishing to travel for work, must complete the Request to Travel form [hyperlink] and submit it to the [name of relevant business area or specific role] via travel@latrobe.edu.au. All travel must be approved by [insert role title].”* Statements such as ‘the University will do X’ should be avoided as it does not inform the reader who at the University will do X.

University policies and procedures are binding on staff and students by virtue of their employment and enrolment at the University respectively. Policies and procedures can also apply to contractors and other members of the University community under the terms of a contract. In the case of staff/students, a breach of policy and procedure can lead to disciplinary action and the termination of a contract/engagement.

Status of other documents – guidelines, local business practices, operational manuals & frameworks

Guidelines, local area instructions etc are not part of the Policy Framework. However, university business units/departments can develop such documents to provide further information or guidance on operational processes. For example, Investigation Guidelines, provide further detail on how to carry out an investigation to assist individuals tasked with carrying out an investigation under University legislation, policy or procedure.

- i) A **guideline** describes good practice and provides explanatory statements, advice and recommendations.
- ii) A **checklist** - a list of items required, things to be done, points to be considered, used as a reminder.
- iii) **Manuals and local area instructions** – describe the specific processes that a particular function or division of the University should follow, they are often captured in ProMapps.

Example - Contract Policy

Policy	<p><i>Principle statements</i></p> <p>Contracts must be reviewed or drafted by Legal Services prior to execution.</p>
Procedure	<p><i>'How to' procedural statements</i></p> <p>Requests for legal advice can be made by staff to Legal Services via its online platform LawVu or legal.services@latrobe.edu.au.</p>
Guideline	<p><i>Good practice guidelines – e.g. Contract Management Guidelines</i></p> <p>Good contract management involves regularly reviewing the arrangement to ensure both LTU and the contracting party are both complying with their obligations.</p>
Local area practice	<p><i>Documented local area practice</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paralegal Officer to receive request for legal advice and allocate a legal file number. 2. Deputy Counsel will assign the file number to a lawyer. 3. All contracts will have the following typography: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Font: Arial - Size: 8 - Margin type: normal

Frameworks (such as this one) are a high-level document which pull together and summarise information from legislation, policies, procedures and other documents, which are all relevant to a particular subject. Frameworks are not binding in and of themselves but contain information from legislation and other instruments documents which are part of the Policy Framework and are mandatory. For instance, a 'Clinical Governance Framework' would reference and include:

- Key information from legislation relevant to the provision of healthcare (e.g. Health Records Act 2001, Health Complaints Act 2016),
- University policies (e.g. Privacy – Health Information Policy, policies relevant to complaints etc) ,
- Information about relevant industry standards (e.g. National Safety and Quality Health Services Standards).

APPROVALS

Council – La Trobe University Act 2009, section 9

Council must establish all **governance** policies and procedures. Governance policies are those which relate to matter for which Council and its committees are responsible and has not delegated (or is prohibited from doing so under the Act). Governance policies include those which relate to overseeing the effective management of the University (e.g. policies which relate to Council's operations) and those which have a significant strategic, financial or reputational risk associated with them, including the University Code of Conduct, new financial policies (or significant amendments to existing ones) and delegations of authority.

Academic Board – Academic Board Statute 2009, section 2

Academic Board approves all **academic** policies and procedures. Academic policies are those which relate to academic issues such as course approval, research standards, higher degree by research, teaching, learning, assessment and student progress and academic integrity.

Vice-Chancellor –La Trobe University Act 2009, section 8, Instrument of Delegation (No 4 of 2021)

The Vice-Chancellor approves **operational** policies and procedures. Operational policies are those that relate to operation and management of the University including human resources, finance, information technology, records management, alumni & advancement, marketing, student enrolment administration, health & safety, risk management and compliance. T

AMENDMENTS

Editorial/administrative

Administrative amendments do not require formal approval and can be undertaken directly with the Policy Officer via policy@latrobe.edu.au . An administrative amendment is:

- A non-contextual change i.e correcting grammar, typo, formatting error or clarification of wording
- Add, remove or update links in documents i.e hyperlinks to internal or external resources, intranet or to other documents in the Policy Library

Minor

Minor revisions need to be approved by the Accountable Executive -Policy and provided in writing to the Policy Officer via policy@latrobe.edu.au. A minor change is:

- A change that is of an insubstantial nature, is not contentious, has no impact on resources or compliance and does not affect the meaning or intent i.e updates to position titles and divisional names because of an organizational restructure.

Major

All new and major revisions to policies and procedures need to be presented for approval using the [Policy Coversheet](#). A major change is:

- Adding or removing several clauses throughout the document
- Changing the scope or intent of the document
- Creating a new policy document

REVIEW

The policy review cycle is usually set and based on a 3-year review cycle. Refer to the [Best Practice Guidelines on Consultation, Communication, Implementation and Review](#).

SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNTABILITIES

ROLE

RESPONSIBILITY

Approval Body

Council, Academic Board, Vice-Chancellor

Approves policies and procedures on the condition that they are lawful, consistent with any internal or external compliance requirements, consistent with other existing policies and has suitable arrangements in place for implementation.

Accountable Executive - Policy

The Senior Executive Group member or direct report to a SEG member who is ultimately accountable for the policy and procedure(s) and approving any departures from them.

Determines whether new policies should be developed based on recommendations from a Responsible Policy Officer.

Responsible Manager - Policy

A senior staff member responsible for the content, accuracy, review and compliance reporting of the policy and/or procedure.

Ensures that appropriate consultation has taken place before seeking formal approval.

Creates and implements strategies for the communication and education of the policy/procedure to ensure they are widely understood and achieve their intended purpose.

Policy contact/author

The contact person for enquiries relating to the content of the policy/procedure in the first instance. They also lead the initial drafting, consultation and refinement of the policy content with input from the Responsible Manager – Policy (where they are different people) and relevant stakeholders.

Assists with the approval, communication and compliance reporting of a policy.

IMPLEMENTATION AND PROMULGATION

When policies and procedures are formally approved by the Approval Body, an Action Memo with the minute reference is provided to the Policy Team. The Policy Team checks the formatting and links and then publishes the document to the Policy Library.

The Policy Team includes regular updates on policy approvals and/or revocations via Policy News which appears in the La Trobe News issued by the media and Communications team.

The Responsible Policy Officer also has a role in communicating any new or revised policies and procedures widely to key stakeholders to help ensure they are understood. The Responsible Officer must also ensure that any implementation plan activities are completed.

RESOURCES

1. Templates and guides to support the operation of the Policy Framework are available from the Policy Library [Resources](#) page.
2. FAQs <https://policies.latrobe.edu.au/faq>
3. Policy Officer via policy@latrobe.edu.au