

POLICY AND PROCEDURE WRITING TIPS

- Differentiate between policies and procedures.
 - **University Policies** are:
 - principle-based statements to be followed to carry out the activities of the university;
 - have broad application throughout the university;
 - are binding on members of the university community; and
 - have subject matter that requires Board of Governors, Faculty Council, Presidential or Vice Presidential review and approval for policy issuance and revision.
 - **University Procedures** are the processes or set of steps followed in order to give effect to a university policy.
- Ensure that the policy's title is clear and concise and accurately describes the subject(s) addresses.
- Use consistent language and terminology throughout the policy. Utilize terms that are well understood and try to avoid terms that have multiple meanings or are commonly used in differing ways. Avoid terms and statements that can be easily confused or interpreted in multiple ways.
- Ensure that definitions are clear, concise, and consistent. Define terms that:
 - require clarification;
 - could be interpreted as referring to something other than what was intended;
 - are unique or have special meanings;
 - may be unfamiliar to the intended audience; and
 - are technical.
- Use single idea sentences and avoid complex sentence structures.
- Ensure that the policy clearly defines responsibilities.
- Use correct punctuation and grammar that corresponds to the University's Style Guide.

- Use the formalized spelling of words in a policy rather than abbreviations.
- Use gender-neutral language.
- Use headings and/or subheadings to group information logically. Also consider adding numbering or lettering sections or using bullets and lists to simplify text where appropriate.
- Use a present tense and positive tone.
- Consider the audience when deciding what information is essential.
- Avoid using contact information that may change such as a person's name, phone number or e-mail address.
- Refer to titles, positions, and departments' not specific individuals.
- Keep the policy as brief as possible. Lengthy or complex information should be included in the associated procedures or in an appendix.
- Ensure that draft policies are clearly identified as "drafts" and include the date of the draft to avoid confusion. Consider utilizing a consistent version control system.
- Ensure that spelling is thoroughly checked. Employ the Canadian spelling of words.
- Use the standardized format for policy and procedure documents approved in the University Policy on Policies and Procedures.