



Policy Framework

A/1.1

Purpose

The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod governs itself through compliance with a broad regulatory framework comprising internal and external requirements.

This Policy Framework is the operational structure for developing, approving, amending, reviewing and decommissioning documents within the Policy Framework of the Queensland Synod.

The Policy Framework is designed to ensure that the policies of the Synod shape our operations and activities in such a way that they are consistent with our core values, and reflect the call on the Church to participate in the mission of God in our world and our neighbourhoods.

The objectives of the Policy Framework are to:

1. govern the development, approval, amendment, review and decommissioning of documents within the Policy Framework to ensure relevance, authority and consistency with relevant regulatory frameworks; and
2. define the roles, responsibilities and authorities in relation to the development, approval, amendment, review and decommissioning of documents within the Policy Framework.

Scope

This Policy Framework applies to all policy documents developed for, and within the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod within the bounds of the Queensland Synod office including the Trinity College Queensland, Raymont Residential College and the Alexandra Park Conference Centre. The Policy Framework also applies to all policy documents generated by the Queensland Synod office relating to ministry agents engaged in ministry placement and other religious activities of the Uniting Church in Australia within the bounds of the Queensland Synod.

Whilst policy documents of agencies and institutions of the Synod are outside the scope of this Policy Framework, the policy documents of agencies and institutions are expected to conform to the Queensland Synod Policy Statements.

Policy

1. Policy Statement

Documents within the Policy Framework must:

- (a) be created only where there is a clear and justifiable long-term need
- (b) align with strategic and business plans
- (c) be consistent with legal requirements and community expectations
- (d) apply and be binding as identified in the document
- (e) be developed, approved, amended, reviewed and decommissioned in consultation with key stakeholders
- (f) assign roles and responsibilities to ensure transparency
- (g) encourage responsible document ownership
- (h) consider resourcing requirements.



2. Policy Documents

The Policy Framework comprises several document types:

- (a) **Policy Statement:** a high level, overarching statement of the intent and principles that guide the actions and decision-making of the Queensland Synod.
- (b) **Policy:** a broad statement of principles that govern, regulate and/or constrain the operations of the Queensland Synod
- (c) **Procedure:** detailed statements that operationalise or inform the steps to be taken to implement a Policy, and guide and establish best practice. A Procedure may outline the mandatory minimum requirements and best practice recommendations for completing a specific group of activities or tasks.
- (d) **Tool:** provides step-by-step instructions or workflows for implementing specific activities or tasks and may include forms, manuals, templates, information sheets and guidelines.

3. Regulatory Framework

The Policy Framework exists within a broader regulatory framework including:

- (a) Basis of Union
- (b) The Uniting Church in Australia Constitution
- (c) The Uniting Church in Australia Regulations
- (d) The Uniting Church in Australia Presidential Rulings
- (e) Uniting Church in Australia Act 1977 (Qld)
- (f) Queensland Synod By-laws
- (g) External legislation / regulation

4. Procedural Principles

New policy or major amendments to policy must be endorsed by the Executive Leadership Team on the recommendation of the relevant Synod office group Executive Director or Associate General Secretary. Approvers of such policy proposals must:

- (a) confirm the rationale and/or priority of the development/review work
- (b) endorse the proposal prior to commencing development/review work
- (c) assess the proposal against the principles of this Framework
- (d) ensure the relevant document owner(s) are notified of the endorsed proposal.

Documents within the Policy Framework of the Queensland Synod will be developed to ensure compliance with relevant aspects of the regulatory framework, meeting the expectations of the Church and promoting operational efficiency and reducing risks.

Process	Policy Documents
Need Confirmed	<p>Prior to the development of documents within the Policy Framework, consultation to confirm the rationale and/or priority, and to assess the time and resources required, must be undertaken as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Policy Statement: General Secretary • New Policy or major amendments to Policy: Executive Leadership Team on the recommendation of the relevant Synod office group Executive Director or Associate General Secretary • New Procedure: Synod office group Executive Directors or the Associate General Secretary, for their respective business group • New Tool: Direct line managers



Process	Policy Documents
Presentation	<p>Documents within the Policy Framework must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be written in a clear and succinct manner• record the document approver and document owner• comply with the relevant approved template• include appropriate document control.
Approval	<p>Documents within the Policy Framework must be approved as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy Statement: Synod Standing Committee. Consequential and minor amendments may be approved by the General Secretary.• Synod Wide Policy¹: Synod Standing Committee, upon the recommendation of the Executive Leadership Team (following consultation with agencies and institutions of the Queensland Synod). Consequential and minor amendments may be approved by the General Secretary.• Operational Policy – specific to a Synod office group: Synod office group Executive Directors or the Associate General Secretary, for their respective business group• Operational Policy – applicable across Synod office groups: Executive Leadership Team on the recommendation of the relevant Synod office group Executive Directors or Associate General Secretary• Procedure: Synod office group Executive Directors or the Associate General Secretary, for their respective business group• Tool: Direct line managers <p>The above policy approval process includes approvals relating to the development, amendment, review and decommissioning of documents.</p>
Storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Governance Secretary must ensure that all approved documents within the Policy Framework are available in a location accessible by all staff and other relevant stakeholders.
Communication and Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff will only be trained in / informed of documents within the Policy Framework to the extent required for their role.• All line managers are responsible for ensuring all staff are aware of, and comply with the suite of Policy Framework documents applicable to their activities.
Monitoring and Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Governance Secretary maintains and monitors the Policy Register, including notifying the relevant document owner three months prior to a document's review due date.• All line managers are responsible for ensuring that the suite of Policy Framework documents applicable to their activities are updated as required in accordance with this Policy Framework.• At least every two years, or earlier as required, a review must be undertaken of each Policy Statement and Policy document.• Procedures and Tools shall be reviewed at least every five years, or earlier as required.

¹ Policies applying to all functions and activities within the bounds of the Queensland Synod.



Related documents

Templates for Policy Statement, Policy, Procedure and Tools
Policy Register (as maintained by the Governance Secretary)

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Queensland Synod	Means the work and activities of the Uniting Church in Australia performed within the bounds of the Queensland Synod office including the Trinity College Queensland, Raymont Residential College and the Alexandra Park Conference Centre.

Revisions

Document number		A/1.1			
Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
3.0	15.01.2021	General Secretary (minor amendments only)	15.01.2021	Executive Director Shared Services	Governance Secretary
Next scheduled review		15.01.2023			