

**Policy Title**

***Please Note***

***1) Text in Italics***

*Italicised text is provided to instruct the policy writer on what to include in the relevant sections and is to be deleted from the first draft of the policy.*

***2) Font Settings***

*The recommended font to use for Section Headings is ‘Arial’ with a font size of ‘16’. For text within sections is ‘Arial’ with a font size of ‘12’. For ease of use, and where appropriate, the initial text in each section has been suggested but you may amend or delete the text as appropriate.*

***3) Text Justification***

*Ideally, all text within a policy is to be ‘Fully Justified.’*

***4) Mandatory / Optional Sections***

*This template is designed to assist the policy writers in organizing the content of a new, or the update of an existing, policy according to the* [*University’s Policy on Policies*](https://www.dcu.ie/policies/policy-guides-templates)*. The various sections of a DCU policy are indicated in non-italicized bold text. Some sections are mandatory, and so must be included in all policies (e.g. ‘Purpose’), while the inclusion of others is optional and may be excluded if so desired by the policy writer (e.g. ‘Sanctions’).*

***5) Section Numbering / Indexing***

*In this policy template section number / indexing has not been adopted. However, it may be implemented where a policy writer believes it adds to the final policy’s clarity or overall readability.*

***6) Policy Development***

*Additional issues to consider when drafting a policy are included in a separate document titled* [*Guidelines on Policy Development*](https://www.dcu.ie/policies/policy-guides-templates) *which is available on the University’s policies web page.*

Table of Contents

**(Optional)**

*As University policies should not be more than 3-4 pages in length a separate table of contents at the beginning of the policy should not be needed. However, where policies are of a greater length then a table of contents may be used.*

*When inserting a table use the inbuilt Word Tool - References / Table of Contents / Automatic Table 2. An example of a table of contents, for the purposes of this template, is set out below.*

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Introduction

**(Optional)**

The University……

*This section may be used to further expand upon the context of, or on any issues related to, the policy.*

Purpose

**(Mandatory)**

The purpose of this policy is to……

*This section will provide the reason or rationale to justify the existence of the policy, (i.e. the issue that the policy seeks to resolve). It may also refer to any legal, regulatory, or other requirements that the policy strives to meet and/or the possible impact if the policy is not followed.*

Scope

**(Mandatory)**

This Policy applies to……

*This section will name the parties to which the policy is intended to apply and so they must be made aware of, and comply with, its provisions. In practice the vast majority of DCU policies will apply to all parts of the University unless specific units or groups of individuals are identified within the relevant policy as being excluded.*

*Examples of scope*

*a) Where no exceptions to the policy are identified then the scope may be defined as:*

*‘This policy applies to all units of the University, both academic and support, including its research centres and its wholly owned campus companies. These are all hereinafter collectively referred to as the ‘University’’.*

*b) Alternatively, you may wish to state that the policy applies to ‘All Staff’ or to ‘All Students’ or to a certain cohort of staff or students e.g. ‘This policy applies to post graduate students.’*

*Thought must be given to setting out the desired scope of a policy in an accurate and clear manner. You may need to consult with relevant stakeholders to ensure that all parties are included, or in some cases, that certain parties are excluded, from the scope of the policy.*

Policy Statement

**(Mandatory)**

1. All staff will ….
2. Etc….

*This section will set out the policy’s principles and is intended to be a clear statement of intent or position on a particular matter or issue. It may state what is permitted or prohibited, what is required or how a matter or issue is to be addressed.*

*The stated principles should be concise, definite and without ambiguity. Where appropriate they may need to be further broken down into numbered / indexed sub-sections.*

*Ideally, the policy statement should state that compliance with the policy is mandatory as this is one of the defining attributes of a policy.*

***Important Note:*** *Do not place procedures, guidelines, or forms within the statement section of the policy as they add to a policy’s length and may need more regular updating than the policy to which they relate. Instead, they are to be provided in a separate document to the policy which can be referenced in the ‘Related Documentation’ section below.*

Roles & Responsibilities

**(Mandatory)**

The roles and responsibilities of staff engaging with this policy are as follows….

*This section may be used to outline the various roles and responsibilities of all the individuals involved in the implementation of a policy. Only formal University titles or positions should be provided.*

Sanctions

**(Optional)**

The following sanction will apply in the event of non-compliance with this policy….

*This section may be used to outline the sanctions that may be taken in the event of non-compliance with the policy. The statement of a defined sanction within a DCU policy is rare but it may be appropriate in some cases e.g. for a breach of discipline.*

Definitions

**(Optional)**

*This section may be used to define the meaning of key words or phrases used in the policy which may not be familiar to, or might be misunderstood by, a reader. Consideration should be given to the target audience for the policy and the likelihood that they will understand technical or unit specific words or phrases.*

*It will add to the clarity of a policy if key words and phrases are laid out using a table like the one below. (Additional rows can be added to the table by placing the cursor within the table, right click, select Insert, select ‘Insert Row Below’).*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Key word or phrase # 1** | This is ….. |
| **Key word or phrase # 2** | This is…… |
| **Key word or phrase # 3** | This is……. |

Related Documentation

**(Optional)**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies / procedures / guidelines……

*This section will be used to list any related guidance material that will assist policy users in understanding or implementing the policy. For example, a policy’s guidance material could be its related procedures, guidelines, forms, or internal / external websites.*

*As mentioned above the material should be merely named or referenced in the policy and should not be included as additional content within the text of the policy as to do so merely adds to a policy’s length.*

*Where considered appropriate the creation of a hyperlink within a policy’s text to the specific Unit’s home web page where the guidance is located is preferable over a direct link to the URL of the guidance itself because hyperlinks tend to break down over time. Where hyperlinks are used, they should be in short form e.g. ‘Guide on…’ as opposed to the full URL (see example below for ‘Policy Toolkits’).*

*Where possible, the additional guidance material should be provided on the same Unit web page as where the reference / link to final policy will be located (Note: the master versions of all University Policies are published on its dedicated* [*Central Policies Webpage*](https://www.dcu.ie/policies) *and are to be merely referenced on a Unit’s webpage). Examples of two alternative web page formats are as follows:*

* [*Policy Toolkits*](https://www.dcu.ie/hr/policy-toolkits) *as adopted by the University’s Human Resources Office*
* [*Accordion layout*](https://www.dcu.ie/ocoo/child-protection-unit) *as adopted by the University’s Child Protection Unit.*

*If considered appropriate the same table layout as recommended above in the preceding Definitions Section can be used in this section to arrange the additional material related to a policy.*

Frequently Asked Questions

**(Optional)**

Q1: What are…..

Ans: They are…..

Q2: Who do I…..

Ans: Contact….

*This section may be used to list typical queries, and their answers, in relation to the policy and should be used if you foresee the policy giving rise to several recurring queries. Where there are likely to be a substantial number of queries they should be listed in a separate document and a reference or hyperlink to the document’s web page location placed within this section.*

Contact

**(Mandatory)**

Any queries regarding this policy should be directed to…..

*This section will be used to state the contact details for the University Unit associated with the implementation of the policy, which in most cases, will be the Policy Owner.*

Policy Review

**(Mandatory)**

This policy will be reviewed…...

*This section will be used to state how often the policy is to be reviewed. It is recommended to state ‘This policy will be reviewed as and when changes are required’ rather than state a definite number of years hence.*

Version Control

**(Mandatory)**

*All policies will have a version control panel like the one used below for this Policy Template. It will state the following:*

1. *Policy Name*
2. *Unit Owner – the name of the DCU Unit that owns, promotes, and manages the policy.*
3. *Version Reference - select from i) or ii) below as appropriate*
   1. *Original Version - all policies must have a designated reference. References begin at ‘Original Version 1.0’ and proceed to ‘Original Version 2.0’ to ‘3.0’ and so on in sequential order. A sequential number will be allocated to a policy where it has undergone a fundamental change from the previous version.*
   2. *Reviewed Version – all policies are to be periodically reviewed. Where the review has been completed and only minor (non-fundamental) changes are made then the policy will be designated as ‘Reviewed Version 1.1,’ or ‘1.2’ or ‘1.3’ and so on.*

*In the example below the ‘Reviewed Version’ option was used as there was only a slight change to the policy template. If it were a fundamental change to the template (or policy), it would be appropriate to use ‘Original Version’ option (ii) above.*

1. *Approved by – the name of the University Office Holder, Committee or level of Management that approved the policy (both the original version and, if appropriate, the reviewed version).*
2. *Effective Date – the date on which the policy was approved.*

*A Version Control panel may be created by copying & pasting the example below and then amending it accordingly.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Policy Name** | Policy Template | |  |
| **Unit Owner** | Office of the Chief Operations Officer | |
| **Version Reference** | **Original Version - 3.0** | **Reviewed Version – 3.2** |
| **Approved by** | Risk & Compliance Officer | Risk & Compliance Officer |
| **Effective Date** | July 6th 2022 | May 15th 2023 |

**End.**