



POLICY AND PROCEDURE FRAMEWORK

1. GENERAL POLICY FRAMEWORK INFORMATION

This section defines the three types of policy documents at Medicine Hat College.

	POLICY	PROCEDURE	DIRECTIVES/ GUIDELINES
	COLLEGE-WIDE		DEPT/DIVISIONAL
	WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY	HOW	As needed
Purpose	Establishes authority, enables decision making, and defines scope and limitations on action or behavior. Ensures MHC is compliant with applicable legislation and promotes accountability.	Provides step-by-step directions on <u>how</u> policy directions will be applied.	Provides department level guidelines and directions
Responsibility	Vice-President(s) & Associate Vice-President(s) (Executive Sponsors)	Vice-President(s) & Associate Vice-President(s) (Executive Sponsors)	Responsible Managers (different titles apply)
Approval Authority	President and Executive Sponsor	Executive Sponsor	Area senior management (SEC level not required)
Review Mechanism	Predetermined review schedule and as needed	As required	As required
Policy	GA-01: <i>Policy on Policies</i>	GA-02: <i>Policy on Procedures</i>	Not applicable
Template	Policy Template	Procedure Template	Not applicable
Development Process	PR-GA-01-01: <i>Policy and Procedure Development and Approval</i>		Area management determines
Forms	Policy Requirement Form (PRF)	Not applicable	Not applicable

PLEASE NOTE: Only operational policies approved by the President will be called “Policies” at MHC. Only operational procedures approved by an Executive Sponsor will be called “Procedures” at MHC.

The development and management of directives/guidelines are at the departmental/divisional management’s discretion.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD POLICY

The following are what are considered attributes and values of good policy:

- enables consistent, effective and efficient decision making
- enables enforcement
- written in clear, simple and explicit language
- tested for feasibility
- creates transparency
- minimizes ambiguity
- developed with input from stakeholders
- sponsored at the executive level
- complies with legislation
- aids in identification of key performance indicators

3. POLICY AND PROCEDURES CATEGORIES AND NUMBERING SCHEME

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION & EXAMPLES	ALPHA CODE
Academic	Policies and procedures relating to academics such as program development and review, curriculum development, review and administration	AC
Student Development/ Student Services	Policies and procedures relating to the student development such as accessibility/ accommodation, residence, and wellness.	SD
Research and Intellectual Property	Policies and procedures relating to institutional research such as integrity in research, conflict of interest, applied research, intellectual property, and ethical conduct.	RE
Finance	Policies and procedures relating to financial matters such as day-to-day financial management, procurement, travel and travel expense, and budgeting.	FN
Human Resources	Policies and procedures relating to human resources such as recruitment; employee planning and performance appraisal, leave, employee recognition programs, code of conduct, and respectful work and learning environment.	HR
Facilities	Policies and procedures relating to the college facilities such as facility access, parking, allocation and utilization of space, and use of college vehicles.	FL
Health, Safety and Security	Policies and procedures relating to health, safety and security such as emergency management, personal protective equipment, and workplace violence.	HS

Information Technology	Policies and procedures relating to information technology such as internet usage, emails, and use of IT resources.	IT
College Advancement and Communications	Policies and procedures relating to College advancement such as donations/fundraising as well as communications policies such as promoting and positioning, and media relations.	CA
General Administration	Policies and procedures that are generic in nature (i.e. they do not fit into any of the abovementioned categories) such as policies, procedures, and records management	GA

4. POLICY AND PROCEDURES NUMBERING SCHEME

The Policy Analyst will assign policies a reference number using a combination of the alpha code and at least a two digit number, e.g. AC-01.

The Policy Analyst will assign procedure numbers. The procedures will be linked to their corresponding policy by using “PR” to indicate a procedure, followed by the policy number and an additional two digit number, e.g. PR-AC-01-01. If there are two procedures for the same policy, the next procedure will have the following reference number PR-AC-01-02.

5. POLICY AND PROCEDURE REVIEW AND MAINTENANCE

5.1 Policies

All policies will be reviewed on a regular basis as per the predetermined schedule, but may also require interim reviews as circumstances require (e.g. legislative change). At the time a policy is developed, the next review date as well as the minimal frequency of reviews will be determined.

On a quarterly basis, all policies requiring review in the next quarter will be provided to the Policy Authority and the Executive Sponsor, with a list being provided to SEC for awareness. It is the responsibility of the Policy Authority to review the policy (and any supporting procedures), utilizing stakeholder input as required, in determining the following:

- Continued relevancy
- Accuracy of documents
- Accurately reflects intent of relevant legislative framework

If changes are required, the Policy Authority will determine what type of change is required and follow the applicable process in the preceding section of this document.

Additionally, the Policy Analyst will create a document that will outline the changes that have been made. This will provide a more effective and efficient method of ensuring the college community remains cognizant of policy—negates the necessity to read the whole policy to try to determine what has changed. This document will be communicated along with the newly signed policy once it is approved.

If no changes are required, the Policy Authority will inform the Policy Analyst who will update the document history with the review date and set the next review date. SEC will also be notified monthly of all review activity that has taken place.

5.2 Procedures

It is the responsibility of the Policy Authority to ensure the procedures for policies for which they have been identified as the Policy Authority are kept up to date. The Policy Authority will coordinate any changes/updates with the Procedure Authority as per the process in the preceding section of this document.

6. GUIDELINES FOR WRITING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The intention of the following guidelines is to provide you with assistance to enable you to write policies and procedures that are easy to use and understand.

For consistency in publications, MHC uses the Canadian Press Stylebook and its companion publication, CP Caps and Spelling. The Office of Advancement, Communications has developed a Communications Planners: *Style Guide for use within MHC*.

The following are guidelines for writing good policies and procedures:

- Use everyday language—plain English (strong, short words)
- Use active voice, present tense
- Avoid use of jargon, unnecessary technical terms
- Avoid the use of acronyms. If required, use the full title/term once before using acronym (e.g. Senior Executive Council (SEC))
- Define terms being used—discuss with Policy Analyst because terms may already have definitions
- Use “will” or “shall” to convey a necessity to comply
- Use “should” when discretion to adopt a different approach is permitted
- “May” conveys authority to exercise full discretion
- Avoid redundancies
- Avoid words that convey a point of view or leave “wobble room”
- Use gender neutral language (e.g. use *their* instead of *he/she*)
- Use short, simple sentences (maximum 15 words) in short paragraphs (maximum 100 words)
- May positive rather than negative statements
- Do not include information that will be quickly outdated, e.g. names of persons

Specific for writing policies:

- Be brief—lengthy or complex information should be included in an appendix
- Policies should be as succinct as possible and should usually not exceed five (5) pages (including appendices)

Specific for writing procedures:

- Use one action verb per step

- Start with a verb
- Assign the action (who has responsibility for the action)

7. IMPLEMENTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In addition to communicating about new policies/procedures, it is important to consider additional aspects of implementation. The following are questions that will serve to guide the development of an implementation plan:

- Are procedures required?
- Are forms required?
- Is training required?
- Does employees have adequate skills and experience for implementation?
- Is there a need to test implementation at an early stage, to enable integration of lessons-learned?
- Have dependencies been considered and planned for?
- Is a project plan required? Has it been developed?
- Given the nature of the policy, are train-the-trainer courses required?

8. GLOSSARY

The purpose of a glossary in the context of policy and procedures is to ensure all users understand the terminology used and are consistent in the use of this terminology.

The development of the glossary will be an ongoing process. As definitions are reviewed and approved via the *Policy and Procedure Development and Approval* procedure, new definitions will be published in the Glossary.

Please contact the Policy Analyst at PolicyAnalyst@mhc.ab.ca for assistance with terminology and definitions.