UniHaven Policy-on-Policy Policy

1. Policy Overview

This policy aims to clearly outline and define the processes that underpin the development, approval, issuance, and revision of new and current policies at the College.

2. Policy Statement

Policy development is a core activity of the College and allows for the description of best practice relative to the programme being run and the demonstration of consistency with the following regulatory and legislative requirements[1]

- Are informed by QQI quality assurance guidelines.
- Are fully documented and available publicly (published); necessary information is available to staff and the public as required in usable formats.
- Are fit for purpose and appropriate to the provider context.
- Have formal standing within the provider and form part of strategic management.
- Include a role for learners and other stakeholders.
- Promote a culture of quality.
- Facilitate diversity and support innovation.
- Cover any elements of a provider's activities that are subcontracted to, or carried out by, other parties both at home and abroad.
- Demonstrate accountability as a given, but always aim for continuous improvement.
- Are reviewed periodically to ensure they are fit for their purpose and remain effective.
- Are consistent with the requirements of relevant legislation.

Policies must promote best practice and give direction regarding adherence to regulatory and legislative requirements. A policy document is organised through a series of expected

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[1] Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers (2016), section 2.1

headings. The content of this document guides informed decision-making and significantly improves the consistent application of a policy and associated procedure to ensure clarity and fairness to students and staff. Procedures are distinct from policies and are a series of steps that complement the effective implementation of a policy in the live environment. Some procedures are outlined at the end of each policy document and others exist as standalone documents. Where procedures exist as standalone documents, their revision and introduction should follow the process set out in this policy.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

This policy should be used by all staff, students, agents, and stakeholders engaged in policy development and implementation. All staff have responsibility for implementation and adherence to all policies as relevant to their roles and areas of responsibility. External stakeholders, e.g., external members of committees, recruitment agents etc., and students for all student-related matters, will be impacted by the implementation of College policies.

The Academic Director is responsible for ensuring that policies are developed and maintained, that they remain fit for purpose, that they remain in compliance with QQI guidelines, that they are updated as per agreed schedules, and that they are being implemented as intended. In the latter context, the Academic Director will inspect a sample of policies each year to check for the correct implementation and bring the findings to AC as part of the annual QA/QQI review and reporting process.

4. Policy

College policies are summarised in chapters one to twelve of the UniHaven Quality Assurance Manual (QAM). The QAM, policies and procedures will be communicated directly to those who work with us as relevant and will be published on internal and external websites for the benefit of students, staff, and stakeholders. College policies are approved for use by Academic Council

(AC). The Academic Director is responsible for ensuring compliance with the quality assurance policies and procedures concerning academic affairs and student supports within the College.

Procedures for the issuance and/or formulation of the policy outlined here apply only to policy developed or revised after the date of implementation of this specific policy other than those approved for initial use by QQI while this policy is also approved for first use. All other College policies have been drafted as per the template outlined in this policy for consistency. All subsequent revisions of all policies will be completed under this policy.

The principles outlined in this policy must be adhered to when developing policies for use in the College. It is vital for the efficient and effective development of policy that relevant and competent staff write and review new and existing policies, respectively. This will also help to ensure that such policies remain up to date and fit for purpose. All staff who develop or revise policy must have an in-depth understanding of the matter being developed and must fully adhere to the policy development requirements set out in this policy document. The below policy development process must be followed at all times.

5. Procedures and Forms

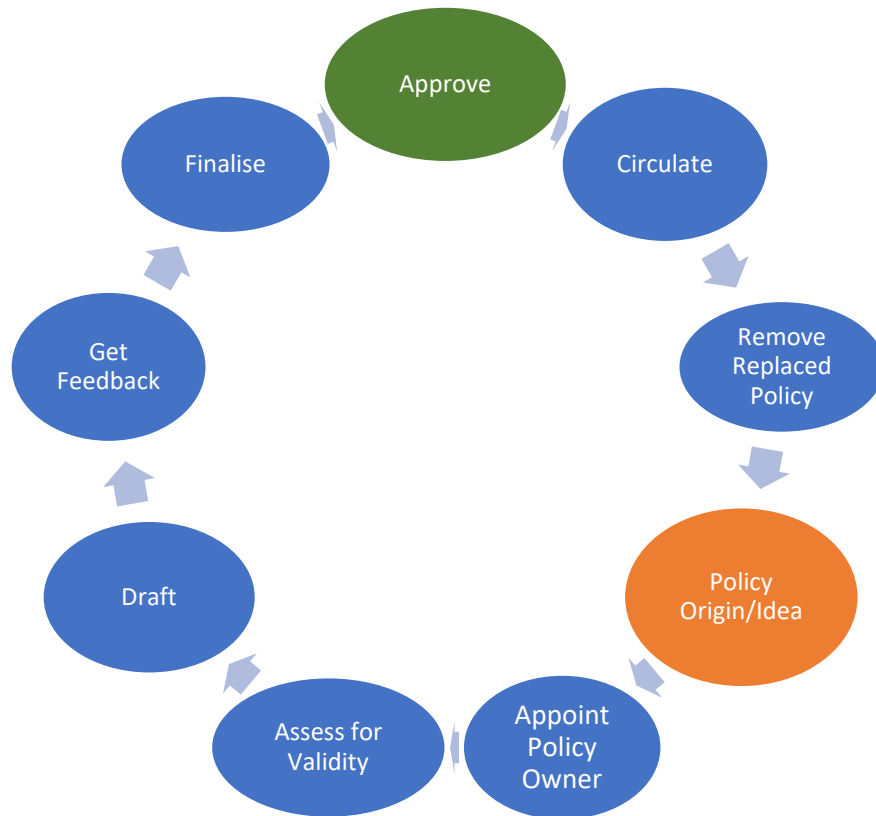College policies are developed according to the below series of steps.

Figure 1: The Policy Development Cycle

Policy Origin/Idea

The origins of a new policy can come from the external regulatory environment where, for example, new laws of regulations demand it, from an internal suggestion by any member of staff or from any of our stakeholders to include students, external examiners, agents, advisors and so on. Ideas or submissions regarding proposed new or policy amendments should be forwarded in all instances to the Programme Manager or Academic Director. decides how best to proceed.

Appoint Policy Owner

The Academic Director is responsible for appointing a policy owner to a given policy. It is the responsibility of the policy owner to ensure that given policies are up-to-date and reflective of accreditor, regulatory and sectoral best practices. The policy owner is responsible for

progressing the draft policy document fully through initial origin or idea or modification proposal through to its consideration by AC.

Assess for Validity

The policy owner under the direction of the Academic Director must ensure that the need for a new or updated policy – other than when a scheduled revision is due – is a valid one in the context of the regulations and the needs of the College. Areas to assess include if the policy already exists, whether a revision to an existing policy is a better way to proceed if modifications or new policies will ensure compliance with programme validation, regulatory requirements and so on.

Draft

The policy owner is responsible for producing the first draft either by writing him/herself or by assigning this to a competent member of staff. Either way, the policy owner is fully accountable for the draft policy that is forwarded for refining and ultimate approval by AC.

Get Feedback

The policy owner ensures that the initial draft is circulated to appropriate members of staff and external individuals/groups as relevant for consultation. All College staff must, where requested, contribute to the development of policy or associated procedure development.

Finalise

Once the consultation is complete, the policy can be finalised and forwarded to AC for approval.

Approve

All new QA policies must progress through a process of consideration and approval by AC before its implementation in practice. AC has the right to call for further changes and improvements before ultimately approving a policy and, although rare, may deny a policy introduction should it deem this necessary. Changes to existing policies or procedures or proposals for new policies and procedures are referred to QQI for approval before implementation in the College.

Circulate

The Academic Director is responsible for circulating the new policy, procedure, or update and for publishing it. This involves revising other live documents where the policy is referenced where necessary, including insertion into /referencing from the QAM if relevant. This step also includes the need for the Academic Director to ensure that relevant staff (see UPOL010 UniHaven Staff Learning and Development Policy Rev 1), agents (see UPOL027 UniHaven Agent Policy Rev 1) and stakeholders receive training on the revised policy or procedure. Once approved, policies are made publicly accessible for wide dissemination with a copy held by the Academic Director also as per UPOL026 UniHaven Communications Policy Rev 1.

<u>Remove Replaced Policy</u>

The Academic Director is responsible for ensuring that the previous policy or procedure revision, where relevant, is removed from physical and electronic circulation. This step is key to the integrity of the College document control system and to ensuring that only live, up-to-date policies are being implemented in College.

Policy Format

Policy naming is as follows: UPOL*XXX* UniHaven *XXXXXXXXX* Policy with 'QQI' added in after 'UniHaven' in the policy name where a new policy needs to be submitted to QQI for approval. This policy is stored in a secure folder on the IT Systems/Servers with the revision number of the policy being 1 more than the last live policy number in sequence for existing policies and the policy number being 1 more than the last live policy for new policies. This server has restricted access to the CEO, Academic Director and Programme Manager.

The format of policies in the College is standardised to promote consistency with the following table and subsequent headings mandatory:

Policy Title

Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) Chapter X (Refers to a specific Chapter of the QAM)	
Document Name	
Policy Document Number	
Version Reference	
Document Owner	
Roles with Aligned Responsibility	
Approved By	
Approval Date	
Date Policy Becomes Active	
Revision Cycle	
Revision History/Amalgamation History	
Additional Information	
References/ Supporting Documentation	

- **Policy Overview**
  - Summary of why it exists
- **Policy Statement**
  - Background and Context referencing relevant legislation as appropriate.
- **Roles and Responsibilities**
  - Who will implement the policy
- **Policy**
  - The policy itself.
- **Procedures and Forms**
  - Related procedures and forms…either detailed or referenced, as appropriate.

This order allows clarity and ease of navigation. Additional headings may be added as required. College documentation should be presented in Optima font size eleven at 1.5 line spacing. The template described in this policy should be always utilised and an editable copy is available from the Academic Director.

Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) Chapter 1	
Document Name	**Policy-on-Policy Policy**
Policy Document Number	**UPOL004**
Version Reference	**Rev.1**
Document Owner	**Academic Director**
Roles with Aligned Responsibility	**All staff**
Approved By	**Academic Council**
Approval Date	**2.3.2023**
Date Policy Becomes Active	**1.4.2023**
Revision Cycle	**Annually**
Revision History/Amalgamation History	**Revised for text errors post programme validation**
Additional Information	**N/A**
References/ Supporting Documentation	**UDOC000 UniHaven Quality Assurance Manual Rev 2** **Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers (2016)** **Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary Basis (2016)**