ACCRA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

FRAMEWORK FOR PREPARING POLICIES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES AND FORMS POLICY

CONTENTS

FRAMEWORK FOR PREPARING POLICIES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES AND FORMS

Short description	Framework for preparing Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Forms to ensure that institutional documents are consistent, clear and well communicated.
Relevant to	Officers responsible for preparing and approving documents.
Approved by	This Framework has been approved by The Governing Council.
Responsible officer	The Registrar
Responsible office	Registry
Date(s) modified	
Relevant Technical University documents	
Relevant legislation	
Key words	Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Forms

1. PURPOSE

The aim of this framework is to

1.1 Assist staff of Accra Technical University prepare Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Forms that are: written concisely in plain language; clearly expressed and can be clearly communicated to everyone; consistently formatted; easy to follow; easy to implement; up-to-date; and consistent with the Technical University Act and Statutes, as well as other statutory documents.

1.2 Enable staff and students to understand their responsibilities within the Technical University.

1.3 Enable the Technical University to be consistent in its approach to solving problems and making decisions.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This framework is a guide to all staff responsible for preparing or approving Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Forms.

2.2 These Guidelines do NOT apply to directives emanating from the Head of a Faculty, Department, Unit or other office to provide local guidance on the application of Technical University policies and procedures to staff solely in that area. Any directives from a Faculty, Department, Unit or other office must not be inconsistent with approved Technical University policies or procedures and, to the extent that this is the case, will be invalid.

3. TYPES OF DOCUMENTS

3.1 Policy

3.1.1 Policies set out principles that must be observed by staff and students in making decisions, participating in Technical University activities or performing functions related to the Technical University. Policies are implemented through procedures.

3.1.2 Governance policies must be approved by the Governing Council including policies and procedures with respect to:
The internal organisation of the Accra Technical University including the establishment, variation and supervision of academic divisions, Departments and faculties of that Technical University;

The overall educational mission and programmes;
The terms and conditions for the admission of students;
Institution of awards, fellowships and scholarship schemes;
Award of fellowships and other honorary titles to deserving persons;
Appointment of the Vice Chancellor, Lecturers and other persons to academic and administrative positions;

Management of the finances and fixed assets of this Technical University;
Consideration and approval of annual estimates of income and expenditure of the University; Discipline of Accra Technical University staff;
The implementation of the objects of the Technical University;

3.1.3 Operational policies must be approved by the Academic Board for any matter relating to the management of the Technical University (excluding those listed as governance areas).

3.1.4 Observance of policies is mandatory.

3.2 Procedures

3.2.1 Procedure set out the systematic steps that have to be executed in the same manner always in order to implement a policy.

3.2.2 Procedures to develop policy must emanate from the Academic Board.

3.2.3 Observance of procedures is mandatory.

3.3 Guidelines

3.3.1 Guidelines are detailed advice on best practices to follow in implementing existing policies and procedures. Guidelines may be developed by Heads of Faculties, Departments or Units and within their area of responsibility.

3.3.2 Guidelines give insight into things that should be considered carefully when taking decisions or performing functions required to implement policies and procedures. The observance of guidelines is mandatory.

3.4 Forms

Forms are templates developed to assist users to collate necessary information, or to guide users through relevant procedural steps, in order to comply with a policy and procedure. Where a policy or procedure authorises the creation of forms by a particular officer, or a form is required by a particular officer, use of the form is mandatory.

4. STATUS OF DOCUMENTS

4.1 Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Forms constitute a hierarchy of documents that inform and guide Technical University decision-making and action.

4.2 Within this hierarchy, Procedures, Guidelines and Forms define how the policies of the Technical University are to be implemented. Accordingly, all Procedures, Guidelines and Forms must be prepared with regard to the Technical University's approved strategies and policies.

4.3 On some occasions, however, a procedure may not have been established to deal with a particular situation confronted by the Technical University. In these cases, the principles set out in the policy should be sufficient to guide decision-making or action in the absence of a procedure or guidelines.

5. AVOIDING INCONSISTENCY

5.1 One of the main aims of developing policies, procedures, guidelines and forms is to ensure consistency in decision-making and problem-solving. When developing documents, it is essential that consideration is given to all existing policies, procedures, guidelines and forms to ensure that the approach proposed is consistent and does not contradict an existing policy.

6. STEPS FOR DEVELOPING POLICIES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES AND FORMS

6.1 Each policy shall be drafted in the format provided in (7) here-to (with such additions as may be appropriate to the context) and should identify The Issuing Authority (Academic Board or Governing Council), Responsible Officer for the policy, the Effective Date and date of the policy being superseded (if any), and date for next review. Each Policy also should include the following sections: a Policy Statement, Policy Purpose, Scope of Policy, Procedures for Implementation, Definitions (where applicable), and Related Policies (where applicable).

6.2 The following sets out the steps in developing a policy, procedure, guidelines or form.

(a) Set up an official file or use an existing file in case of a revision.

(b) Consult with relevant staff (and students) for inputs on the proposal.(c) Obtain the advice of internal and external experts, especially from the Technical University Solicitor on legal aspects of the proposal.

(d) Circulate a consultation draft of the document – when the document is ready, circulate a Consultation Draft of the document to the Technical University for comment. Allow a reasonable amount of time for comments to be supplied.

(e) Revise the document in the light of comments – make appropriate revisions to the document and finalize.

(f) Refer the Proposal to Academic Board – policies and procedures (except where the policy was initiated by Council for its own matters) must be referred to Academic Board to consider the organisational implications of the policy or procedure.

(g) In all cases, the Proposal shall be submitted using the cover sheet at Appendix 5, which explains the process used to develop the document and includes a draft Communication and Training Plan (where necessary), an outline of who was consulted, any required changes to delegations, and the reasons for the proposal.

(h) Approval – if the proposal is considered to be appropriate, then the document shall be submitted to Council for consideration.

(i) Communication and Training – when a document has been approved, a notice shall be placed notifying staff of the document and providing a summary of the key features. The document must also be referred to the Technical University Registrar for inclusion in the Technical University's Academic or Administration Manuals. Where a Communication and Training Plan has been developed, this shall be implemented to ensure staff (and students) understand and use the document properly.

(j) Compliance Review – where the document imposes significant new processes or responsibilities on staff or students, the responsible officer shall initiate a review of compliance with the document no more than six (6) months after its approval to obtain confirmation that measures have been implemented to conform with any new requirements. The outcomes of the review shall be reported to the body who approved the document.

(K) Triennial review – a review of all policies, procedures, guidelines and forms must be initiated by the responsible officer no more than three (3)

years after its first approval. Documents must be re-submit-ted to the appro-priate body for re-approval after the completion of the review.

7. FORMATTING STYLE

The following format must be used for policies, procedures and guidelines:

(a) Use Arial 11 font for the text and Arial 10 for tables.

(b) Justify the text

(c) Only subdivide if there are two (2) or more clauses or sub-clauses. Do not subdivide if there is only one clause or sub-clause.

(d) Use decimal numbering with indentation spaced at 1 cm or 1.25 cm intervals for the various levels of subdivision. E.g. clause 1 can be subdivid-ed into sub-clauses 1.1, 1.2, etc., and sub-clause 1.1 can be sub-divided into sub-clauses 1.1.1, 1.1.2, etc.).

(e) Try to limit decimal numbering to three (30 subdivision levels (e.g. 1.1.1), if possible, but no more than four (4) levels (e.g. 1.1.1.1). If further subdivisions are needed, then use bullet points.

(f) Use (a), (b), (c), etc. for a list of items. If you want to subdivide items within a list, then use bullet points, separated by single or double line spaces.

(g) Insert a double line space between each clause, sub-clause and listed item.

(h) Type major headings in bold capital letters. Type minor headings in bold, lower case letters.

(i) Use appendices to present information that would otherwise be difficult to integrate into the policy or procedure. They are written as part of the doc-ument. NOTE: Attachments are separate documents that have been added to the policy or procedure because of their relevance. Number each appen-dix or attachment and place it on a new page.

(j) Insert a footer with the document name, page number, version num-ber and date in Arial 9 (e.g. copy and paste the footer from the templates). Check that the automatic page number is also in Arial 9.

(k) Record the version details and document history (i.e. amendment details) for each document. A. policy, procedure, guidelines and form may have different version and amendment details.

8. VERSION CONTROL

10.1 Version numbering consists of a number followed by a point and another number (e.g. 1.0).

10.2 The number to the left of the point describes the original version and the number of major amendments from the time of issue. Major amendments for the purposes of version numbering are approved changes to the content of a policy, procedure or guidelines.

10.3 The number to the right of the point describes the number of minor amendments from the time of issue or from the last amendment. Minor amendments are administrative changes resulting from changes to names of departments, changes to telephone numbers, or changes to expression or construction of sentences, as long as the intent of the content does not alter.

10.4 Draft versions are numbered 0.1, 0.2, etc. and the word "draft" is added (e.g. title, footer or watermark). When approved, the version number becomes 1.0; the first minor amendment is 1.1; and the first major amendment is 2.0.

10.5 If a document is rescinded and replaced by a new version, then the version numbering starts afresh from version 1.0.

9. SECTIONS

Policy documents shall be divided into the following sections.

Cover Page
Table of Contents
Summary Details Table

SECTION ONE
Definition of Terms

SECTION TWO
Policy
Policy Statement
Purpose
Scope
Principles

SECTION THREE
Procedures

SECTION FOUR
Guidelines

SECTION FIVE
Forms and Templates

REFERENCES
APPENDICES
TABLE OF AMENDMENTS

REFERENCES

Roberts, J. 1996, "Policy and Planning Definitions", The Craft of Managing, 2nd edn, Council of Intellectual Disability Agencies (Vic) Inc, Nunawading, Vic.

Tipper, D. 1995, Practical Policy Making: A Guide to Policy Development for Community Organisations, Vol. 1, Local Community Service Association and ITRAC Wyong Shire Inc., Surry Hills, Sydney.

APPENDICES

1. Policy Template

2. Procedure Template

3. Guideline Template

4. Form Template

5. Approval Cover Sheet

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS

VERSION NUMBER	DATE	SHORT DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENT