

University of Law Policy Management Protocol

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The University of Law's Policy Management Protocol sits within the University's Quality and Standards Code. This suite of policy documents is designed to safeguard the academic standards of the University and to assure the quality of learning opportunities leading to the University's award. This protocol should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the University's Quality and Standards Code.

2. Scope and Purpose

This protocol sets out the responsibilities and processes for the management of the University's policy documents which underpins its approach to academic quality assurance. It aims to ensure that these documents are developed, approved, and maintained in a consistent and effective manner with appropriate consultation and accountability.

- 2.2 The primary audience for this protocol is Document Leads and may be published on the University's website: www.law.ac.uk/policies.

3. Key Responsibilities

- 3.1. **Academic Board** is responsible for approving academic regulations and policies at their inception as well as further amendments, from time to time, and in line with its Terms of Reference.
- 3.2. **Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC)** has oversight for keeping under review the University's policies relating to setting and maintaining academic standards, ensuring that they are current and operating effectively. It will consider and recommend amendments for approval by Academic Board, in line with its Terms of Reference, and includes responsibility for this Policy Management Protocol. Currently, this is managed through the ASQC Academic Regulation & Policy Sub-Committee.
- 3.3. **Other Academic Board Committees** will have responsibility for considering and recommending amendments to policies and related documents in line with the relevant Committee Terms of Reference, including routine review of policies within the scope of these terms. Current Academic Board Committees are listed under Appendix 2.
- 3.4. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Executive Group** will receive and consider Equality Impact Assessments for the University's policies. It will monitor progress of any actions identified to mitigate or remove negative impact of University policy on people with protected characteristics.
- 3.5. **Academic Registry** (Academic.Registry@law.ac.uk) will oversee the maintenance and publication of the series of documents outlined in this protocol. It will co-ordinate the routine review of policies and make reports to the Academic Standards and Quality Committee on the annual review cycle

for this series of documents.

- 3.6. **Document Leads** will develop, maintain, and review regulations, policies, and procedures in line with this protocol. They will consider University and statutory requirements and sector best practice. They are also responsible for developing additional guidance and other supporting documents as necessary.

4. Definitions

- 4.1. For the purposes of this Protocol, the following definitions will be encapsulated into the term “Policy Document” used throughout this Protocol.
- 4.2. Regulations (what and why – primarily programme delivery)
Regulations detail the University’s overall principles for academic governance, primarily in relation to programmes. Regulations should normally be written at a strategic, institutional level, which may have some reference to operational matters and will be informed by external reference points for the maintenance of standards. Regulations must be adhered to in order to ensure compliance with internal and external obligations of the University in all its functions. It is anticipated that all University Regulations are published on the University’s website, unless the Document Lead expresses otherwise.
- 4.3. Policy (what and why)
Policies are the framework the University adopts to deal with a particular matter or theme. They are statements of principle to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes; they may be developed to comply with internal or external requirements. Policies are normally written at a strategic, institutional level and will be informed by external reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and statutory requirements, and internal reference points for alignment with institutional strategic priorities. Policies must be adhered to ensure and promote best practice by the University in all its functions. It is anticipated that all University Policies are published on the University’s website, unless the Document Lead expresses otherwise.
- 4.4. Protocol (how)
A protocol details the procedures or system of rules to be following in defined circumstances and typically, the implementation of a regulation and/or policy. They are detailed documents which primarily focus on operational matters. Protocols should be followed but may be adjusted for application. Where this is the case, the scope of adjustment and the authority for approving adjustments must be detailed in the protocol. It is anticipated that all University Protocols are not published on the University’s website, but rather the internal Sharepoint site for policies, unless the Document Lead expresses otherwise.
- 4.5. Statement of Practice (how and affirmation of practice)
A statement which outlines the University’s position on a policy or service area, where neither a policy nor protocol are appropriate, which is usually operationally focused. It permits room for adaptation in practice and/or application, and, for example, to specific student groups or cohorts. It is

anticipated that all University Statements of Practice are published on the University's website, unless the Document Lead expresses otherwise.

- 4.6. Guidelines (best practice examples)
Guidelines or guidance notes provide operational details to support application of regulations, policies, and protocols. Typically, they draw on good practice examples and facilitates operational alignment between internal teams or systems. It is anticipated that all University Guidelines are not published on the University's website, but rather the internal Sharepoint site for policies, unless the Document Lead expresses otherwise.

5. Policy Document Development, Approval and Review

- 5.1. The need for a new policy document, or to revise existing policy documents, will be determined by the appropriate Document Lead in consultation with Academic Registry in the first instance.
- 5.2. The expected consultative process for the development and review of policy documents will vary depending on the policy document but must consider input from relevant stakeholders and University committees, as well as compliance with relevant laws and regulatory requirements, including those of the PSRBs.
- 5.3. All new, and revised policy documents must adhere to the review process as outlined in Appendix 1, and must come before the ASQC Academic Regulation & Policy Sub-Committee in the first instance for advice and guidance
- 5.4. All policy documents must be reviewed at least every three years. Academic Registry will maintain a rolling schedule for the review of policy documents. Academic Standards and Quality Committee (through the Academic Regulation & Policy Sub-Committee) will have oversight of review activities and will provide a report on this theme to Academic Board periodically.
- 5.5. All new University policy documents and revisions with substantive changes to existing policy documents and all policies that are to be decommissioned require approval of the Academic Board.
- 5.6. All policy documents that have been reviewed but do not require any substantive change require the agreement of Academic Standards and Quality Committee, or other relevant Academic Board Committee with operational oversight for the policy area.
- 5.7. In situations where policy documents must be established in a time that is too short for the regular review and approval process to be completed, expedited written approval may be sought from the Chair of the University's Academic Board. In this instance, all policy documents must go through the standard approval process at the earliest opportunity. Interim policies can only be

approved for a fixed time, which shall normally be for a maximum of 12 months and may not be renewed based on a further interim measure.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1. This section is currently under development.

7. Publication and Dissemination of Policy Documents

7.1. Once approved, all policy documents will be added to the University's Sharepoint site for policies and University's Policies webpage. The Document Lead must inform Academic Registry (Academic.Registry@law.ac.uk) if the policy document is to be published for an external audience (please also see the Definitions section above for further guidance).

7.2. All published copies on the University's Sharepoint site for policies by Academic Registry are deemed as the current version and supersede any other versions.

7.3. Document Leads are responsible for ensuring that those affected by their policy document are aware of any alterations to their policies and protocols and must provide any training where necessary.

7.4. Academic Registry will maintain an archive of policy documents and shall keep records of alterations that have been made to policy documents.

8. Reference Points for this Protocol

8.1. External reference points

- [Securing Student Success; regulatory framework for higher education in England](#), Office for Students (OfS) 2017
- [The Higher Education Code of Governance](#), Committee of University Chairs (CUC), 2020
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Policy Document Approval Process

Appendix 2 – List of Academic Board Committees

Version history:

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
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V1.0	Senior Quality Officer and Head of Academic Partnership Governance	Initial drafting and Protocol Approval	August 2021
V1.1	Quality Assurance Manager	Change of reference from VLE to Sharepoint site for polices; inclusion of the ASQC Sub-Committee and amended definitions section in relation to policy publication.	June 2022

Appendix 1 – Policy Document Approval Process

Stage 0 – Policy Proposal

- A policy idea is proposed at ASQC.
- ASQC (through the Academic Regulation and Policy Sub-Committee) shall consider the proposal and can then approve the proposal for the policy.
- A project working group (PWG) is then established to move to Stage 1 – drafting.

Stage 1 – Drafting

- The PWG drafts the policy document, ensuring all adherence to relevant sector benchmarks.
- Student(s) should be involved at the drafting stage where possible, as part of the PWG, to ensure policy cocreation.
- An Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken as part of the drafting stage. The Equality Impact Assessment is currently being developed and will be added to this Protocol in due course.

Stage 2 – Consultation

- The draft policy is required to be proposed to AEC and ASQC for feedback before finalising for the approval stage.
- Both AEC and ASQC should give approval before the Consultation stage can be complete.

Stage 3 – Approval

- All policies require the approval of the ASQC Academic Regulation and Policy Sub-Committee before they can be submitted to the University's Academic Board for final approval.

Stage 4 – Publication

- Once Academic Board provides approval, the Policy document requires publication on the University's policies webpage and/or Sharepoint site for policies.
- The Document Lead is responsible for ensuring any training is delivered on the new, or updates to the existing, policy document.

Appendix 2 – List of Academic Board Committees



