The Glasgow School of Art

Publication and review of policies – guidance notes

1. Introduction

This document sets out some key principles and advice on publishing and reviewing policies at the Glasgow School of Art.
It also includes a policy cover sheet template (**Appendix 1**), as well as a template for Heads of Department to record the policies that are in place at the GSA (**Appendix 2**), including details such as date of approval, the approval route, and dates of the policy's last and next reviews.

2. Policy – some definitions

Policies "guide the way work is done in the organisation"[1], and can be defined as a statement of intent. A policy differs from other published documents, such as a briefing paper, in that it sets "the rules, framework or standards for the operation of the organisation"[2], and should be adhered to, rather than being for information only. A policy might then be *implemented* via a procedure or protocol.

3. GSA policy structure and contents

A **policy cover sheet template** (Appendix 1) has been created to enable documents to be recognisable as approved GSA policies, as well as ensuring that key details are included in all GSA policies. The cover sheet includes space to record details about the policy, such as its date of approval, the approving body, the department responsible for creating and maintaining the policy, review dates, EIA (Equality Impact Assessment) date, and details of any related policies and documents.

4. Policy approval and publishing

Before publishing a policy, several steps are needed:
- an EIA (Equality Impact Assessment) needs to be undertaken (and evidenced) as part of the development of a policy, as well as when it is reviewed (please see Section 6. "References and useful links" for further information)
- identify the most appropriate committee, group or individual (e.g. Academic Council, Executive Group, Board of Governors , Head or Director of Area) to approve the final draft of the policy – please discuss this with your manager
- agree a date for the policy to be reviewed – every policy should be reviewed every three years, and Heads of Department should consider the review schedule for their department / area as a whole every year (please refer to Appendix 2)
- publish the policy via the GSA website (or the VLE where appropriate), and communicate the policy to all staff / students affected by the policy (e.g. by circulating an email)

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[1] https://wiki.qut.edu.au/display/CPNS/Keeping+Records
[2] ibid

5. Undertaking a policy review

In order for a policy to remain useful and up-to-date, it should be reviewed periodically, every two years for example. A review date can be agreed and set at the time the policy is approved (see above).

A differentiation should be made between **minor changes and amendments** to a policy (such as updating contact details or web links, clarifying wording within a sentence or paragraph, or revising formatting), and a **major policy revision**, where substantive changes are made to the policy (such as adding new requirements and responsibilities, or making significant changes to the document's content). Any amendments should be subject to equality consideration and impact assessment. A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) needs to be undertaken (and evidenced) as part of a major policy review.

If a review results in **major** changes being made to a policy, the original approval route should be followed, as well as considering whether other bodies need to be involved. Sometimes a policy may need to be replaced with a new one, and this can be noted in the "Policy details" section of the GSA policy cover sheet, under the "Supersedes" heading.

A **Policy Publication and Review Schedule template** (Appendix 2) has been created for Heads of Departments and areas to record the policies that are in place, their status, and the schedule for reviews, and to provide a GSA-wide overview.

6. References and useful links

GSA Guidance for Assessing Equality Impact
http://www.gsa.ac.uk/media/1136708/GSA-Guidance-for-Assessing-Equality-Impact-July-2015.pdf

Queensland University of Technology: "Tips for writing policy"
https://wiki.qut.edu.au/display/CPNS/Keeping+Records

University of St Andrews: "Records management guidance – version control"
https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/business-improvements/recordsmanagement/documents/Version%20Control.pdf

University of South Dakota: "New policies and revisions"
http://www.usd.edu/policies/new-policies-and-revisions

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XXXXXX *[insert TITLE of policy]*

POLICY DETAILS:

Date of approval	
Approving body	
Supersedes	
Date of EIA	
Date of next review	*See departmental schedule*
Author	
Responsible Executive Group area	
Related policies and documents	
Benchmarking	

Appendix 2

GSA Policy Publication and Review Schedule template

Area: …………………………………………………………………………………

Policy title	Location *(e.g. VLE, or GSA web page address *)*	Date of approval	Approving bodies *(e.g. Academic Council; Executive Group; Board of Governors; Head or Director of Area; HR Committee)*	Implementation date	Supersedes	Date of EIA summary report approval (Equality Impact Assessment)	Date of last review	Date of next review	Responsibility (Department and Executive Group area)

* e.g.: http://www.gsa.ac.uk/about-gsa/key-information/institutional-policies/   or http://www.gsa.ac.uk/about-gsa/key-information/occupational-health-and-safety/ or
http://www.gsa.ac.uk/about-gsa/our-structure/academic-services/academic-policies/