**Best Practices**

**Stage 3 - Consultation**

**Policy Cycle:**

Stage 1: Predevelopment - Identify-Conduct Analysis-Approval to Proceed

Stage 2: Drafting / Writing

**Stage 3: Consultation**

Stage 4: Document Approval – Approval Authority action required

Stage 5: Publication

Stage 6: Implementation and Communication

Stage 7: Evaluation and Review

**INTRODUCTION**

Consultation is a key to successful policy development. During consultation, content experts and frontline staff input their knowledge from an operational perspective, experts can streamline the procedure and senior Executives can input their strategic overview.

Inadequate consultation can result in poor policy that cannot be effectively implemented, or in deliberate or inadvertent non-compliance.

**BENEFITS OF CONSULTATION**

* Policy documents will be aligned as far as possible with strategic direction, legislative / regulatory requirements, operational practicalities
* Approval is likely to proceed more smoothly if the Policy Writer / Implementation Lead can demonstrate that there has been thorough consultation and that operational matters have been identified and addressed.
* Engagement with policy generally and respect for policy in the institution will be increased.

**CONSULTATION ESSENTIALS**

* a consultation strategy showing the degree of consultation that is appropriate and the intended outcome of the consultation, given that some policy issues require more consultation and engagement than others
* Consult broadly with individuals and groups who are interested or active in advancing equity, diversity and inclusion and can consult with individuals from those groups (e.g. IRG, FRG and Human Resources and Wellness Groups).
* Ensure processes address power differentials, such as when student makes a complaint about an instructor or an employee disagrees with the decision of their manager or supervisor. For example, provide for a third party decision maker or advisor role to be involved in the process.
* Obtain demographic data to be informed about how specific policies and procedures may have a disproportionate impact on some groups
* include a wide variety of key contacts, interest groups, learner representatives, coordinators, content experts, senior executive and advisory committees, representatives from committees that have a role in approving them, policy communities
* provide a variety of methods to gather comments and concerns
* acknowledge the non-negotiables in the consultation process: be honest with participants about what they can and cannot influence
* do not let the consultation process be side-tracked or hijacked by personal agendas or irrelevant responses
* provide feedback to stakeholders on how their comments have been addressed
* distribute documents in advance to allow people to share information with colleagues and managers
* provide a reasonable period of consultation, generally of no less than 20 working days
* maintain good record management procedures to record input and responses and the decision-making processes
* report back to the delegated approval authority or committee on the consultation

**CONSULTATION METHODS**

* through the committee processes
* videoconference, teleconference, WebEx
* surveys, focus groups, special interest networks (eg persons with disabilities, health and safety, diversity, employment related policy matters, portfolio or unit specific)
* a dedicated web page / Policy and Procedures main page has a spot for Notices
* See Open for Consultation notice
* Executive Group and/or Management Group

**NEXT STEPS**

When the consultation has been completed relevant feedback incorporated:

1. finalise the Implementation and Communication *Plan* ensuring that it:

• Identifies all issues that need to be addressed for an effective implementation

• identifies tasks and timelines to be completed to address each of those issues

• assigns responsibility to position titles or groups for those tasks

• identifies resources needed to implement the policy document

1. complete the **Briefing Template** and submit it together with the drafted document(s) to the Responsible Approval Authority and the Corporate Secretary for final review.

Open for Consultation Notice Sample

Brief:

Who presenting and why

“name of document” is now open for consultation

Access draft of X here LINK TO WORK OF SURVEY

Access by emailing governance@nosm.ca to obtain a copy

Any written comments or feedback should be provided via email to:

ADDRESS OR PERSON RECEIVING COMMENTS

Background:

example

Discussion of the ‘Draft WHAT TO WEAR Policy’ which was initially scheduled for the September 2019 meeting of Academic Council has been held over until the meeting of 22 October 2019 to allow for a more broad, deep and systematic consultation with stakeholders and special interest groups. Staff, faculty and learners are welcome to continue providing feedback by email.