



Royal College of Art

Postgraduate Art & Design

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Policy Owner

College Secretary

Policy Lead

Governance Officer

Lead Contact information

Governance@rca.ac.uk

Approved by: SMT

Next review date: (2024 or as required)

Related information

Freedom of Information Policy and College Publication Scheme.

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy framework is to ensure that a consistent framework and format is applied to all policies at the College.

This policy framework also draws a distinction between policy and supporting documents and defines the terms for clarity. It sets out areas of responsibility relating to policies as well as the process for creation, approval, review, and revision of policies and supporting documents.

This framework aims to ensure that College policies and guidance are effective in enhancing operational efficiency, easy to access and understand, are subject to regular checks to ensure they remain fit for purpose, that they support compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and are consistent with our values as an organisation.

Policy Statement

This policy framework aims to ensure clear, consistent information is available to all College stakeholders on our policy position and supports a policy structure which articulates our values as an organisation.

Scope

This framework applies to the creation and maintenance of all policies at the College and should be read and understood by all Policy Owners and Policy Leads in the creation, review and implementation of College policies.

Responsibilities

The Governance Officer is responsible for oversight of policies across the College and for providing support and guidance to those tasked with drafting or amending policies. The Governance Officer is responsible for the creation and amendment of the approved College Policy Template and for management of a central College Policy project team.

Directors of Professional Services Divisions are responsible for ensuring that policies which fall within the remit of their Departments are assigned a Lead Contact and are ultimately responsible for the policy. The Lead Contact may also be the Policy Owner.

The Lead Contact is the named role responsible for the development and regular review (including revision and update, where required) of any given policy.

The Policy Owner and Lead Contact are responsible for ensuring that the necessary supporting documents and processes are in place to sit alongside the policy.

The Lead Contact is responsible for liaising with the Governance Officer to ensure that new or amended policies are published on the website following formal approval. The Lead Contact will be responsible for the maintenance of intranet pages relating to policy. Where a policy is available on both the intranet and website, a link from the intranet to the website should be provided to avoid duplication.

The Lead Contact or Policy Owner is responsible for raising staff awareness of their area's policies (in conjunction with the Communications team), and for facilitating and arranging the appropriate training of staff (where required).

Definitions

A policy is a high level statement of guiding principles or set of ideas adopted by a group of people or an organisation which is used as the basis for taking actions or decision making in relation to a specific topic or area.

A 'College Policy' refers to a policy that applies broadly across the College, reflects the College's values, and articulates expectations and requirements.. College Policies are required when there is a need to make clear obligations in relation to legislative or regulatory requirements, to formalise agreed College values or aims, and/or to communicate expected behaviours throughout the institution. These are often created upon instruction from the College's Executive Group or Senior Management Team.

A 'Departmental Level Policy' is an operational policy specific to a Department, School, or Programme (e.g. dress code relating to research or technical areas) and should be consistent with College Policy.

'Supporting documents' are related guidance and procedural documents that refer to specific processes and practices which enable adherence to the policy. These are living documents that can be updated as systems and processes change. Standalone guidance and procedural documents may also exist separately and be unrelated to any policy.

Policy format, processes and template

College policies should ensure consistency of approach throughout the institution. Each policy must follow the format of the agreed College Policy Template. They should be written in clear, accessible, and straightforward language, avoiding unnecessary complexity. Policy templates and guidance is available from governance@rca.ac.uk and is published on the intranet.

Policies should generally not include the specifics of internal processes or procedures, as these should be detailed in the supporting documents. Any supporting documents or forms should be linked to the policy.

Development, Approval and Dissemination

Departmental Level policies can be initiated locally by individual teams or business areas, Schools, or Professional Services Divisions.

For support in relation to the drafting of policies, use of the policy template, or the application of this policy, Policy Owners and/or Lead Contacts should engage with the Governance Officer.

Policies must be approved through the appropriate Group(s) and/or Committee(s) at the College; areas of policy responsibility and approving Committees are outlined in the College's Policy Map, available from governance@rca.ac.uk.

College policies review and collaboration

All College policies will be managed, reviewed and updated on the central College Policies Basecamp project. This will allow all Policy Owners and Policy Leads access to a shared space to collaborate on policy updates centrally coordinated by governance. Policies will be stored and reviewed in collaborative working document format, in order to ensure a 'single source of truth' approach to review and publication.

Review and Revision

Policies should normally have a default review date that is two years from the date of approval or last revision, unless a shorter or longer review timeframe is customary or required for any other reason (e.g. changes to legislation).

Policies should also be reviewed by Policy Owners and Policy Leads on an ad-hoc basis, to ensure they are still fit for purpose, should there be any changes or updates to related legislation or statutory requirements before the next scheduled review date.

Where changes are required to policies following review, these must be approved through the same appropriate Group(s) and/or Committee(s) that the original policy was approved by.

Supporting documents should be updated as required, whenever there are changes to processes and procedures related to the policy, and do not need to follow the same review and approval processes as policies themselves.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

An EIA must be carried out on all new and existing policies by the policy owner to ensure that the proposed policy does not have an inadvertent negative impact on individuals by virtue of them belonging to a protected group under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment,

marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and additionally Social Economic background). The College has a legal duty to mitigate, remove or reduce the negative impact of its policies, processes and procedures where they are identified to ensure that we do not discriminate unlawfully through any changes being made. EIAs are an important component in supporting the College's compliance with the equality legislation; it is essential to ensure that they are fair, transparent, lawful and consistently applied. They are a recognised tool for identifying any potential impacts or steps to advance equality and foster good relations, when developing or reviewing policies.

Governance Team

September 2022