Policy Framework

Scope

This Policy Framework applies to Holmes Institute Pty Ltd (Holmes) and to all staff and Holmes governance bodies involved in the development, review and management of policy.

Purpose

The Policy Framework:
- sets the standards for the development and review of policy and policy related documents at Holmes, and
- outlines the principles to be considered in the development, review and management of Holmes policy and policy related documents.

Definitions

Terms and definitions identified below are specific to this policy and are critical to its effectiveness:

Academic policy high level statements that establish the principles and minimum set of academic standards that apply in the provision of education to Holmes students. Academic policy includes but is not limited to admissions; assessment; academic integrity and conduct, progression and recognition of prior learning policies.

Academic procedures and guidelines: outline the processes to be followed in a particular academic activity at Holmes. Procedures and guidelines are more detailed and technical in nature and typically assist staff members and other stakeholders to understand how an activity is undertaken at Holmes including factors that are relevant to making particular decisions.

Amendment types:

- **Administrative amendment** is editorial in nature and does not change the substance of a policy.
- **Consequential amendment** is a change made to bring a policy into conformity with a regulatory requirement, or where a policy needs to be updated due to changes to another, approved policy. This change must not change the substance of the policy. Where the change is significant, this makes the change a substantive amendment.
- **Substantive amendments** require approval/ re-approval of the initial approving body unless there is a delegation of authority permitting a lower body to handle the matter e.g. the Academic Board's oversight of academic policy.

Approval body/ authority is the committee or position with authority (or delegated authority) to approve a policy or policy related document.

Form is an administrative template used to seek information from relevant stakeholders to enable a decision on a specific matter.

Implementation Officer is the designated staff member responsible for operationalising a policy and/or policy related document. The Implementation Officer is the primary contact for a policy or policy related document and is responsible for ensuring policy currency and compliance. Specific responsibilities of the Implementation Officer are listed in the Policy Framework Procedures.

Policy outlines the overriding/ strategic principles and standards for a particular area. E.g. refund or assessment standards and expectations. Policy is sometimes interchangeably referred to as Codes, Frameworks or Charters. Policy is not generally subject to regular change and is often supported by Procedures and/ or Guidelines.

Policy related documents include procedures, guidelines, forms and any other document that supports implementation of a policy.

Procedures are statements of the specific responsibilities and actions that must be taken in implementing a particular activity. Procedures are typically instructive and outline workflows.

Guidelines are statements that recommend how specific actions should be undertaken. Guidelines aims to streamline how things are done including considerations to be taken into account in doing something. A guideline is not binding and are not enforced.

Responsible Officer is the most senior officer with whom the policy matter most clearly resides. The Responsible Officer is generally a Senior Management Group member given overarching responsibility for the policy or policy related document and is accountable together with the Implementation Officer for ensuring compliance.

The Policy Framework

The hierarchy of policies and policy related documents at Holmes is as follows:
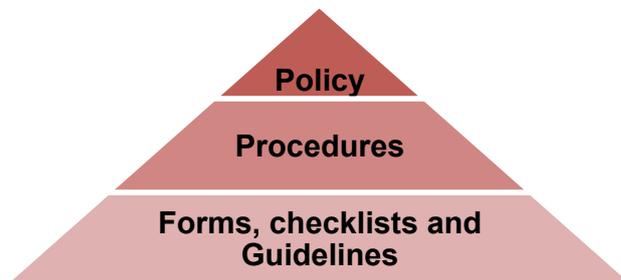
Where two documents in the hierarchy are in conflict, the document higher in the hierarchy takes precedence.

Where a policy is not entirely an academic policy, its category and the relevant approval authority will be determined through consultation amongst members of Holmes Senior Management Group.

Where a form is attached to and therefore forms part of a policy, procedure or guidelines, it is subject to the same level of approval and review processes as the higher level document.

Governance principles

Policy and policy related documents are shaped by and comply with:
*   relevant legislation and regulations
*   national standards and community expectations.

Policy standards

*   The Governing Council approves all corporate policy.
*   The Governing Council delegates authority for academic policy development, review and approval to the Academic Board who approve all academic policy.
*   The Senior Management Group is responsible for approving and maintaining policy related documents in key business areas so long as the Governing Council or Academic Board have not chosen to maintain overall approval responsibilities for the activity and where the proposed governance instruments are consistent with approved policy.
*   Policy and policy related documents should:

- be drafted, approved, implemented and reviewed as outlined in the Policy Framework Procedures.
- identify the approval authority and Implementation Officer.
- be clear and able to be implemented.
- appropriately communicated to stakeholders and complied with.
- be reviewed every three years. Early review can be initiated at the discretion of the Implementation Officer and will occur where there is a need to align policy with:
  - legislative or regulatory requirement or
  - changes in business processes and/ or operational needs.

Approval authorities and accountabilities

Approval authorities and accountabilities under this policy are as follows:

- *Governing Council* - approval of new corporate policy; substantive amendments to corporate policy and rescission of corporate policies and any corporate policy related documents appended to a policy.
- *Academic Board* – approval of new academic policy; substantive amendments to academic policy and rescission of academic policies and any academic policy related documents appended to a policy.
- *Senior Management Group* – approval of procedures, guidelines and forms consistent with policy.
- *Dean (Governance & Accreditation)* – centrally manages policy and supports policy related documentation review, development and management processes in consultation with Implementation Officers and the Governing Council and Academic Board.
- *Executive Director* – approval of administrative and consequential amendments to policy.

Version Control and accountable officers

It is the joint responsibility of the Implementation Officer and Responsible Officer to ensure compliance with this policy.

Responsible Officer	Executive Director			
Implementation Officer	Dean (Governance & Accreditation)			
Review Date	November 2021			
Approved by				
Holmes Governing Council				
Version	**Authored by**	**Brief Description of the changes**	**Date Approved**	**Effective Date**
1.0	Dean (Governance & Accreditation)	New Policy	16 November 2018	30 November 2018