Policies & Procedure – Drafting, Approving, Filing & Reviewing

Procedure Reference:		G49	
Related Policy:		N/A	
Effective date:	May 2019	Review date:	May 2022
Approved by SLT:		September 2020	
Owner:	Victoria Knox	Job Title:	Director of People & Organisational Development
To be issued to:		ET SLT Policy & Procedure Review Group Area Managers	
Method of Delivery:		Email Procedure	

Version Control

Date	Owner	Version	Reason for Change
Sep 2020	Victoria Knox	V3.0	Cyclical review
			Transfer to new template

Summary of Changes

Section	Change
2.4	Policies & Procedures now approved through the Policy & Procedure Working group
All	Updated Policy & Procedure Templates to be used
Appendix 1	Flow chart added to demonstrate approval and publishing process which indicates and clarifies responsibilities across the organisation

Policies & Procedures – Drafting, Approving, Filing & Reviewing

Contents

1.0 Introduction

This procedure describes ARKs process for:

1. Drafting new or revised policies and procedures;
2. Approving new or revised policies and procedures;
3. Removal of policies and procedures;
4. Merger of policies and procedures;
5. Formatting new or revised policies and procedures;
6. Agreeing circulation/implementation across Ark;
7. Saving new or revised documents in the appropriate folder, and ensuring that previous versions are archived;
8. Ensuring that reviews of policies and procedures are carried out when they are due.

See Appendix 1 for the flowchart that demonstrates the full process.

2.0 Responsibilities

2.1 Board of Management

The Board of Management have a governance responsibility and will "approve policies, other than those remitted to a Sub-Committee, ensure that these are reviewed, updated and amended as necessary on a regular basis and monitor compliance with specified policies through the receipt of regular reports".

2.2 Chief Executive, Exec or Senior Leadership Team

The Chief Executive, Exec Team (ET) Member or Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Member is responsible for producing new, revised, deleted or merged policies or procedures covering their area of responsibility. The task of drafting a particular document may be delegated to a Manager, other ARK employee, or staff group where appropriate.

Each policy & procedure owner is responsible for monitoring the master index to ensure policies & procedures within their area of responsibility are reviewed and approved according to the governance schedule.

2.3 Author

Where a policy or procedure relates to activities in more than one department, the author responsible for drafting or reviewing will ensure that colleagues in the relevant department(s) are consulted during the drafting process and seek input from the Policy & Procedure Review Group (P&PRG), if appropriate. The author is responsible for following

the agreed process as detailed in this procedure. The author is responsible for ensuring that new or updated policies and procedures have been rolled out to the relevant staff as per the policy cover sheet.

2.4 Policy & Procedure Review Group

The Policy & Procedure Review Group (P&PRG) is responsible for:

1. Reviewing, documenting and sign off P&P approval process
2. Update of this procedure - G49
3. Define and agree responsibilities of SLT members relating to drafting policies and procedures
4. Define and agree responsibilities of SLT members relating to implementing policies and procedures to ensure that P&Ps are distributed and monitored effectively
5. Review, update and agree P&P templates and guidance
6. Monitor and update P&P timetable to ensure that reviews are planned and in line with the agreed Ark cycle (3 yearly)
7. Scrutinise, comment on and approve Ark P&Ps to be issued to the Board of Management for final sign off
8. Ensure P&Ps are developed and updated using a consistent approach and in line with the ARK framework
9. Ensure that all ARK P&Ps are informed by legislation, best practice and with appropriate stakeholder input where required
10. Ensure that all P&Ps have been through an appropriate consultation process
11. Design and develop training requirements for each P&P
12. Ensure that where necessary, Equality Impact Assessments & Data Protection Impact Assessments have been completed
13. Invite P&P authors to attend P&PRG meetings to discuss and agree content
14. Invite subject matter experts to attend P&PRG meetings to discuss and agree content
15. Ensure P&P cover sheets are completed consistently and in line with requirements as set by the Board of Management
16. Ensure the P&P folder is maintained and is accurate at all times

2.5 Personal Assistant to the Executive Team

Storage of the policies & be maintained by the Personal Assistant (PA) to the Executive Team. All documents will be saved on a 'read-only' basis so that no unauthorised changes can be made to the version in the master folder. The PA to the Executive Team will also

ensure that an efficient administration process is followed as laid out in the process chart – see Appendix 1.

3.0 Policy & Procedure Format

Policies and procedures will be produced in the standard format as agreed by the Board of Management. The standard template must be used and all sections completed as appropriate.

Guidance for completion and standard templates are stored in the Policy & Procedure Guidelines and Templates Folder on the General Drive. Listed here are:

1. Policy Guidance
2. Policy Cover Sheet
3. Policy Template
4. Procedure Cover Sheet
5. Procedure Template

4.0 Policy & Procedure Approval

4.1 Policy Review/New Policies/Deleted or Merged Policies

Following the creation of a new policy, update of an existing policy, deletion or merger of policies this will be reviewed by the person responsible for presenting the policy to the P&PRG before it is submitted. This will always be a member of the ET or SLT.

Following their assessment and once they have confirmed that the contents and format etc. are satisfactory, this will be issued for approval in two stages.

Stage 1 – Policy & Procedure Review Group Approval

1. Author to send to ET/SLT member along with a completed cover sheet. Where the policy has been updated, changes should be tracked;
2. ET/SLT member to review, and once satisfied;
3. Save in the P&PRG folder at least 2 weeks in advance of the P&PRG meeting;
4. ET/SLT member to email P&PRG to inform that a policy has been added for approval;
5. ET/SLT member to invite any other manager involved in the development or update of the Policy to the P&PRG meeting where the policy will be discussed;
6. Policy to be discussed and approved at next available P&PRG;
7. PA to the Exec Team to update the policy master index.

Should the policy not be approved by the P&PRG this will be returned to the author by the ET/SLT member with comments for amendment and the process will be repeated. If the author is present at the P&PRG Meeting they will be given the feedback verbally.

Stage 2 – Board Approval

Once the P&PRG has reviewed and approved the changes to the policy, the Board of Management/Finance Sub-Committee will receive a copy of the policy cover sheet as part of the normal process for issue of Board papers, at least one week before the meeting. This should provide a summary of the changes for the Board to review. The ET member responsible will present the policy to the Board/Sub for approval.

Policies that are updated out with the non-cyclical review, for example, Organisational Development policies that are amended on an annual basis to reflect legislative changes to rates, will also only require a cover sheet to be issued to the Board of Management.

1. PA to Exec Team to save cover sheet in the Board/Sub folder once approved by P&PRG;
2. PA to Exec Team to add policy to next agenda for approval;
3. PA to inform ET/SLT member that the policy has been approved;
4. ET/SLT/PA to Exec Team will follow Filing process – see section 5.0.

Should the policy not be approved by the Board/Sub this will be returned to the ET/SLT member by the PA to the Exec Team with comments for amendment and the process will be repeated.

4.2 Board/Sub Approvals

Finance Sub will approve all Finance, Housing & Maintenance Policies.

Board of Management will approve all other policies.

Unite will approve OD policies that impact on staff terms & conditions of employment. Should Unite object to policy changes, the approval process will be repeated.

4.3 Procedure Review/New Procedures

Following the creation of a new procedure, update of an existing procedure, deletion or merger or a procedure this will be reviewed by the person responsible for presenting the policy to the SLT. This will always be a member of the ET or SLT.

Following their assessment and once they have confirmed that the contents and format etc. are satisfactory, this will be issued for approval.

Stage 1 – Policy & Procedure Review Group Approval

1. Author to send to ET/SLT member along with a completed cover sheet. Where the procedure has been updated, changes should be tracked;
2. ET/SLT member to review, and once satisfied;
3. Save in the appropriate folder on the P&PRG drive at least 2 weeks in advance of the P&PRG meeting;
4. ET/SLT member to email all ET/SLT to inform that a Procedure has been added for approval;
5. ET/SLT member to invite any other manager involved in the development or update of the Procedure to the P&PRG meeting where the procedure will be discussed;
6. Procedure to be discussed and approved at next available P&PRG;
7. PA to the Exec Team to update the policy Master Index.

Should the procedure not be approved by the P&PRG this will be returned to the author by the ET/SLT member with comments for amendment and the process will be repeated. If the author is present at the P&PRG Meeting they will be given the feedback verbally.

Procedures do not require to be approved by the Board of Management or Unite therefore can be filed.

5.0 Filing Policies & Procedures

All current policies and procedures will be filed by the PA to the Exec Team in the General drive / Policies & Procedures folder, within which there are further sub-folders for each department.

In addition, the C&S Administration Assistant will update the relevant section of the Website to ensure that Freedom of Information requirements have been met.

The PA to the Exec Team will maintain a set of archive folders that mirror the current master folders. The purpose of the archive folders is to provide an 'audit trail' of amendments to policies and procedures, should this be required in the future, and to demonstrate that Ark has a continuous improvement process of regular policy and procedure reviews.

5.1 Policy & Procedure Format

Policies

Following approval at the Board/Sub and prior to filing, the PA to the Exec Team will inform the ET/SLT member of the approval. The ET/SLT member or author will save all tracked changes and ensure the document is finalised and send back to the PA to the Exec Team, who will then follow the Filing and distribution process, see Appendix 1.

Where an OD Policy then has to go to Unite for approval, the Head of People & Organisational Development will manage this process (before or after Board approval), and then send a final and clean draft to the PA to the Exec Team for filing. If Unite do not approve the changes, the process will be repeated.

Procedures

Following approval at the ET/SLT and prior to filing, the author will save all tracked changes and ensure the document is finalised and sent to the PA to the Exec Team who will then follow the Filing process.

5.2 Policy & Procedure Master Index

The index will contain:

1. Each document's reference number and title;
2. The month and year it is next due to be reviewed;
3. Allocations and approvals stages.

The PA will colour code the entries on the master index, as follows:

Red	Overdue for Review
Amber	Due for review in the next 6 months
Green	Due for review 6 months +

Performance in relation to review of policies and procedures will be reported upon through review of the Master Index at meetings of the P&PRG.

Following approval of a new or revised policy or procedure by Ark's PEPRG and/or Board of Management, the PA to the Exec Team will:

1. Check that the final draft is in the correct format and all tracking has been removed;
2. Save the cover sheet, EIA, DPIA (if relevant) and document in the relevant sub-folder;
3. Update the Master Index by entering the title under the relevant month and year, according to when it is due to be reviewed;
4. Add a hyperlink to the document so that members of staff can access that document directly from the index; and
5. Save any previous version of the policy or procedure in the appropriate archive folder, ensuring that it is saved under the relevant version number of that document's title, to distinguish it from any other versions already archived.

6.0 Delivery to Staff

As part of the completion of the cover sheet the author will determine how they intend to share the new or amended policy/procedure across the organisation and this will be discussed and approved by the P&PRG.

The P&PRG will ensure that this action is complete following conclusion of the approval process including ensuring that LearnPro is updated.

7.0 Implementation & Review

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is implemented by the appropriate staff.

The Chief Executive will ensure that this procedure is reviewed at least every three years.

Appendix 1 - Flowchart

Policy and/or procedure to be created/reviewed

Key:
Blue: Action by SLT/P&PRG
Orange: Action by Exec PA
Green: Approval action

Allocated to appropriate manager(s)

ET/SLT sponsor confirms content

Policy and/or procedure to P&PRG

Policy Approved?

Procedure Approved?

Yes — No — No — Yes

Policy & cover sheet to Board

Exec PA: Back to SLT owner to be finalised/tracked changes saved

SLT format and return to Exec PA for file

Policy Approved?

Yes — No

Exec PA:
- File & update master index
- Add Hyperlink
- Save & archive previous version
- Send to C&S Admin to update FOISA section on Website

Exec PA
Feedback to SLT Sponsor

SLT format and return to Exec PA for file / website FOI

SLT issue to staff by agreed process including update to LearnPro

Exec PA:
- File & update master index
- Add Hyperlink
- Save & archive previous version
- Save to drive for BoM
- Send to C&S Admin to update FOISA section on Website

Policy & Procedure Review Group to check P&P has been rolled out

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