



<b>Document Name</b>	Policy on Policies
<b>Lead</b>	Company Secretary
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<b>Approved by</b>	DALC Board on recommendation of the Governance Committee
<b>Effective Date</b>	7.3.2023

**Dublin Adult Learning Centre  
Policy on Policies**

## **POLICY ON POLICIES**

### Policy on the Formulation, Approval and Review of Policies

#### **1. Purpose of Policy**

The purpose of this policy, also known as the 'Policy on Policies', is to define the process by which all Dublin Adult Learning ("DALC") policies are to be developed, approved and maintained.

By using a consistent policy development process and format, DALC will assemble policies that are:

- a) Appropriately developed and regularly updated;
- b) Easy to find, read and understand;
- c) Consistent with DALC's mission;
- d) Compliant with applicable QQI QA criteria core & specific guidelines;
- e) Compliant with Charity Regulator's Governance Code;
- f) Compliant with any applicable legislation or regulatory regime and any applicable funder requirements;
- g) Referenced within our online Risk Management System; and
- h) Designed to promote best practice in all areas in the Centre.

This policy development framework establishes a standard and principles for policy development, approval, implementation and review. The framework ensures consistency and compliance and sets down a transparent process with stakeholder consultation and appropriate approval pathways.

#### **2. Policy Lead**

The Policy Lead<sup>[1]</sup> for this policy shall be responsible for keeping the policy up to date and for ensuring that only approved versions of the policy are accessible via the online Risk Management System. The Policy Lead shall periodically review this policy. The policy shall be subject to approval by the DALC Board following a recommendation of the Governance Committee and shall state the date on which it was so approved.

#### **3. Policy Statement**

Dublin Adult Learning Centre policies shall be:

- a) Developed according to the process set out in this policy;
- b) Presented in a format which follows the general parameters of this policy;

- c) Approved by the appropriate authority following the recommendation of any person or body as are in each case specified in respect of that policy in the Appendix to this Policy (the “Appropriate Authority”);
- d) Accessible to all parties with an interest in the policy’s subject matter;
- e) Kept up-to-date and current within a framework of an organized system of change control; and
- f) Clearly described as policies and kept separate from related documentation such as procedures, guides and other types of related documentation.

All individuals who are responsible for the drafting, updating, recommending, approval and distribution of DALC policies shall comply with this policy. Operational policies shall not be in conflict with this policy but they may be more restrictive. The Appendix to this Policy may, with the approval of the DALC Board, be updated from time to time to specify the Appropriate Authority in respect of new policies.

#### **4. Policy development**

The Policy Lead shall be responsible, in respect of the area to which his or her policy relates, for the drafting of new or revised DALC policies, for ensuring policies are up to date, for consulting with interested parties and for steering the policy through any appropriate committee or group required for recommendation and for subsequent approval by the Appropriate Authority. The Policy Lead shall also arrange for the policy’s publication, when approved, on the DALC website and a link to the appropriate risk on the Risk Management System.

#### **5. Policy format**

Each DALC policy shall be presented in a format which follows the general parameters of this policy and at a minimum adopts the version control panel and numbering system.

#### **6. Policy approval**

The process for reviewing, recommending and approving draft policies may vary depending upon the nature of the policy and shall be as specified in the Appendix. In general, the responsibility for promoting compliance with a policy will rest with the Policy Lead unless as specified otherwise within the policy.

#### **7. Accessibility**

All policies will be held in a shared office folder, linked to on the online Risk Management System and published on the DALC website.

## **8. Review**

The Policy Lead for each policy shall be responsible for keeping the policy up to date and for ensuring that only approved versions of the policy are accessible via the DALC website and online Risk Management System. The Policy Lead shall periodically review policies which fall under their remit. Each policy shall state the date on which it was approved by the Appropriate Authority as applicable. Except where a separate process or authority for making changes to a policy are included within the policy, the amendments to existing policies and the development of new policies shall follow the development and approval process as outlined in sections 4 and 6 above. The Management team shall assist Policy Leads in implementing a process of regular review and shall provide guidance to Policy Leads in relation to complying with the requirements of this policy.

## **9. Operational procedures for policy development and review**

Any policy development initiative, regardless of its origin, should follow a pre-defined cycle of:

- initiation
- drafting
- consultation
- (if applicable) recommendation
- approval
- communication
- implementation
- ongoing monitoring and review.

### **(a) Initiation**

A policy development can be triggered, for example, by legislative or regulatory changes, funder requirements, strategic objectives or restructuring of DALC or identified institutional risk or gap. A policy proposal should be submitted to the relevant committee or group to assess the need for a policy development or review. The approval of the policy proposal should involve an initial discussion and stated preferences on the policy principles. Once it has been decided to develop a new policy that is not already within the scope of the Appendix to this Policy, DALC Board approval should be sought to amend the Appendix to set out Appropriate Authority required to approve the new policy and any recommendation which the Appropriate Authority should receive and consider before giving such approval.

### **(b) Drafting and Development/Review**

The Policy Lead should consider the policy issue, conduct an initial discussion on policy principles with stakeholders, carry out any relevant research including review of international good practice, formulate a draft policy document, undertake consultation with appropriate stakeholders, address any gaps highlighted by the policy impact assessment, and submit a final draft of policy for approval. Policy should:

- i. Contain language that is plain English and appropriate for the audience
- ii. Comply with the requirements of paragraph 5 above.

### **(c) Consultation**

Informal consultation with interested parties is strongly recommended throughout the development of a new policy or a major policy review. The Policy Lead should seek to engage decision making groups on the character of policy problems to be addressed as a prior step to developing policy solutions. Once a policy has been drafted, it needs to be made available for formal consultation with the relevant governance/approval body.

### **(d) Recommendation**

Where the Appendix specifies that the Appropriate Authority in respect of a policy must receive and consider the recommendation of a person or body before approving a policy, the Policy Lead shall liaise with that person or body (or with the Committee Secretary where the recommendation is to be given by the Governance Committee) and ensure that such recommendation is sought and provided to the Appropriate Authority.

### **(e) Approval**

Approval of policies shall follow an agreed approval pathway as set out in the Appendix to this Policy and will be effective from the date of approval, if not otherwise specified.

### **(f) Communication**

All policies are published on the DALC website and linked to the online Risk Management System in line with an approved Document Management Protocol. A policy published is considered the only authorised version. The Policy Lead is responsible for communications about a new or revised policy. A communication plan should be an essential part of successful implementation and application of a new policy.

### **(g) Implementation**

Implementation should be planned from the very start of a policy development process. It is important to ensure the oversight of policy

implementation, in particular where the implementation spreads across different areas of DALC. The Policy Lead should discuss policy implementation with relevant stakeholders to agree a timeline for all required implementation activities and to assign responsibilities for each activities and discuss with the relevant leadership and management structures the assigning of responsibilities for each activity.

### **(h) Monitoring and Review**

It is essential that, once approved, policies remain relevant, fit for purpose and consistent with DALC's mission and objectives. Policy compliance can be monitored by recording issues arising from implementation, gathering feedback and by monitoring decisions taken under the policy. Information collected through monitoring activities is used during the formal review of the policy. All approved policies are subject to periodic review. Reviews normally take place after 1-5 years of operation. Where necessary, policies may be reviewed outside the review cycle. Editorial or other minor amendments to policy may be made outside a formal review. Minor amendments to policy require the approval of the relevant committee or group. Major amendments to policy can be approved and implemented only as a result of a formal policy review with appropriate stakeholder consultation. A review should consider related documents and references and if the policy:

- (i) Remains consistent with good practice and the strategic direction of DALC;
- (ii) Continues to meet stakeholder needs;
- (iii) Complies with any existing related policies;
- (iv) Works well on an operational level; and
- (v) Could be enhanced.

## APPENDIX TO POLICY ON POLICIES

Policy	Policy Lead	Appropriate Authority (AA)	Date of Approval of AA	Review Schedule
Policy on Policies	Company secretary	Board on the recommendation of the Governance Committee	7.3.2023	Annually
Code of Conduct	Company Secretary	Board on the recommendation of the Governance Committee		Annually
List of Matters reserved to the Board	Company Secretary	Board on the recommendation of the Governance Committee		Annually
Accounting Policies	CEO	Board on the recommendation of the FARC		Annually
Academic Policies as per QQI Quality Assurance Manual	Review and Design Group	Quality committee	28.02.2023	Annually
Risk Management Policy	Chief Risk Officer	Board on the recommendation of the FARC	7.3.2023	Annually
Employment Policies as per Staff Handbook	Senior Management	CEO/Board on recommendation of a HR committee		Annually
Data Protection Policy	DP Administrator & Company Secretary	CEO	20.2.2023	Annually
Health and Safety Policy	DALC H & S contractors at	CEO	1.12.1021	Every 5 years

	the direction of the CEO			
Complaints Policy	Company Secretary	CEO		Annually
Information and Data Management Policy	DP Administrator and Company Secretary	CEO	20.02.23	Annually
Public Information and Communication Policy	CEO	Board from 26/04/23 Previously CEO	20.03.23	Annually

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[1] The **Policy Lead** for the initiating, drafting, developing, recommending and reviewing of any DALC policy shall be any person or body designated to undertake such work