Policy and Procedure Component Definitions

1. Purpose (optional)

Provide an overview of the rationale/explanation as to why this policy/procedure is needed. If appropriate, reference to external regulations/statutes, etc. It should not be more than one paragraph long and beware of using abbreviations, acronyms and not yet defined terms. Can be included as part of the policy statement.

2. Policy Statement

Provide a concise statement that establishes the specific rules or philosophies that are established by this policy.

3. Scope (optional)

To whom does this policy relate? Does this policy always apply or only in some situations? Are there consequences for non-compliance?

4. Definitions (optional)

Definition of acronyms or professional terminology used as needed.

5. Procedures

Provide step-by-step guidelines on how to accomplish the policy statement. If this policy is not procedure-related write "Not Applicable" so the reader knows there is no structured process to follow.

Procedural details can include an approach that literally a step-by-step approach, a checklist of what needs to be done, or as simple as an explanation of how to complete the necessary forms required by the policy.

6. References and related policies/forms

Include other policies that either impact or are impacted by this policy, forms, KAR's, KSA's which should be read in conjunction with this policy/procedure.

7. Appendices

Lists, charts or statements referencing a person, agency or contact details may change/ become outdated. This allows the appendices to be changed as needed without having to revise the policy.

* Always ensure that you are working on the most recent version of a policy

Remember the difference between policies and procedure	*Policies* * Describe the rules that establish what will or will not be done. * Can range from broad philosophies to specific rules. * Are usually expressed in standard sentence and paragraph format. * Include WHAT the rule is, WHEN it applies and WHO it covers	*Procedures* * Describe the critical steps undertaken to achieve policy intent. * Are succinct, factual and to the point. * Are usually expressed using lists * Include HOW to achieve the necessary results.

Use everyday language that readers will easily and immediately understand	* Use short words (one or two syllable) * Avoid the use of jargon, unnecessary technical expressions and fancy vocabulary. * Use common words (eg. "use" instead of "utilise"). * Use active, rather than passive language. *Write as you would speak, editing out informal words or phrases *Avoid the use of acronyms. If acronyms are necessary, use the full title/term first before using the acronym
Keep the structure simple	* Use gender-neutral language -use "their" instead of "he/she" * Use short sentences (maximum of 15 words) * Use short paragraphs (maximum of 100 words for policies; maximum 40 words for procedures) * Use lists -it makes it easier to read, and encourages short sentences * Use numbering to facilitate easy referencing * Be consistent -repetition of familiar words increases comprehension * Remove words that don't add meaning. Tips to help achieve this include: write as you would normally do so, then edit to create short sentences to remove unnecessary words and information that does not add value to the policy or procedure. For example use "often" instead of "in most cases", "before" instead of "prior to", "because" instead of "due to the fact that" * Use definitions in the Swinburne Policy Dictionary to ensure consistency of terms throughout policies and procedures * Use the approved policy and procedure template - documents written and presented in a consistent manner aids readability
Be specific -mean what you say and say what you mean	* Rather than "submit the appropriate form" say "Submit the Withdrawal from Program form" * If action is *mandatory* "must" or "will" is used * If the action is *recommended* or valid reasons to deviate from the requirement may exist in particular circumstances, then 'should' is used * If the action is *permissive* "may" is used * The word "shall" must be avoided unless there is a legislative requirement than prescribes its use. This word causes confusion between whether an action is mandatory or recommended.

Avoid the use of information that is quickly outdated and that therefore requires regular amendment.	* Use department names, rather than position titles (if possible • Avoid using specific names or contact details. • Provide links generic web pages rather than specific web pages (if possible) For example, refer to "Student Administration Forms" rather than the specific uri for the form
Procedures should:	• List steps to follow in order to comply with the policy. • List responsibility for each step. • Use one action per step - steps that contain more than one action can confuse the reader * Wherever possible, start with an action verb, ie. "Submit completed form to Academic Unit" rather than "The student should complete the form and then submit it to the Academic Unit". * Avoid too much detail - link to unit rules or work instructions stored on the University intra net if necessary. * Refer the reader to related documents, forms, work instructions/unit rules