

Appendix C – Consultation Guidelines for Policy Development and Review

Consultation: General Approach

Consultation allows you to obtain the points of view of relevant groups of interest regarding the policy document(s) you are developing.

It involves active engagement with interested members of the Queen's community and full and frank conversations about what you are trying to achieve with your policy.

It should be thorough, sincere, and meaningful for all involved (for example, you should explain the purpose of consultation, your expectations, which groups you reach out to, etc.).

It is not a deliberative process. However, ensure to account for the inputs received from groups of interest for accountability purposes.

Consultation is about building consensus across groups of interest and having conversations that may be difficult.

provided before full policy development.

Engagement and Consensus

It is important to remember that consensus does not equal consent. If there is opposition from groups of interest, try meeting with separate groups or individuals to better understand their points of view. Engage in frank conversations about why specific directions are being chosen.

Take the time to discuss any disagreement. Ensure that your groups of interest understand that, though consultation involves active participation, it is not a partnership in which both parties (the policy sponsor and groups of interest) define the policy process and content.

Make sure to communicate in advance to your groups of interest whether their views will be reflected in draft policies and why or why not. Otherwise, they may express disappointment or anger, generating resistance to change and a sense that they have not

Although not all groups of interest may agree to an approach, they should believe that you have genuinely attempted to understand their viewpoint. Generally, this requires that you with their views. This can include attempts to broker agreements with groups of interest that do not agree with each other. It may consist of placing alternatives before the group and actively discussing the pros and cons of each approach.

Whatever way this is done, it should show a predominant focus on attempting to reach a satisfactory, not perfect, outcome for key groups of interest, who will be those persons most directly impacted by a policy or its change. It would be best if you strived for true accord and should only proceed in its absence where there is a legislative or regulatory imperative to be

Ensure you consider visible and invisible barriers when designing your consultation process and contact the Human Rights and Equity Office for advice as needed.

3) Commitment

Be genuinely committed to fully engaging with the consultation process and demonstrate this to all involved through your words and actions. Listen closely to feedback, be honest in your responses, and take time to consider what you hear when drafting your documents. As part of the change management process, you are not only seeking views, but you are also seeking to establish consensus.

Consultation: Importance and Relevance

which helps avoid surprises and a feeling that the path forward is already set among groups of interest.

Once you have your draft share it with your working group again (including your groups of interest) and gather feedback. Discuss if your policy has hit the mark, whether it is clear enough, overly complex, or too broad.

At this stage, assess whether key groups of interest have yet to accept the proposed approach and set up a plan of how to address that situation. Also, consider assessing whether you have achieved a consensus view amongst your most affected groups of interest.

Communication of Consultation

To reach out to your groups of interest before or after drafting your policy, communications efforts should invite them to participate in consultation. Communicating your policy draft can be part of an effective change management plan that builds awareness, understanding, and buy-in and facilitates implementation. Consider all possible channels of communication when providing information about consultation opportunities.

You may wish to liaise with the communication contacts of your most relevant groups of interest to get the word out. University Relations should also be contacted if the new policy or proposed changes will significantly impact on the university's operations or have the potential to be controversial. Please reach out to the University Secretariat at policies@queensu.ca for support.

To confirm dates and deadlines, contact the University Secretariat.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the University Secretariat at policies@queensu.ca

Suggested Student Contacts:

AMS – Director of Communications: communications@ams.queensu.ca

SGPS – VP Community: vp.community@sgps.ca