Research and Drafting Guidelines
for New Policy Development

These Guidelines should be used when researching and drafting new or revised policies. Policy Developers do not need to submit this information to the Policy Advisory Group but should note their responses and be prepared to answer questions relating to the topics addressed below.

1. Alignment and Relevance

☐ Confirm how the proposed policy or revision supports Acadia's mission, vision, and values.

☐ Ensure consistency with Acadia's strategic priorities, institutional frameworks, and relevant planning documents.

☐ Identify any legislative, regulatory, or collective agreement requirements that apply.

2. Context and Existing Materials

☐ Determine whether the proposal aligns with or impacts existing University policies, procedures, or guidelines. Review related documents carefully, as changes in one area may have implications elsewhere.

☐ Examine any background materials that inform the issue, including reports, correspondence, minutes, or prior decisions.

☐ Assess current practice at the University and note any differences between practice and existing policy. Consider whether the new policy should reflect current practice or whether the practice needs to change.

3. Environmental Scan and Comparative Review

☐ Review policies and practices at other Canadian universities, particularly within Nova Scotia, to identify benchmarks or opportunities for improvement.

☐ Confirm that the proposal aligns with external standards, accreditation expectations, and government requirements.

☐ Identify any ethical, equity, privacy, or sustainability considerations that should be addressed.

☐ Evaluate potential risks associated with adopting or not adopting the proposed policy.

4. Impact Analysis

☐ Identify who will be affected by the policy and who will be responsible for compliance.

☐ Clarify intended outcomes and behavioral expectations.

☐ Anticipate possible implementation challenges or barriers to acceptance, recognizing that some issues will only emerge through consultation.

☐ Determine which offices, committees, or groups should be consulted during drafting and after the initial draft is prepared.

5. Drafting Considerations

☐ Use clear, inclusive, and accessible language, suitable for a broad University audience.

☐ When possible, build flexibility into the policy to allow for changing circumstances or emerging needs.

☐ Consider the financial implications of the policy, including any resource or budget requirements.

☐ Assess whether the policy will require training or educational initiatives to support implementation.