

How and when to write policies and procedures

A resource for disability services



Written and published by ACROD Ltd (Qld Division)

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- Deborah Rae
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ACROD Ltd (Qld Division)

Suite 15, Level 4 CENTRO Lutwyche
543 Lutwyche Road
Lutwyche Qld 4030

Email: acrodqld@acrod.org.au

Phone: (07) 3357 4188 or 1800 357 827

Fax: (07) 3357 4288

Website: www.acrod.org.au

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Introduction

This resource has been created to help you develop useful policies and procedures for your organisation. The first few sections cover what policies and procedures are and why you need them. From there the remainder of the resource will help you to decide how you will develop, maintain and improve policies and procedures. Some sections discuss the Disability Service Standards and how they are reflected in policies and procedures — an important step in meeting the Disability Sector Quality System requirements.

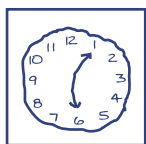
How can this resource help?

This resource may help you by:

- explaining in simple steps how to create policies and procedures
- asking questions that get you thinking
- explaining any new or strange words and ideas (refer to the Glossary on page 48)
- giving examples and samples of policy and procedure layouts
- showing you how and where to get more help.

Because everyone's needs are different, this resource is designed so you can read (or skim) it the whole way through, or just use separate sections. Simply find the questions on the contents page that you need answered and check out that section.

If you're in a real hurry, there are also summaries and tips throughout the book. Just look for these symbols:



= Summary



= Tip



Using the resource online

If you are reading this resource online (either on the ACROD web site or CD) you will be able to link to any page reference that has a box around it by simply clicking anywhere in the box with your cursor. For example: pages 20-25.



Section 1

Why create policies and procedures?

Organisations have policies and procedures to guide decision-making and how work is done in that organisation. They are the documents that translate the organisation's vision, mission and values into operation.

Well-written policies and procedures increase organisational accountability and transparency and are fundamental to quality assurance and quality improvement programmes.

Do they really have any impact on what people do?

Policies and procedures can have a huge impact on the way people act. In some workplaces, policies and procedures are written documents that are referred to when needed and form the basis of training staff in how the service runs. In other workplaces they are unwritten (i.e. 'the way things are done around here') and are passed on verbally or by example.

Some policies and procedures are viewed as 'dust collectors' that are located on a shelf somewhere and rarely referred to. Often these have been written by one or two individuals or to meet a funding body or governmental requirement. Only a few people will know what they contain. In the absence of policy or procedure people will make up their own mind about how to approach each decision or new situation.

The aim of this resource is to guide you through a process to create policies and procedures that have long-lasting relevance and usefulness for your service and its users.

One of the keys to relevant and useful policies is participation — participation by the staff who face decisions about the service every day, participation by the service users who are affected by the decisions that staff make and participation by the managers who are responsible for the service.

Management committees can be involved, however their role is focused on whether there is current policy and procedure in place and in having confidence that practice in the organisation is aligned to policy and procedure.



Participation is paramount!

Participation by all people connected with your service

=

Long-lasting, useful, relevant policies and procedures



How can policies and procedures be useful for staff?

Policies and procedures help staff to make decisions. Having a useful and relevant set of policies and procedures will mean that you will:

- be confident in the quality of staff decision-making
- have quicker and easier decision-making
- increase the consistency of quality service delivery
- reduce the mistakes or the amount of time and resources spent 'putting out fires'
- use resources in a more efficient and effective way
- identify issues quickly, determine how they came about and focus on fixing them
- have transparent, accountable processes that meet the Disability Sector Quality System certification requirements
- meet the Disability Service Standards and have the confidence of users and funding bodies in your service.

Involving users of the policies and procedures can mean putting in a lot of time and effort and re-prioritising urgent day-to-day work. However, the long-term result of this involvement will be policies and procedures that guide your service, are actually used by staff and improve outcomes for service users.

How can they be useful for service users?

Having useful and relevant policies and procedures will result in improved service delivery that better meets the expectations of service users.

By involving service users in the development of policy and procedures you will ensure their expectations are included in the documents. Their involvement may also improve the service user understanding of the business side of managing a service. This can improve the communication and understanding between service users and service providers.

What are the benefits of involving everyone?

The process of involving everyone in the development of policies and procedures also has some side benefits, such as:

- helping you work out what your service wants to achieve
- sharing the good practice that is occurring in your service delivery
- developing the strengths of your staff, other stakeholders and service users in participating, giving feedback and guiding future direction
- strengthening links between all your service's stakeholders (board members, staff, suppliers, etc.) so that communication is more efficient
- developing morale and confidence in your service.



Why am I doing this?

Efficiency and consistency
Staff confidence
Transparent, accountable processes
Quality and continuous improvement processes
Strengthen links between people

Why do we need to write them down?

It may be that your service functions quite well, and staff and service users have shared ideas about where your service is heading. People just 'know' what to do and what to expect from each other. Writing this down makes it easier:

- for people new to your service (e.g. service users, their family, staff or board members) to adjust to your goals and way of doing things
- to see when people or processes have moved away from your service's policies and procedures
- to demonstrate to external people (e.g. potential service users, families, funding bodies) that you meet legislative requirements and have strategies to consistently provide quality service.

When you're writing, say things in a way that everyone involved with your service will understand and use. Policies full of jargon and academic language may meet legal requirements but won't get used if they make no sense to anyone else.



Write or draw?

For procedures, sometimes it may be better to use diagrams, flowcharts, pictures or photos, since these will be easier to understand and explain the steps of a task more simply. Examples are given on pages 20-25.

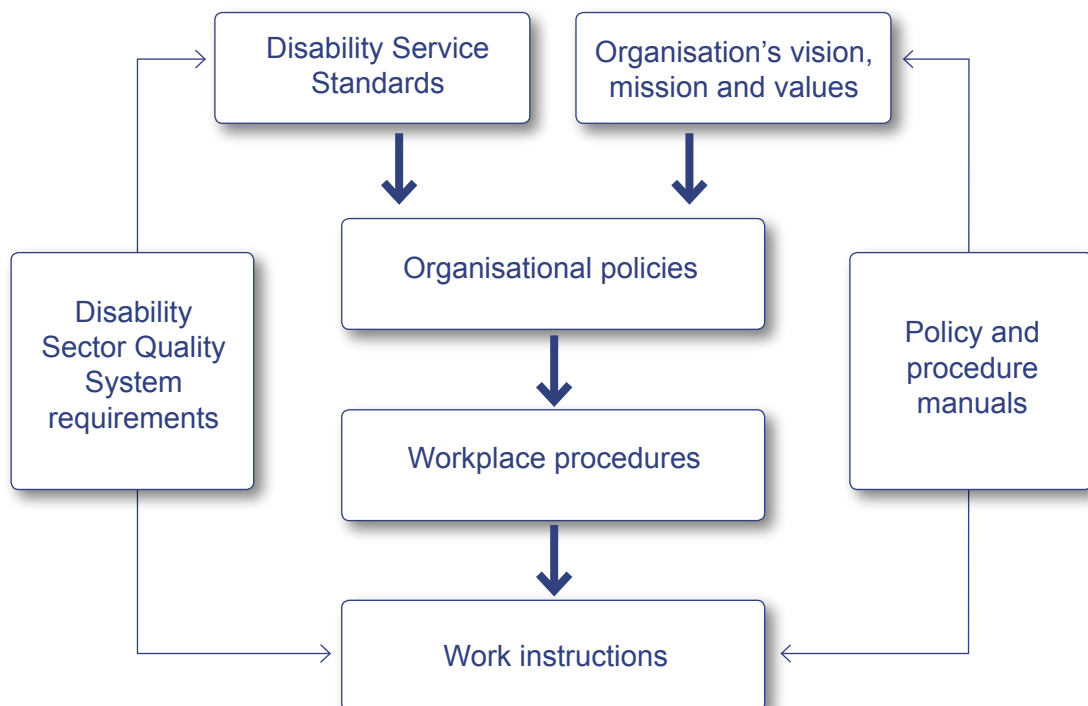
How do policies and procedures relate to quality systems?

Policies and procedures are important tools in any quality system. For most quality systems policies and procedures are the documents against which the organisation is assessed. There is an assessment as to whether:

- the organisation has policies and procedures in place
- the practice in the organisation aligns with the policies and procedures.

For organisations in Queensland that receive state funding there is a requirement to participate in the Queensland Disability Sector Quality System. This system sets quality expectations for services for accreditation and funding. It is based on the Disability Service Standards (see page 38).

Organisations need to ensure the principles of the Disability Service Standards are evidenced in their organisation's policies. The procedures (and work instructions at a much more detailed level) will in turn reflect these principles and explain how they are done in the workplace.





Section 2

What do good policies and procedures look like?

What are policies and procedures?

Policies and procedures are not the same thing. Policies come first, as the broad ideas and principles your service will work according to. Procedures are more specific and give more direction about how policies will actually be carried out:

- **policies** are the guiding principles of your service; they are what your service believes in and is guided by
- **procedures** are step-by-step directions based on your policies; they are like a recipe for how you will achieve your policies, who will do it and when.

The example below is based on Disability Service Standard 5 — participation and integration.

Policies

What does our service believe in and want to be guided by?

What does our service believe about...

Standard 5:
Participation and integration

What does our service believe in and want our actions to be guided by?

Our service supports the participation and integration of people with disabilities in the operation of our service.

Procedures

How can we actually do this

How does our service action our policy...

of supporting the participation and integration of people with disabilities in the operation of our service.

How can we actually do this?

Service users have a service users forum with support from staff as requested.

Staff regularly collect informal feedback from service users.

Service users are provided with the opportunity and skills development to act as board members.

You may have heard the word ‘policy’ used in a more general sense. It is sometimes used to refer to an organisation’s mission, philosophy, policy and procedures manual or even simply organisational ‘rules’. For example, organisations might talk about having a non-smoking ‘policy’, but this is really a procedure. Their policy is actually a much broader guiding principle, such as being concerned about the health and safety of people connected with their organisation.

What are work instructions?

These are even more specific than procedures. They give a detailed step-by-step breakdown of how to do a certain task. For example:

| <p>Policies</p> <p>What does our service believe in and want to be guided by?</p> <hr/> <p>Equitable practice.</p> <hr/> <p>Health and safety of service users, visitors and staff.</p> | <p>Procedures</p> <p>How can we actually do this?</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New staff are recruited based on equitable principles. • Promotions are based on the skills, knowledge and abilities of candidates. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff identify and assess risks in the workplace. • Staff take reasonable action to protect themselves and others in the workplace. | <p>Work instructions</p> <p>What specific steps do you follow to do this particular procedure?</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps for conducting an interview with a job candidate (internal or external). <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps to conducting a work assessment. • Steps for safety inductions for all visitors. • Steps for ensuring regular safety training for all staff. |
|---|---|--|
|---|---|--|



What are they again?

Policy

What does our service believe in and want to be guided by?

Procedure

How can we actually do this?

Work instruction

What specific steps do you follow to do this procedure?

What does a policy actually look like?

There is a standard format for writing policies that makes them recognisable and easier to organise. Some basic principles are listed below and an example is given on page 20.

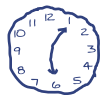
| Formatting question | Basic guiding principle |
|--------------------------|--|
| What is a policy? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a broad outline of the beliefs guiding your service • covers one key quality aspect of your service. |
| How are they set out? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • usually more than one paragraph and less than a page long. |
| What goes in the header? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name of the organisation • name of the work area or location (if relevant) • title of the policy • issue date • issue number • page number (including the total number of pages). |
| What goes in the footer? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name and title of the authorising officer • date signed by authorising officer • signature of the authorising officer. |



What does a procedure actually look like?

The format for procedures is less formal than policies since staff must be able to use them in the workplace on a daily basis. While there are some standard characteristics listed below, they should also be organised to meet the needs of the people who will read and use them. Examples of different layouts are given on pages 21-25.

| Formatting question | Basic guiding principle |
|--|--|
| What's in a procedure? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • says who will do the procedure • explains in steps how to do it • says when it will be done (or not done). |
| How are they set out? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they're written in simple, easy to understand language • may be a flowchart, diagram, picture, photo, etc. |
| What are the different parts of a procedure? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purpose (why the procedure is needed) • scope (what work area or process it covers, or doesn't cover) • responsibility for implementing procedure (who will make it happen) • procedure (the specific list of steps to do the procedure and what not to do) • documentation (list of paperwork or forms needed during the procedure) • records (what records must be kept afterwards and where) • authorisation and date (signature and date of the person authorising the distribution of the procedure). |



A procedure has...

Purpose

Scope

A person responsible for implementation

Step-by-step procedure

Documentation needed

Records to be kept

Authorisation and date



How does that go again?

Actually doing a procedure or watching someone else do it and writing the steps as you go can be quicker and easier than relying on your memory.

The steps can be shown by a flowchart or diagram. See pages 23-27 for examples.

Policies and procedures with meaning

When creating your policies, try to think about the ideas, actions or philosophies that are the heart and soul of your organisation. These are the beliefs you want to guide every action taken by staff and create every outcome for service users. For disability services, these will include the Disability Service Standards. You may also have other policies that are specific for your service, such as a policy about having fun with teenagers or meeting the particular support needs of older service users.

If your policies are meaningful in your service, you should be able to use them to design service delivery and create quality outcomes for people with disabilities. To check if your policies and procedures are useful, ask:

- Will they guide us to achieve our vision, mission and values?
- Will they lead to quality processes in our services?
- Will they create quality outcomes for service users?
- Can they be used to evaluate the service?
- Can they guide staff selection, induction and training?
- Can they be used for staff appraisals?



Have you heard...

- Everyone has input into policy and procedure development.
- Everyone is able to understand and use them.
- Policies and procedures have meaning for everyone.



Section 3

How do we get the ball rolling?

To get the ball rolling you will need to prepare for developing your policies and procedures. Preparation includes researching different ways to create policies and procedures, holding workshops with a selected group of people and identifying a list of policies and procedures.

What do we need to do to prepare?

The first step is about informing yourself about how to create policy and procedure. There are many other resources similar to this one that can give you a good grounding in the task of developing policies and procedures. Advice is readily available from:

- **Disability Services Queensland (DSQ):** DSQ can provide advice, resources, publications, etc. You may contact them by phone, visit their office or have a Community Resource Officer come to your service.
- **Working with others in your region:** instead of reinventing the wheel, share ideas and resources with other services going through the same process as you.
- **The Internet:** there are many resources available on the Internet.

If you keep an eye out there may also be workshops or information sessions about this topic. As a starting point you can also refer to *Section 10 — References* in this manual for some additional resources.



One size doesn't fit all...

To create a policy and procedure manual relevant to your service, all information or advice you collect needs to be tailored to fit your organisation.

How do we know what policies and procedures to create?

The next step is to put together a plan and identify what policies and procedures need to be developed. To do this you will need to run an introductory session with people who will be involved in the development process. The type of information you will need to talk through with this group during the introductory session is:

- the need for, and benefits of, policies and procedures
- the Disability Service Standards

- the Disability Sector Quality System
- what participation will involve and how best to participate
- developing a plan of action and timeline for the overall process.

The outcome is that all of those participating in the process have a belief in the need for policies and procedures, an understanding of the outcome, a commitment to their involvement and the actions that need to be completed.

Now that people are on board, the final step is to identify a list of policies to be developed. To do this you will need to run some workshops to discuss your organisational goals and determine the key indicators of quality for the organisation.

Steps to creating a list of policies and procedures

1. Start by spending time on the organisation's purpose and goals. Review the vision, mission and values of the organisation and gain agreement on the understanding of what this is trying to achieve.
2. Using this understanding of what the organisation is trying to achieve, brainstorm the key indicators of quality. Another way of asking this is 'what would we look like if we had achieved the organisation's purpose and goals'.
3. Review the Disability Service Standards one at a time and determine what each one means for your organisation (see page 38 for suggestions on how to explore this). Add any key indicators of quality that are not on the list from the previous activity.
4. Review the full list and agree that this list makes up the key indicators of quality for your organisation.

This then makes up the list of policies and procedures that will make up your manual.



Ah, this part is not covered, you will need a service specific policy practice

Who should be involved and how?

Involving people connected with your service is vital to the success of your policies and procedures. The table below covers some of the things you will need to think about.

| Key concept | Questions to consider |
|---|---|
| Who will be invited? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you include people from all areas of your service? • How will you get a range of perspectives? • What could be the consequences of inviting some people and not others? |
| How will people be invited? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of invitation will different people be able to understand? • Will the invitation create interest in participating? • Will they know what to expect? • Will they understand what is expected of them? |
| How will people participate? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have they participated in service development before? • Are they aware of what it involves? • Do you need to help them develop skills and knowledge about how to participate? • Are there other ways that people can give feedback or have input? |
| What approaches will encourage participation? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should group sessions be more formal or informal? • How can you manage people who may attempt to dominate the process, won't participate, etc.? • Should you have several short sessions, a few long sessions, etc.? • Should sessions be during work hours, nights or weekends? |



Don't reinvent the wheel...

Time is precious and people are busy. Get help or advice and share resources whenever you can.

How do we get the best out of our workshops?

In your introductory session and initial workshop, your approach and attitude will create the tone for everything else that follows. Being positive, confident and motivated can generate interest, enthusiasm and participation, help you make it through the rough patches and make the process easier. The initial workshop is also very important as the basis for all policy and procedure development activities.



Please welcome...

The introductory session is your best chance to start getting your policies and procedures working to their full potential. Sell them well and get lots of people on the bandwagon with you!

How do we keep on track?

To make sure your efforts in getting everyone started aren't wasted, think about which strategies will work best in your service to keep everyone motivated and on track. Some ways to do this are:

- identify a person or sub-committee to manage the whole process if needed
- keep sessions short and on time
- keep clear agendas for each session
- have a chairperson for each session
- include food or social activities as opportunities to relax and refocus
- use a range of activities that encourage participation such as discussions, brainstorms, small group work, email, Internet discussion boards, one-on-one interviews, verbal or written questionnaires, etc.
- delegate tasks and responsibilities where possible and encourage others to take ownership of some tasks or parts of the process.



The big picture...

1. Gather information about how to create policies/procedures
2. Have an introductory session
3. Run some workshops
4. Trial the policies and procedures
5. Review and evaluate your progress
6. Develop a final draft and have it authorised
7. Distribute and trial the policies and procedures
8. Regularly refer to them in everyday work
9. Have regular reviews and make adjustments

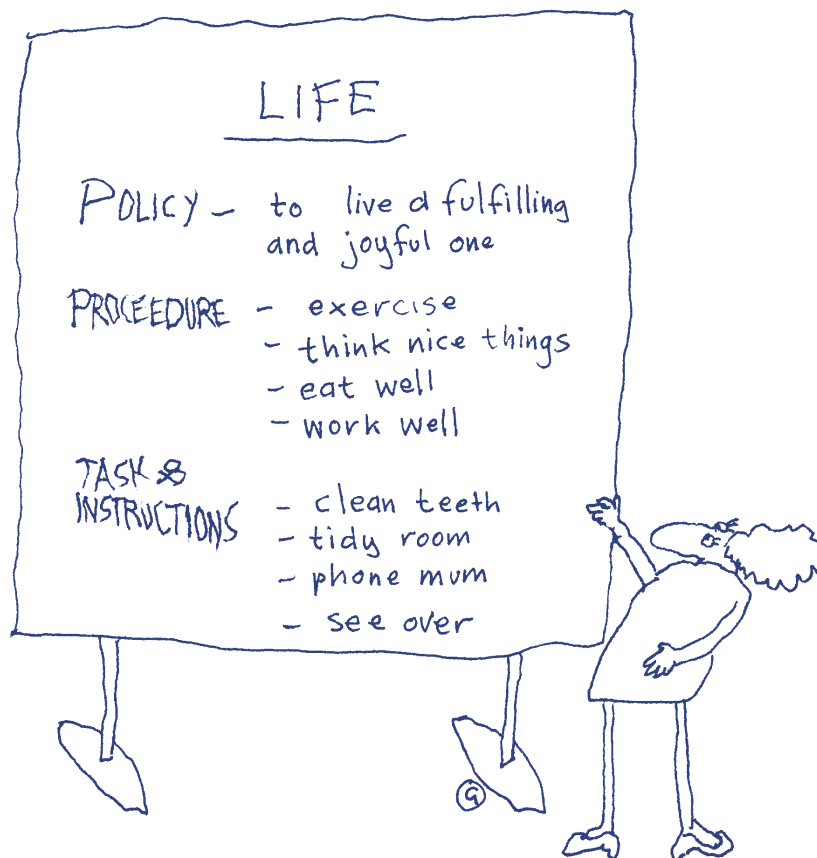


Section 4

How do we create policies and procedures that work?

Creating policies and procedures that work involves choosing an appropriate layout and then developing them — making sure you continue to involve a range of people to help write, trial and review them.

Although there is no one way to develop policies and procedures, this section provides some sample layouts to consider, guidelines on the development process and tips on how to actually write them.



How are policies and procedures set out?

There are many ways to set out policies and procedures. You will need to consider your individual needs to help decide on the best layout.

Above all, policies and procedures should be easy to read and understand. The following pages contain some examples of simple but effective layouts.

Standard policy layout

| | |
|---|------|
| Name of organisation | |
| Name of service stream or unit (if specific to a service stream or unit) | |
| Title | |
| Page x of y pages | |
| Issue no: <i><insert no.></i> | |
| Issue date: <i><insert date></i> | |
| Text <i>Insert text of the policy</i> | |
| <i>Insert text of the policy</i> | |
| <i>Insert text of the policy</i> | |
| Name and title of authorising officer | Date |

Example of a standard policy

| | |
|---|--------|
| Toronto League | |
| Participation and integration | |
| Page 1 of 1 page | |
| Issue no: 1 | |
| Issue date: 7/2005 | |
| <p>The Toronto League is committed to maximising client participation and inclusion in the life of our community.</p> <p>The League involves itself in identifying the needs of people with a mental illness within the community and advocating with them and on their behalf to ensure they are included and integrated into the community. To this end, all those associated with the League are actively encouraged to be involved in community groups and forums.</p> <p>We are sensitive to, and aware of, the needs of clients from a variety of cultural backgrounds and we liaise with representatives of their community groups to enhance their services.</p> <p>Our central and local community services are therefore located in the town centre of Toronto, close to shops, banks and public transport, and are provided throughout the region.</p> <p>The supported housing we offer is integrated in suburban settings throughout the region.</p> | |
| Amelia Brunski Chief Executive Officer | 7/2005 |

Standard procedure layout

Name of organisation

Name of stream or unit (if specific to a service stream or unit)

Title

Page x of y page

Issue no: *<insert no.>*

Issue date: *<insert date>*

Purpose and scope

Specify purpose of procedure, area covered and excursions.

Responsibility for implementing procedures

Specify who will implement the procedure.

Procedure

List sequentially exactly what must be done, note exceptions.

Documentation

List documents to be used with the procedure, attach examples of completed documentation if appropriate.

Records

List any records created as a result of using the procedure, where they are stored and for how long.

Name and title of authorising officer

Date

<Signed and dated by the person authorising the procedure>

Toronto League

Staff appointments

Page 1 of 2 pages

Issue no: 1

Issue date: 7/2005

Purpose and scope

This procedure aims to ensure that the League's policies in relation to affirmative action, equity of opportunity and responsibilities in relation to criminal record checks are met. All areas of the League are covered by this procedure.

Responsibility for implementing procedures

- Managers of each service stream
- Co-ordinators responsible for appointing staff
- Human resources recruitment officers.

Procedure

1. The position is advertised in accordance with the work instruction '*Advertising for staff*'.
2. Each applicant is provided with a position description and employment application form by the contact staff member nominated in the advertisement.
3. When applications have closed, the manager/co-ordinator responsible reviews the applications and convenes the interviewing panel.
4. The panel interviews short-listed applicants and recommends an applicant for appointment.
5. Manager/co-ordinator provides to the recruitment officer completed documentation for the recommended applicant as follows:
 - employment application form
 - letter of appointment
 - confidentiality form
 - employment declaration form
 - consent to check and release any information held by police (criminal record check).
6. Recruitment officer processes the criminal record check and advises the manager/co-ordinator of the outcome.
7. Where the check reveals a previous criminal record, the recruitment officer advises the manager/co-ordinator for the purposes of selecting an alternative applicant; process from point 5 repeated.

8. Where there is no criminal record the recommended applicant is offered employment by the manager/co-ordinator.
9. Recruitment officer processes the offer in accordance with the work instruction '*Offers of employment*'.

Documentation

- Employment application form
- Letter of appointment
- Confidentiality form
- Employment declaration form
- Consent to check and release any information held by police (criminal record check).

Records

All applications of non-successful applicants are destroyed by the manager/co-ordinator when the successful applicant has accepted the position.

The following documentation forms part of the successful applicant's Personnel Record.

- Employment application form
- Letter of appointment
- Confidentiality form
- Employment declaration form
- Consent to check and release any information held by police (criminal record check).

Amelia Brunski
Chief Executive Officer

7/2005

Toronto League

Staff appointments

Page 1 of 2 pages

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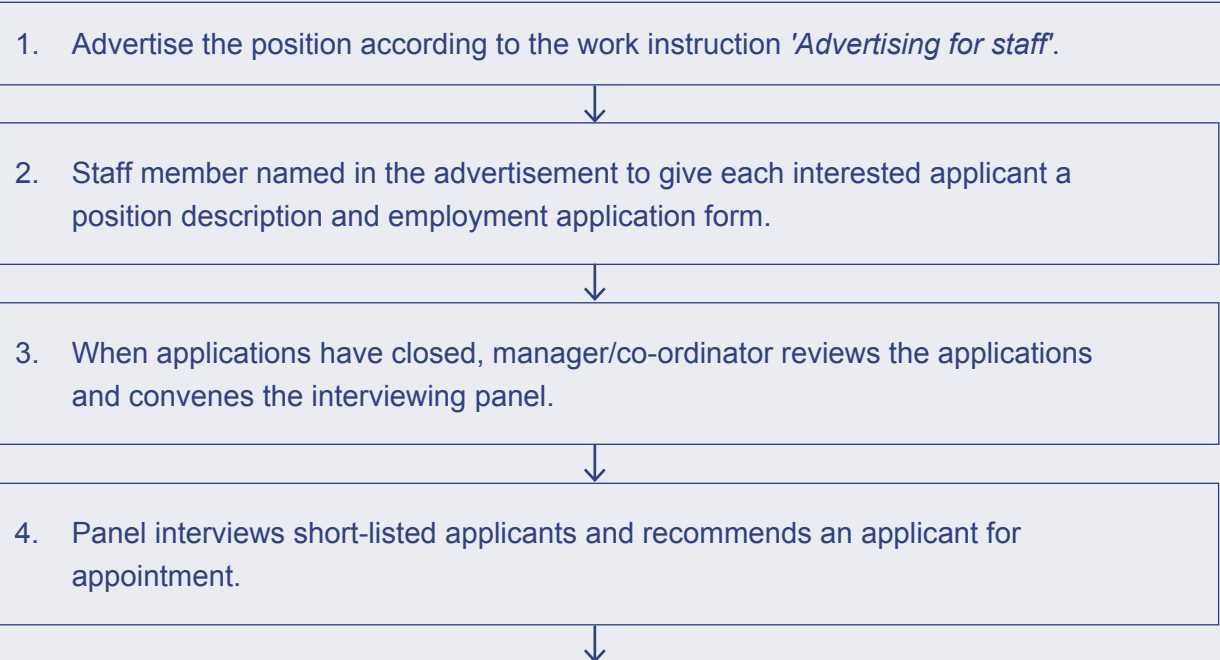
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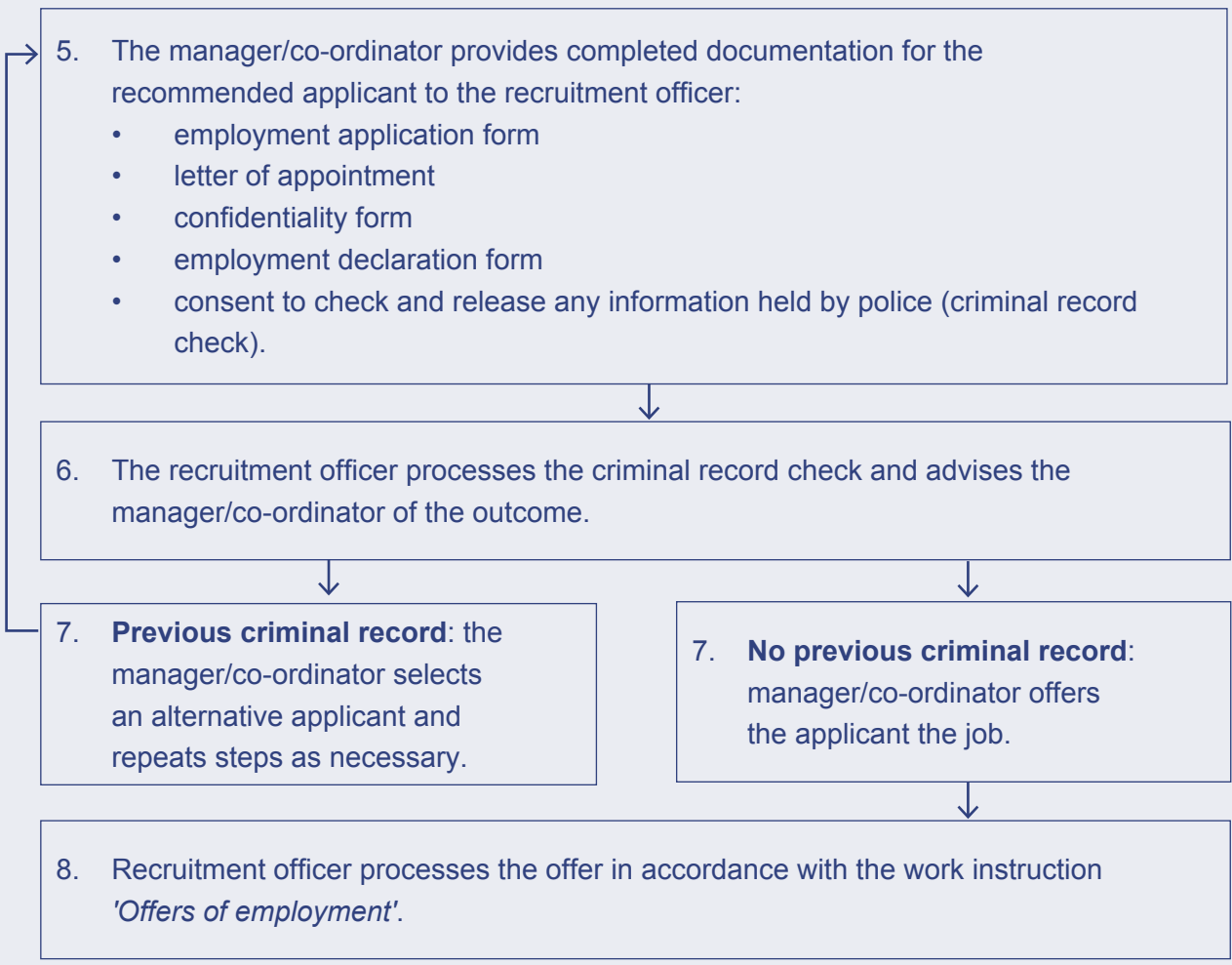
Responsibility for implementing procedures

- Managers of each service stream
- Co-ordinators responsible for appointing staff
- Human resources recruitment officers.

Procedure



Continued over...



Documentation

- Employment application form
- Letter of appointment
- Confidentiality form
- Employment declaration form
- Consent to check and release any information held by police (criminal record check).

Records

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- Letter of appointment
- Confidentiality form
- Employment declaration form
- Consent to check and release any information held by police (criminal record check).

How do we go about developing policy and procedures?

Once you have chosen an appropriate layout you can now develop your policies and procedures. The first step is to be very clear about your organisational purpose and goals. These are often articulated in vision statements, mission statements or a document that outlines the values your organisation wants to represent. Being clear means that all those involved in the service have a shared understanding of what the vision, mission and values are. Starting from this base allows you to move to develop policies and procedures that will have long-term relevance and usefulness. If you haven't already covered this in your introductory session and workshops you should run one now (see pages 15-17 for more information).

Again, involvement is important in creating policy and procedure. The best, lasting results come from inviting participation from all people connected with your service, thinking about your service with an open mind and from a range of perspectives, aligning on organisational goals, then creating policies and procedures that will achieve these goals. Where possible use the same people who participated in your introductory sessions and workshops.

Having a plan and being well organised will make this process quicker, easier and more likely to succeed.



You don't have to do it all...

Find out the strengths of other people in your service, then organise (or delegate!) tasks accordingly. For example, different people in your service may be good at participating in meetings, taking notes, writing or editing and can share the work.

Steps to developing policies and procedures

1. Develop the policies and procedures

Using a working group approach, spend time together developing the content of the policies and procedures. This may take more than one meeting.

2. Trial the policies and procedures

Give the policies and procedures to the people who will be using them to make decisions and allow them time to trial them. This will provide feedback on the usefulness of the policy or procedure. Also provide copies to service users so they can provide feedback on whether the policy or procedure meets their expectations of service delivery.

3. Review and evaluate

Review the feedback from the trial and the feedback from service users. Consider this information in light of what the intent of the policy and procedure was and evaluate what changes are needed.

4. Develop the final draft

Finalise the policy and procedure ready for implementation. You will need to ensure the final copy goes through any necessary authorisation and has sign-off before implementation.

How do we actually write a policy?

The process for writing a policy is similar to creating any other piece of writing — except that you start by working with a group of people. The steps following may help you, as well as looking at the examples of policies and procedures on pages 20-25.

| Steps | Tasks |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Brainstorm | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• in your group, start by brainstorming some ideas• write down anything and everything that people say. |
| 2. Sort through your ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• go through the ideas again together and review each one• choose the ones that are the most useful and relevant. |
| 3. Make more detailed notes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• re-organise and re-arrange your notes• put all the same or similar ideas together. |
| 4. Make sentences | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• make links between similar ideas• write these into full sentences. |
| 5. Make paragraphs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• arrange your sentences in a logical order to make paragraphs• each new paragraph should be a new idea. |
| 6. Re-read and edit your writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• take a break• go back and re-read what you've written• edit and refine your ideas. |
| 7. Edit again and polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ask someone else to look at it for you• use their feedback to polish your writing. |



Steps to developing policies and procedures

1. Develop the first draft
2. Trial the policies and procedures
3. Review and evaluate
4. Develop the final draft



Section 5

Implementing your hard work

Once your policies and procedures have been created, people may think it's all over and promptly forget about them. After putting in so much time and effort however, it would be a shame for them to be neglected, under-used and unvalued.

The truth is that creating policies and procedures is the first, crucial phase of the process. Everyday people in your service will only experience the ultimate benefits of all your work when you take deliberate steps to keep policies and procedures current and useful. This final phase should be part of your original plan developed with all stakeholders.



In a nutshell...

1. Put your manual together to best suit your organisation
2. Promote it in a few different ways
4. Have a launch to introduce it
5. Regularly refer to it during daily work
6. Have a review and get feedback

How is the manual set out?

Once you have written your policies and procedures you will need to decide how your manual will be put together. There are a number of decisions to make when you are planning how to put your policies and procedures manual together. How a manual looks depends on its users. Things like the complexity of your organisation, your service type, the size of your organisation, the geographic location and the profile of your workforce will influence your policy and procedure manual. It is important to talk to those who will use the policies and procedures to find out what is the most useful format for them.

It's difficult to set hard and fast rules on how to put a manual together. However, there are some key guidelines on what to consider and what should be included. Remember though — all services are different; you will need to choose what will best suit the particular needs, arrangements and values of your service. The following pages contain some example content pages as a guide for a:

- large and relatively complex service
- smaller single-delivery focused service.

Sample one — contents page of a policy manual for a complex service

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| In each folder | Amendment sheet (front) Distribution list (back) |
| Folder one | Policies — all services and locations (<i>access by public and staff</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Administration and management (2 policies)• Direct client service delivery (8 policies)• General services (2 policies) |
| Folder two | Policies — specialised (<i>access by public and staff</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protecting the safety of children (children’s respite services) (1 policy)• Health and safety in extreme outdoor activities (youth programs in remote Queensland) (1 policy) |
| Folder three | Procedures — all services and locations (<i>access by relevant staff</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Administration and management (11 procedures)• General services (10 procedures) |
| Folder four | Procedures — specialised (<i>access by relevant staff</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Direct client service delivery — children’s respite (17 procedures)• Direct client service delivery — youth programs (18 procedures)• Direct client service delivery — adult respite (12 procedures) |
| Folder five | Work instructions (<i>access by relevant staff</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Administration and management (4 instructions)• Direct client service delivery (7 instructions)• General services (9 instructions) |

Sample two — contents page of a policy manual for a smaller service

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Section one | Amendment sheet |
| Section two | Policies (<i>access by public and staff — separate folder for public use</i>) |
| | 2.1 Community responsibility |
| | 2.2 Human resource management |
| | 2.3 Marketing and public relations |
| | 2.4 Financial management |
| | 2.5 Health and safety |
| | 2.6 Disability Service Standards (9 policies) |
| Section three | Procedures (<i>access by all staff</i>) |
| | 3.1 Community responsibility |
| | 3.2 Human resource management |
| | • Staff recruitment |
| | • Staff appraisals |
| | • Dismissals |
| | • Promotions |
| | 3.3 Marketing and public relations |
| | • Contact with the public media |
| | • Promoting the service |
| | 3.4 Financial management |
| | • Accounting procedures |
| | • Financial reporting |
| | • Budgeting |
| | • Payment process |
| | • Invoicing process |
| | 3.5 Health and safety |
| | • Maintaining the safety of yourself and others |
| Section four | Work instructions (21 instructions) (<i>access by all staff — separate folder</i>) |
| Section five | Distribution list |

What's an 'amendments sheet'?

An amendments sheet is a page at the front of your policy and procedures manual that shows:

- the version number (e.g. fourth time the policy has been changed)
- what changes have been made (what pages or sections of the manual that have been changed)
- when the change was made
- who authorised the change.

It looks like a form with several columns (see the following example).

Sample amendments sheet

| Issue no. | Page no. | Date | Title | Authorised by |
|-----------|----------|------|-------|---------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

What's a 'distribution list'?

A distribution list is a page usually at the back of your policy and procedures manual that shows:

- the issue date and number of the manual
- how many manuals have been issued
- who the manual has been distributed to (use job titles not names)
- what sections of the manual they received (if relevant)
- who authorises revisions of the manual.

It is a form that is used to track who has the manual to make it easier when it needs to be updated. An example is given below.

Sample distribution list sheet

| Issue date | Issue no. | Number of manuals issued | Manual issued to (job titles) | Authorised by |
|------------|-----------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |



Policy and procedures manual...

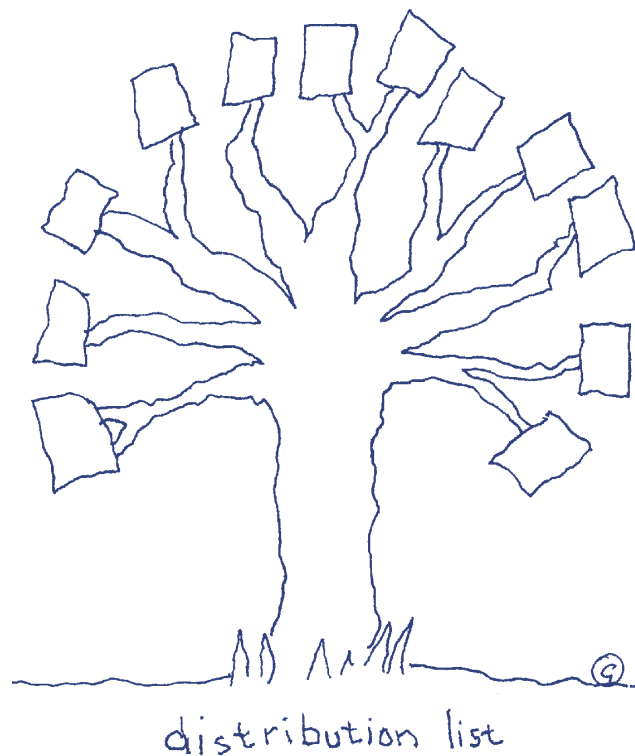
1. Amendments sheet
2. Policies
3. Procedures
4. Work instructions
5. Distribution list

Should policies and procedures be kept in the same manual?

Whether or not you keep policies and procedures in the same manual will vary according to service sizes and types, how many policies and procedures you have, and who will need to access them. You may decide that all documents can be kept together for some relevant people in your service, while other people may only need access to more limited documents.

For example, your policies, representing your service's public face, should be openly available — to the community, potential service users, family members, service users and staff. They may therefore be kept on a website, in marketing or intake materials about your service, in a place easily accessible by staff, or on a networked server.

Your procedures however, are the recipe for staff about how they should do things in the workplace. They would therefore have little relevance for community members, but should always be on hand for staff members. Procedures may then be distributed to relevant staff who would keep them on their desk, in their briefcase, backpack, car, etc.



Should all procedures be kept in every person's manual?

Again, this depends on the size of your service. If it is small, it may be practical to keep everything together, especially if staff members occasionally fill in for each other across roles or work areas. In larger services, you may decide to have separate manuals for separate work areas, such as administration, direct service delivery, human resource management, etc.

What if we provide different services across different locations?

If the services and locations are quite different from each other, you may decide to have separate policies and/or procedures for each one. For example, procedures in an organisation's Adult Respite Service would have little in common with their Drug Rehabilitation Service, as for inner city services compared to rural or remote operations. You need to decide what will suit your service best and clearly record what has been issued to different services and locations.

How do we successfully promote and distribute our manual?

Although people in your service should already be very familiar with the work being done on your policies and procedures long before the final version is ready, once they're complete, everyone should:

- have access to a copy in a format that meets their needs (eg: Braille, large print, simplified English, access to support to read and explain concepts, electronic/paper versions, etc.)
- be able to easily read and understand them
- be able to easily put the policies and procedures into action.

If the completed policies and procedures manual is simply announced in a newsletter or left in staff mailboxes, it's unlikely they will be valued or used. People may not be familiar with using these documents so it would be useful to explain this right from the beginning. The following table covers some key strategies you can use to successfully distribute your policies and procedures and ways to make people aware of them on a daily basis.

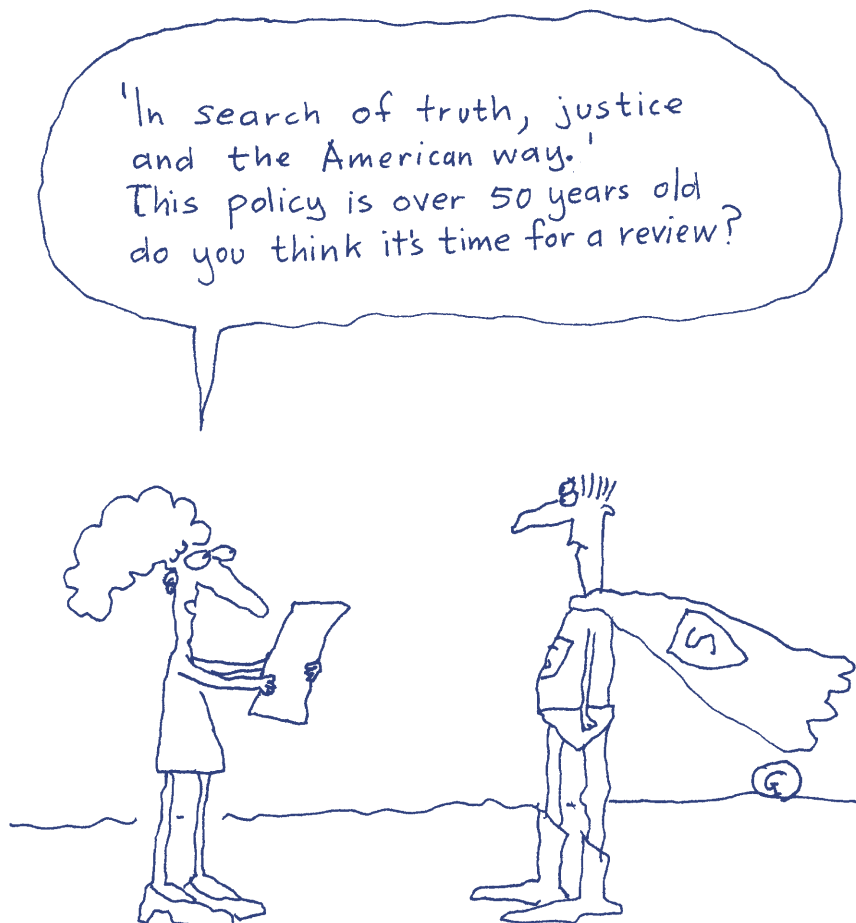
| Steps | Strategies |
|---|---|
| Before distributing the policies and procedures manual. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask different service members to formally trial different procedures and give specific feedback at a future review session. 2. Ask people external to your organisation (or from a different work area) if they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can follow the format of your manual • find it easy to use • understand the policies and vision of your service • have any suggestions for improvement. 3. Arrange to promote your new policies and procedures manual in a range of ways to reach all people connected with your service, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • newsletters • staff, client or parent meetings • part of a mailout • websites. |
| Distribute and explain the manual. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Launch the manual at an introductory session and explain its format and contents, how to use it, how it will be updated, etc. 2. Have other service members explain different parts of the manual where possible to share ownership. |

How can we keep our policies and procedures relevant and current?

After the initial distribution it is important to make sure the policies and procedures are being used — and most importantly that they are achieving what you set out to achieve. To do this:

- regularly refer to the policies and procedures during everyday work routines, staff meetings, appraisals, client meetings, etc. to make sure they are being used
- about 1-2 months after the initial distribution, get people together to review the policies and procedures, collect their feedback and work out how to make improvements and other changes needed
- after about 3-6 months, get people together to give feedback and quickly review and make necessary updates.

Planning regular reviews will also help to make sure your policies are kept up-to-date and continue to meet your needs.



A glaring sign!

If you notice that your policies and procedures are just sitting on a shelf it's time for a review! Make sure you include representatives of everyone connected with your service — they will have clues as to why they're dust collectors.



Why centralised issuing of amendments is important

How can we keep track of changes?

There is never really a 'final' version of your policies and procedures manual. Because the disability sector is always changing and improving, your manual will also need to continuously be updated to remain current and useful.

Staff members using outdated procedures could have serious consequences for your service and service users. Since your policies and procedures have now been spread across your service, trying to make sure everyone has, and is only using, the latest version can be a nightmare.

However, it can also actually be very easily managed if you're well organised and consistently use centralised, standard processes and formats. This involves some simple but vital rules, as outlined in the following table.

| Key questions | Guidelines |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Who should manage this process? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign one person (an administrator) to take full responsibility for issuing new updates, from one central location. • This person should also be responsible for keeping a current master copy of the manual in all its formats and styles (e.g. paper, electronic or Braille etc.). • This administrator will also need to maintain records of updates and amendments and archive outdated versions where necessary. |
| What about formatting and tracking? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number all policy and procedure pages to include the total number of pages. For example, 1 of 28 pages, 2 of 28 pages, etc. • Every policy and procedure should include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) an issue date (b) a version number e.g. Issue date: 14 Feb 2004; Issue no: 3 (see the example on page 20). • Keep an amendment sheet at the front of policy and procedure manuals. Each time an amendment is issued, record it on this sheet (an example is included on page 31). |

| Key questions | Guidelines |
|-------------------------------|---|
| What about electronic copies? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic copies are quicker and easier to distribute and update since the data can simply be emailed, or loaded onto a network or server. The previous electronic copy can then be archived and over-ridden by the updated version. |
| What about hard copies? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating paper versions of manuals can be expensive, frustrating and a waste of paper. Use loose leaf folders so you can easily replace just a few pages, rather than the whole manual. • When issuing updated hard copies (paper, disk, CD, etc.) have people hand in their previous version or ensure they destroy it. |



If all else fails...

1. Have one central administrator of manuals
2. Electronic versions are easier to update
3. Use loose leaf pages for paper copies
4. Have an issue number, date and version on all documents
5. Use an amendments and distribution sheet (see page 31)



Section 6

How can we be sure we meet the Queensland Disability Service Standards?

For organisations providing services for people with disabilities, the focus of their service is the principles represented in the Disability Service Standards. These principles — for example being free to raise complaints, achieving valued status and the right to privacy — will then be the basis of the organisation’s policies.

Procedures (and work instructions to a more detailed level) will in turn reflect these beliefs and explain how they can be actioned in the workplace. Creating policies and procedures based on the Disability Service Standards also meets the Queensland Disability Sector Quality System requirements.

If you already have policies and procedures you will need to review them in light of your understanding of the standards.



What do they mean for us?

Think about what the Disability Service Standards really mean for your service. As a group, align on how you can make them happen in your service (use the activities listed on page 38 to help with this).

What do the Disability Service Standards mean to us?

Each Disability Service Standard is given below with some questions designed to provoke thinking about what the standard really means amongst the people in your service.

For each standard complete the following activities:

1. In light of your organisation's vision, mission and values what does this standard mean to your service?
2. What systems, policies and procedures need to be in place to demonstrate this understanding?
3. How does your policy demonstrate this understanding?
4. How could it better demonstrate what this standard means for your service?
5. How do your procedures demonstrate this understanding?
6. How could they better demonstrate what this standard means for your service?
7. How do your work instructions demonstrate this understanding?
8. How could they better demonstrate what this standard means for your service?
9. Document any actions that have arisen from this discussion.

Standard one: service access

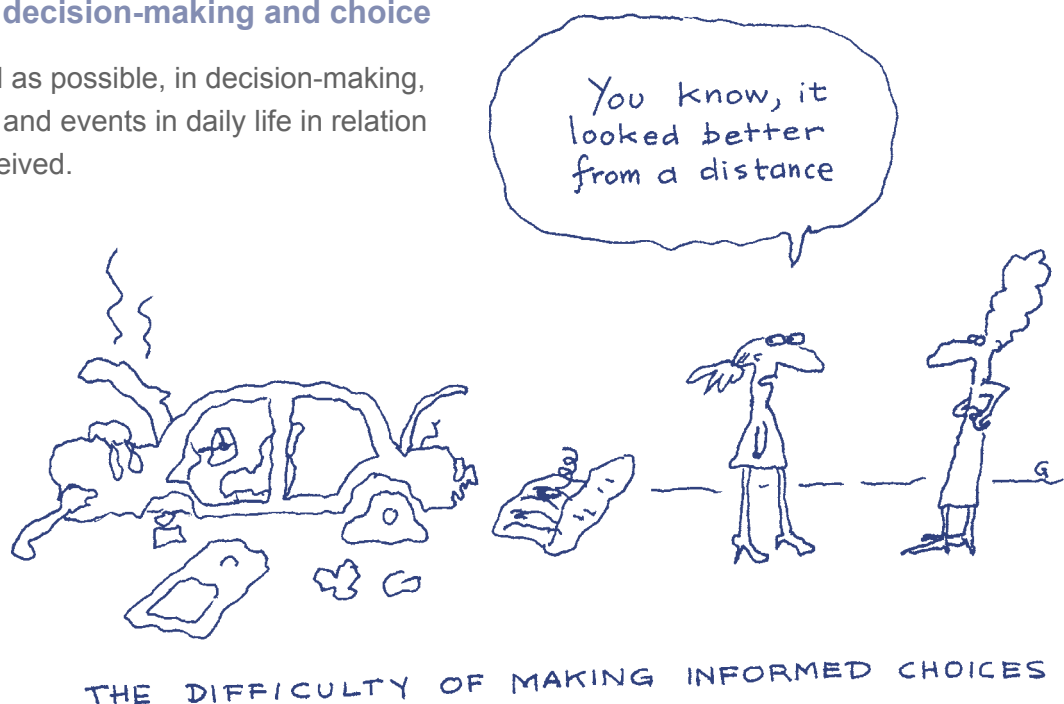
Each person with a disability seeking a service has access to the service on the basis of relative need and within available resources.

Standard two: individual needs

Individual needs and personal goals are met in the least restrictive way possible and within available resources.

Standard three: decision-making and choice

Participation as full as possible, in decision-making, choice of activities and events in daily life in relation to the services received.



Standard four: privacy, dignity and confidentiality

Recognition of the right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all aspects of life.

Standard five: participation and integration

Support and encouragement to participate and be included in the life of the community.

Standard six: valued status

Providing opportunities to develop skills to participate in and achieve valued roles within the community.

Standard seven: complaints and disputes

A proactive approach to complaints and disputes management that safeguards service users and supports them from retributive action when raising complaints.

Standard eight: service management

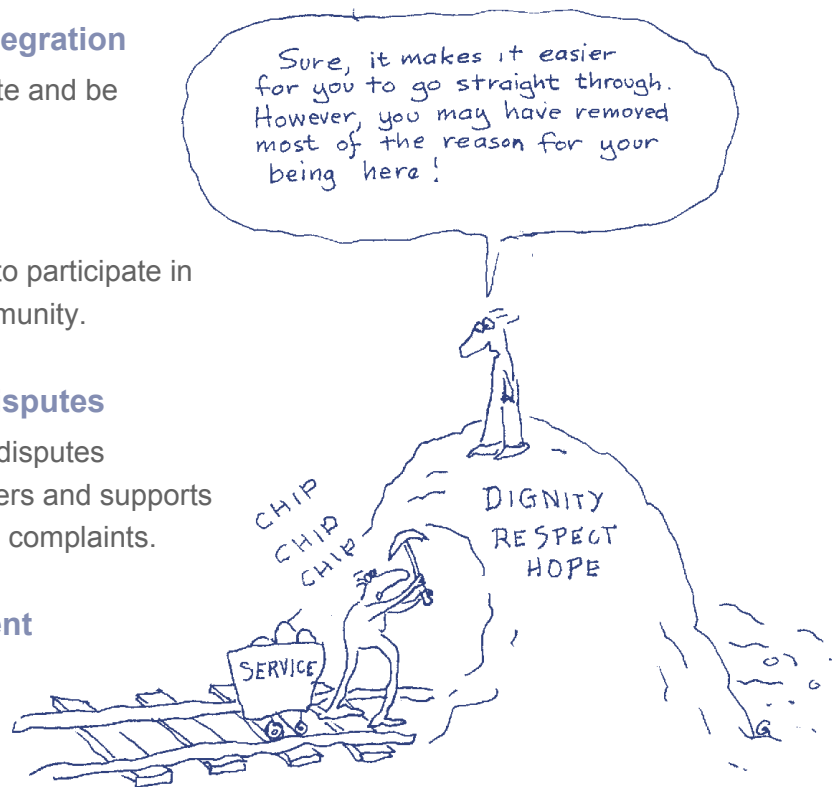
Effective corporate governance through sound and visible management systems and practices.

Standard nine: protection of legal and human rights and freedom from abuse and neglect

Upholding the legal and human rights of each person with a disability and taking action to prevent and/or respond to allegation of abuse and neglect.

Standard ten: staff recruitment, employment and development

Recruitment, selection and development of paid and unpaid staff that ensures they have the relevant values, skills, knowledge and competencies to support service delivery to service users.



Good work, now how can we do it better ?



Section 7

Troubleshooting

It's not likely that the policy development process will run entirely smoothly and effortlessly. Difficulties along the way can be less traumatic if you anticipate and take precautions against them. This section covers some of the more common problems and suggests possible solutions. The general rule of thumb is to:

1. have a realistic plan with small, regular steps
2. encourage participation and ownership of the process by others
3. acknowledge achievements to help people stay positive and focussed on goals.



You're not alone...

Whatever your problem, someone else will probably be having a similar experience. It may help to talk to others and make use of readily available advice (some suggestions are given on page 15).

We're no good at writing things down

If creating policies and procedures is a new or rare task for your service, the prospect of having to write them in formal language can be very intimidating. While you may use a standard format for writing policies, this should not be your main focus. As a real reflection of your service's values, future direction and expectations, your highest priority in writing policies and procedures is that they can be easily understood by everyone connected with your service — regardless of wording or grammar — they will then be more valued and used.

In getting help with writing formats and styles, there's certainly no need to reinvent the wheel. You can save yourself a lot of time, effort and worry by finding out what others in your area have done. You could work together and share resources and ideas.



Help!

Examples of policy and procedure formats and styles are given in this resource as well as others that are available from Disability Services Queensland.

Some useful publications are also listed in *Section 10 — Resources*.



The three main sauces of the key determinations of quality

We can't get people involved

Participation from all ranges of people connected with your service is vital to creating useful policies and procedures. If people don't seem to want to take part, it's important to quickly find out why, then take steps to ease their worries or issues. Some issues and possible solutions are provided below.

| Issue | Possible solution |
|---|--|
| What if people think it's too much work to participate? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you developed a plan with people that is simple and seems achievable? • Could you break the plan down into smaller steps and celebrate each achievement? • Are people aware of the benefits of the process for themselves and the service? • How can you inspire them? Are you inspired? |
| What if people think they don't have anything worth saying? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you reminded people about the value of their knowledge and experiences with the service? • Can you remind people that it's their service, so any input they give is the most valuable and useful? |
| What if people think they aren't smart enough to be of any use? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you clearly explained to people the value of their knowledge and experiences with the service and the value of their feedback? • Have you organised a range of ways for people to safely, easily and comfortably give input? • Have you created expectations that everyone has ownership of this process and the right to have their say, in whatever way suits their needs? • Should you create a more informal, relaxed atmosphere that invites honest feedback? • Do people know how to participate, or do they need to develop some skills first? |

| Issue | Possible solution |
|---|---|
| Do people think they live too far away? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you arrange car pooling, a central location, different venue each time, or combine activities with other service events (e.g. another meeting, a picnic, dinner, training session, etc.). • Could you do something other than face-to-face meetings, such as telephone conferencing, email, faxes, Internet discussion boards or live chats, video conferencing, etc? |
| Do people seem to not care what happens in the service? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the input of others valued in your service? • Have people been told that their input is considered valuable and useful? • Have they participated in service development before? Do they know how to? Do they need to develop some skills and knowledge first? • Can people see the benefits of participating, for themselves and the service? • Have you shown them what results can be achieved and how? Do they believe this is achievable? |
| Do people seem generally negative and unmotivated? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the input of others valued in your service? • Have people been told that their input is considered valuable and useful? • Have they participated in service development before? Do they know how to? Do they need to develop some skills and knowledge first? • Can people see the benefits of participating, for themselves and the service? • Have you shown them what results can be achieved, and how? Do they believe this is achievable? |
| What if people think there are the usual people who will be involved? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you invited people from all aspects of your service (internal and external) to participate? • Do people realise the value of their input? • Have you provided a range of ways to participate? • Do you have a plan to manage participation and delegate tasks? |



What is the problem?

The quicker you find out what's bothering people, the quicker you can fix the problem and get on with things. This may be as simple as asking a couple of key questions then **listening** carefully to the answers.

We're not sure we're doing it right

Remember that you're not in this alone — other services are probably having similar worries and problems as you. It can be useful for you (and others) to work together where possible, to check your progress and help each other out.

There are also plenty of ways to get more advice, help or simply reassurance such as from:

- **Disability Services Qld (DSQ):** DSQ can provide advice, resources, publications, etc. You may contact them by phone, visit their office, or have a Community Resource Officer come to your service. Contact details are on page 47.
- **Working with others in your region:** instead of reinventing the wheel, share ideas and resources with other services going through the same process as you.

It's too much work and we're too busy

It would be rare to have a shortage of work in a community service and creating policies and procedures also definitely involves some extra work and effort. If this is something you (and others in your service) are not used to doing, it may seem especially difficult.

Stay focussed on the long-term benefits

Help people to not get overwhelmed by the task and find ways to keep organised, efficient, positive and motivated. To do this:

1. Have a good plan with small, regular, achievable steps.
2. Make sure your plan has a realistic timeline, then stick to your schedule.
3. Acknowledge every achievement of groups and individuals.
4. Keep positive yourself and inspire others.



We're too busy...

- Have a good plan with realistic timeframes
- Share the work and support others
- Set clear expectations and timeframes for tasks
- Combine tasks and meetings
- Help staff prioritise work and be efficient
- Don't reinvent the wheel — share resources
- Be well organised



Be organised

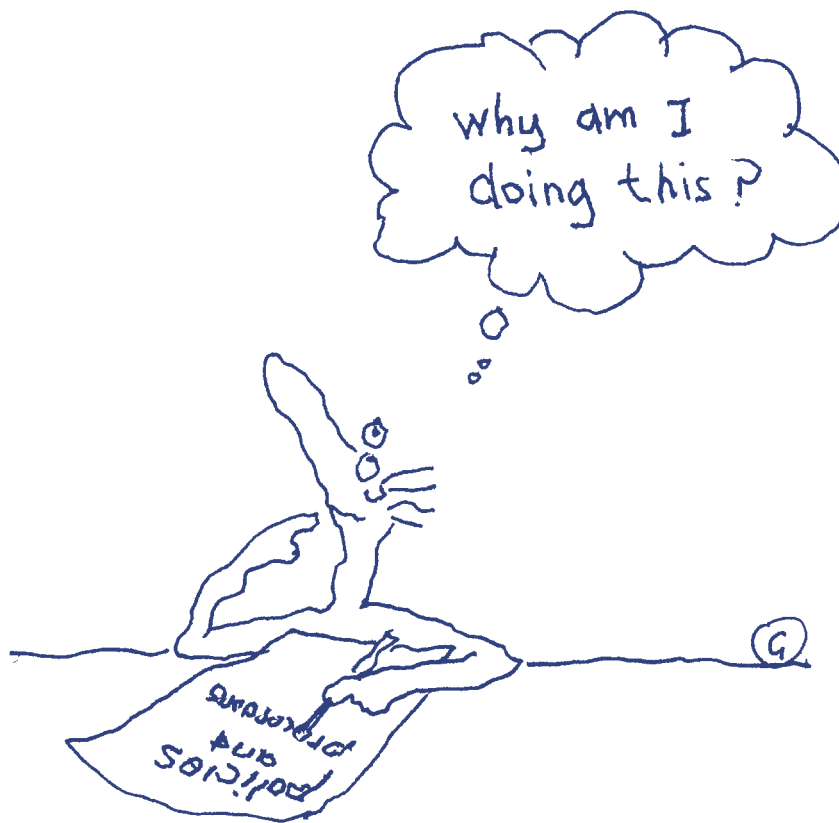
There are other ways you can organise people and the process so the task doesn't seem so overwhelming. For example, you could:

- fit policy development tasks in with regular work, such as:
 - combine meetings
 - combine procedure development with annual audits, reviews, etc.
 - use policy and procedure development as a chance to review processes or client files, do staff appraisals, have a general clean up of old paperwork, etc.
- help staff to prioritise their routine work to fit in extra tasks and support them as much as possible
- motivate as many people as possible to participate and share the workload.

Use good management

There are also some ways you can use yourself to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Make sure:

- you show people how well organised you are, so they are confident their time and effort will be well used and achieve results
- people know exactly what to do, what result is expected, and how to do it so they don't waste time or resources
- you supply people with the resources they need (including enough time) or access to them
- you're always ready to give plenty of advice and support
- you help or encourage people to find (and share) ways to be more efficient and effective
- you find out what other services, government bodies etc. can provide — there's no need to re-invent the wheel.



We've lost momentum

Creating policies and procedures can be a long-term process requiring a lot of work, making it hard at times to see immediate benefits.

To make sure this effort doesn't go to waste and that people get to experience these benefits it's crucial to keep them (and yourself) motivated along the way.

This is done by:

- having a long-term plan with regular, small steps and flexibility to adapt to necessary changes
- reviewing your progress regularly, making any changes needed and celebrating progress
- working with other services in your area to get a new perspective
- getting help or advice from Disability Services Queensland to give you a kick-start.



Don't be discouraged

Try to pick up the pace and get people going again as soon as possible. Kick-starting the process can be as simple as finding and celebrating a small success.

People think all our work will just sit on a shelf and collect dust

There's no denying that policies and procedures written in the past have simply become dust collectors and not been used to their maximum capacity in the workplace.

Tell tale signs of policies and procedures destined to dust collection are:

- people think the policies and procedures are difficult to understand and information is hard to find
- people weren't given a copy of them, or access to them
- people didn't have a chance to have input
- the policies and procedures aren't regularly updated according to feedback from people throughout the service
- management does not consider the policies valuable and useful.

How to avoid dust collectors

To avoid creating dust collectors, ask yourself these questions about your policies and procedures:

1. Is the manual easy to use and the language easy to understand (possibly available in different formats)?
2. Are the procedures easy to follow and apply in practice in your service?
3. Are they easily accessed and clearly explained to everyone connected with your service?
4. Did people who can make them relevant to their everyday work develop them?
5. Does management openly, regularly and wholeheartedly support them?
6. Are they widely talked about (and known) in your service, with positive interest created by management?
7. Are they regularly updated, based on feedback from people internal and external to your service?



Where are you headed?

Making dust collecting policies is very easy — it largely depends on your focus, motivation and commitment to the long term results you want to achieve.



Section 8 Contact details

ACROD Ltd (Qld Division)

Phone: (07) 3357 4188
Fax: (07) 3357 4288
Email: acrodqld@acrod.org.au
Web: www.acrod.org.au
Address: Suite 15, Level 4 CENTRO Lutwyche
543 Lutwyche Road
Lutwyche Qld 4030
Mail: PO Box 893
Lutwyche Qld 4030

Disability Services Queensland

Freecall: 1800 177 120
Phone: (07) 3224 8444
TTY: 1800 010 222 (free – telephone typewriter)
TTY: (07) 3224 8021
Fax: (07) 3239 0355
Email: dial@disability.qld.gov.au
Web: www.disability.qld.gov.au
Address: GPO Box 806
Brisbane Qld 4001



Section 9 Glossary

- Administrator:** This is one person who is responsible for keeping a record of changes to policy and procedure manuals and distributing them to the relevant people. They are therefore responsible for knowing who has what manual and that everyone has the current version.
- Alignment:** As the first step in creating policies and procedures this refers to people in your service all having a shared and agreed focus for their service. They then work toward the same goals and use this as the basis for writing policies and procedures.
- Amendments:** *(In this context)* These are changes, updates or modifications to a policy or procedure.
- Amendments sheet:** An amendments sheet is a page at the front of your policy and procedures manual that shows the number of changes to the documents, what changes have been made, when and who authorised them.
- Authorising officer:** This is the person who signs policies and/or procedures (and changes to them) to authorise their use in the workplace. It may be a service or branch manager.
- Brainstorm:** This is a process to quickly get lots of ideas from a group of people. A question is asked and people answer quickly, while one person writes down what is said. Answers are not judged or discarded during the brainstorm, but are later reviewed and refined.
- Certification:** Process where a service is assessed by a third party (Certification Body) to decide whether they meet all the requirements of the Queensland Disability Service Standards.
- Continuous improvement:** Way of organising work processes so that activities are regularly assessed, reviewed against feedback received, evaluated and improved.
- Discussion board:** A 'noticeboard' on a website where people can write information or questions, then other people can respond to these.

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| Distribute: | Hand out or share out to a number of people. |
| Distribution list: | A distribution list sheet is a page usually at the back of your policy and procedures manual that shows the issue date and number of the manual, how many manuals have been issued, who the manual has been distributed to, what sections of the manual they received and who authorises revisions of the manual. |
| DSQ: | Disability Services Queensland. |
| Disability Sector Quality System: | System in the disability sector to establish quality processes and outcomes for service users. It was established by Disability Services Queensland, and requires disability services to develop quality processes and be certified as a quality disability service. The quality system includes the organisational structure, procedures, processes and resources needed to establish quality management. |
| Effectiveness: | This is how well a service monitors and responds to the changing needs of people using the service. |
| Efficiency: | This is measured by how successful the service is in maximising the use of its resources. |
| Evaluate: | This means to measure the value of something. A service outcome may be judged against set criteria (an assessment), then a decision is made about how valuable that outcome is for service users (evaluation). |
| Feedback: | Information received about how the service is going. It may be received from service users, staff, funding bodies, suppliers, etc. and may be given face-to-face, by email, telephone, letter, etc. It may be positive or negative (such as a compliment or complaint). All feedback provides opportunities to find ways to improve service. |
| Footer: | The bottom of a page, below the regular text. It is usually where the page numbers are found. |
| Header: | The top part of a page, above the regular text. |
| Human resources: | The people in the organisation. |
| Input: | <i>(In this context)</i> The data received from people which contributes to the development of policies and procedures. This may include verbal or written feedback, participation in discussions, meetings and brainstorming, etc. |
| Issue date: | The date on which a policy or procedure was issued (or distributed) or a change was made to it. The issue date should be written on all policies and procedures. |

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| Outcome: | This is something specific that has been achieved from a plan. It is measurable and usually assessed by service users, according to how satisfied they are with what they get from a service. |
| Participation: | <i>(In this context)</i> People connected with a service giving feedback, taking part in meetings and other activities, sharing ideas and contributing to policy development. The approach is one of everyone being equal partners with an open, unjudged exchange of information. It also involves mutual respect, shared responsibility and decision-making. |
| Policy: | These are the guiding principles of your service. They are what your service believes in and is guided by. Each policy is usually a couple of paragraphs long and found at the front of a policy and procedures manual. They may also be called 'organisational policies'. |
| Policy and procedures manual: | A manual (or group of manuals) such as a folder or electronic file, where policies and procedures are kept and accessed by others. |
| Procedure: | These are step-by-step directions based on your policies. They are like a recipe for how you will achieve your policies, who will do it and when. There may be several procedures for one policy and they may be written text, a diagram, flowchart, pictures or photographs. They may also be called workplace procedures. |
| Process: | A set of steps and the resources you need to do a task. It has a specific goal, which in the disability sector would be related to quality outcomes for service users. |
| Queensland Disability Services Standards: | Standards (based on national standards) used as a benchmark for service in the disability sector. Disability services are certified and granted funding according to their ability to demonstrate how they meet these standards. There are ten Queensland Disability Services Standards and their service standard indicators. |
| Resource: | <i>(In this context)</i> Anything that is used to contribute to policy and procedure development, such as people connected with the service, government and/or advisory bodies, written publications, etc. |
| Review: | An activity where you take the time to look back and examine what has happened in a service or with something in particular. It is critically assessed with a view to deciding whether (and what) changes to make to improve it. It also usually involves a group of people relevant to the service or particular situation. |
| Service user: | Person who uses (or is a customer of) a service for people with a disability. |
| Stakeholders: | Anyone who has a particular stake (or interest or concern) in something. For disability services, stakeholders may be service users, staff, board members, suppliers to the service, the local community, potential service users, etc. |

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| Standard: | A level of quality or attainment that is used as a measure or model to compare to. |
| Supplier: | A provider of resources such as equipment, facilities, funding, etc. |
| Trial: | An activity where something is used for the first time to test it. The trial should be done with specific criteria in mind to test it against and should be followed by a review. |
| Version control: | This is about making sure everyone in a service has the current version of a policy or procedure. This means outdated versions must be destroyed and the current version accurately distributed by the administrator. |
| Work instruction: | These are even more specific than procedures and give a detailed step-by-step breakdown of how to do a certain task. They may be developed by asking the question 'What specific steps do you follow to do this basic task?' |



Section 10

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