The policy/project nexus: lessons learned from a policy implementation project

Australian Institute of Project Management Inaugural Regional Conference
Tuesday 18 October 2016

Fiona Margetts
University of Southern Queensland
What policy?
Outline

- Context
- Role of policy in higher education
- Policy Refresh Project
- Critical success factors
- Lessons learned
- Current and future state
Higher education context

- Dynamic and complex
- Competitive and volatile
- Increasingly regulated
- Significant industry & valuable export commodity
- Science, research and innovation agendas
- Global
Global context

Local context
Role of policy

Governance standards

Quality assurance | Risk mitigation
Compliance | Continuous improvement

Academic quality standards

Management standards
Policy timeline

2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014

Dead Cat Bounce

Policy Refresh Project

Author: Mr Steve Ivey, Executive Director (Sustainable Business Management and Improvement) – adapted and used with permission
Policy Refresh Project

Aim: to establish a flexible and sustainable framework for the management of policy

Objectives:
1. Establish the guiding principles (framework)
2. Rework the technical infrastructure
3. Deploy the framework
Deliverables

Policy & Procedure Framework

- Policies (principles)
- Procedures (processes)
- Approval Hierarchy
- Accountability
- Change Management
- Compliance Integration

Deliverables

Technical Infrastructure

Content Management System
- Records Manager
- Meta data
- Audit trail

Publishing System
- University supported
- In-house development
- Google Search Application
- Usage Statistics

Policy & Procedure Library
- Definitions Dictionary
- Policy/procedure/schedules
- Resources
Challenges and impact

- Organisational restructure
- System failure
- Contract variation
- Unclear accountability
- Complexity

2 dimensions
- Project
- Business as usual

4 streams
- Governance & structure
- Management
- Communication & education
- Resourcing/budget/staffing
Critical success factors

- Environmental scanning
- Sponsor and senior management engagement
- Stakeholder identification and engagement
- Effective team structures
- The right people
- Governance structures
- Performance indicators
- Evaluation
- Project management approach
Governance structures

Policy Refresh Project

Program Board
- Program Chair

Vice-Chancellor’s Assurance Committee
- Vice-Chancellor

Policy Implementation Team
- Project Sponsor

Policy and Procedure Framework (BAU)

University Council
- Chancellor

Chancellor’s Committee
- Chancellor

Vice-Chancellor’s Committee
- Vice-Chancellor

Policy Implementation Team
- ED (SBMI)

Accountable Officers
- Senior Executive

Shergold, P, Learning from Failure: Why large government policy initiatives have gone so badly wrong in the past and how the chances of success in the future can be improved, 2015, APS Commission, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, Australia.
Project management approach

- Project initiation
- Objective & KPI identification
- Milestone identification & adjustment
- Monitor / adjust
- Manage delivery / collect data
- Plan / budget / resource
- Objective & KPI delivery
- Evaluation
- Embedded outcomes = project success
Lessons learned

- Policy enables change
- Policy generates cross-organisational collaboration
- Lessons learned
- Robust structured approach required
- Effective project management underpins success
Benefits realised

**Project benefits:**
- Engaged accountable officers
- Cross-organisational collaboration
- Enhanced governance and management reporting capability
- Modern, compliant, robust system
- Compliance integration
- Risk mitigation

**Business as usual benefits:**
- Embedded policy process
- Change efficiencies
- Reduced complaints
- Reduced audit issues and risk profile
- Improved staff survey results
- Improved student experience
Policy change capability

- Editorial Changes
- Minor Reviews
- New & Major Reviews

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<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
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Policy Library usage (September 2016)

Unique Page Views

Hourly Searches

Daily Searches
Policy searches

Top 20 Library Searches

- assessment, 78, 11%
- student, 61, 9%
- academic, 50, 7%
- conduct, 49, 7%
- leave, 36, 5%
- credit, 35, 5%
- research, 35, 5%
- code, 35, 5%
- course, 34, 5%
- misconduct, 34, 5%
- management, 29, 4%
- complaint, 27, 4%
- integrity, 27, 4%
- admissions, 27, 4%
- media, 26, 4%
- information, 24, 3%
- appeal, 22, 3%
- enrolment, 21, 3%
- extension, 20, 3%

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Current state

Policy Refresh Project


Dead Cat Bounce

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# Staff engagement survey

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<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
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<td>Organisational Objectives</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>+22%</td>
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<td>Change &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>+9%</td>
<td>+19%</td>
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<td>Processes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognition</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
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Team and individual awards

ATEM
2016 Mindhive Policy and Governance Award

AIPM
2015 Queensland Project Manager of the Year
Future state

- Further develop organisational change capability
  - Embed
  - Integrate
  - Improve processes

- Enhance evaluation capability
  - Use data wisely
  - Get creative
  - Change faster
Questions

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USQ Policy Library
www.policy.usq.edu.au
References


References


References


Engwall, M 2003, 'No project is an island: linking projects to history and context', Research policy, vol. 32, no. 5, pp. 789-808.


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