

Policy & procedure review process checklist

Article: *10 steps to a successful policy and procedure review process*

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1. Define clear objectives for each review cycle

Each review should begin with a clear statement of what is being assessed, such as legal compliance, operational relevance, or risk exposure. This is normally defined by compliance or governance leaders. Without clear objectives, reviews become superficial and fail to address underlying issues.

2. Maintain an up-to-date policy review schedule

All policies should be listed in a central review calendar with defined review dates. This schedule is usually managed by governance administrators. Without a structured timetable, reviews are missed and documents become outdated.

3. Assign named reviewers and approvers

Every review must have clearly identified reviewers and final approvers. These roles are typically filled by subject matter experts and senior managers. When responsibilities are unclear, reviews are delayed or abandoned.

4. Provide reviewers with relevant background information

Reviewers should have access to previous versions, audit findings, and regulatory updates. Governance teams normally prepare this material. Without context, reviewers may overlook critical risks.

5. Collect feedback in a central system

All comments, recommendations, and change requests should be recorded in a shared system. This is often managed through SharePoint or governance platforms. Relying on email makes feedback difficult to track and audit.

6. Evaluate feedback against regulatory and business requirements

Feedback should be assessed in relation to legal obligations and organisational objectives. Compliance and legal teams usually lead this step. Ignoring regulatory context can result in non-compliant updates.

7. Document decisions and rationales

Every major change or rejection should be documented with a clear justification. This is typically handled by governance administrators. Without recorded rationales, decisions are difficult to defend during audits.

8. Complete formal approval and sign-off

Revised policies must be formally approved before publication. This responsibility normally sits with senior management or compliance officers. Informal approvals weaken governance controls.

9. Preserve previous versions and review records

Historical versions and review records should be securely archived. IT and records management teams manage this. Without proper archives, organisations cannot demonstrate long-term compliance.

10. Update metadata and review dates after approval

Once approved, document properties such as status, version, and next review date should be updated. This is usually done by administrators. Outdated metadata leads to reporting errors.

11. Communicate changes to affected staff

All relevant employees should be informed of policy changes through official channels. HR and internal communications teams normally lead this. Without communication, staff continue following old practices.

12. Support implementation of revised policies

Managers and supervisors should ensure new procedures are understood and applied. This step is often overlooked. Without implementation support, updates remain theoretical.

13. Monitor compliance following publication

Post-review monitoring should check whether updated policies are being followed. Compliance teams usually perform this. Lack of monitoring allows non-compliance to persist.

14. Escalate overdue or incomplete reviews

Missed deadlines should be formally escalated to senior management. Governance leaders usually handle this. Failure to escalate leads to growing review backlogs.

15. Evaluate the effectiveness of the review process

Review cycles should be periodically assessed to identify delays, gaps, or inefficiencies. This is normally done by governance leads. Without evaluation, weak processes remain unchanged.