

Definition

A policy is a statement of principles and intentions.

(Source: ISO14001 and ISO14004)

A policy is a formal demonstration of a business's commitments which:

- Demonstrates commitment from the top;
- Sets the framework for how a Member conducts its business practices;
- Demonstrates corporate responsibility and governance;
- Is consistent with other management policies and practices.

RJC Code of Practices – Provision 4.2

COP 4.2.1: Members must adopt a policy that is endorsed by senior management, supports achievement of this Code of Practices and make the policy publicly available.

The above provision in the Code of Practices specifically requires Members to adopt a policy. An example RJC Policy Statement is included in Appendix 2 of the Standards Guidance.

Other provisions in the Code of Practices could also be usefully supported by a relevant policy, as one (but not the only) type of objective evidence for conformance.

Developing a Policy

Why Develop a Policy?

A policy is a way for RJC Members to show how they intend to comply with the RJC Code of Practices. A written policy helps promote an effective set of management systems or initiatives for a given topic.

To be effective, a policy must:

- Involve senior management and representatives in the preparation of the policy,
- Be relevant to the Member's nature, scale and impacts,
- Be communicated to those that work for and on behalf of the Member, and
- Be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changing conditions.

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The best policies are specific to a workplace and are not borrowed from or written by outsiders. An employer may delegate the preparation of a policy to a staff member. However the written policy statement is a pledge to employees and therefore the employer is mainly responsible for content. The policy should be dated and signed by the senior executive of Member's business.

No matter how well written, a policy is no more than empty words if there are no systems and/or practices established to put the policy into effect throughout the Member's business. The policy can only be put into effect where:

- Responsibilities are clearly defined and assigned,
- Methods of accountability are established,
- Proper systems, processes and program are implemented, and
- Responsibilities for carrying out the policy objectives are clearly communicated and understood.

Part of a successful policy is ensuring that all employees and relevant business partners are aware of it. The Member can reinforce its commitment to the policy by posting it throughout the organisation and making it available to the public. This could be via the company web page, or displayed on premises, for example.

The following checklist may assist you to develop and evaluate an effective policy.

Question	Yes	No
Does the policy outline how it will be implemented and key management responsibilities?		
Is there a commitment to comply with Applicable Law and industry guidelines, where relevant?		
Are obligations for employees made clear?		
Is it signed and dated by senior management?		
Have the views of managers and employees, relevant business partners and other stakeholders been taken into account?		
Have all relevant employees and business partners been advised of the policy?		
Are stakeholders such as employees and affected customers consulted about periodic revisions and updating of the policy?		

General Policy Layout:

A general template for the layout of a policy document is provided at the end of this document.

Further Information:

The RJC website has further information on RJC Member Certification and the Code of Practices:
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General Policy Layout:

The following draft could be modified or adapted to suit the Member's business. It should include the business logo or be produced on letterhead.

Policy Title

[Insert Business Name] is a [Include a Brief Description of the Business].

We have [X] sites located [Y] and employ approximately [Z] personnel.

[Detail of what the policy covers and the applicable law]

[The commitment of the business and who is responsible for ensuring this commitment is met]

[Detail how the policy will be implemented to ensure awareness and competence]

[Reference Material & Applicable Documents]

Signed/endorsed:

Date of effect:

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