

## **Policy**

A **policy** is an overall guide, which sets the boundaries within which action will take place, and should reflect the philosophy of the organization or department. It should be general, yet comprehensive and include:

1. Statement of purpose
2. Commitment to national policy
3. Reference to other policies or guidelines
4. Timescale
5. Skill requirements of the individual(s)

## **Procedure**

A **procedure** is a series of related steps designed to accomplish a specific task in a specified chronological order.

Procedures should be written in step-by-step detail, so as to require only minimal interpretation, and include correctly completed samples where appropriate.

An effective way of developing detailed procedures is to ask the appropriate employee to write down all of the steps taken to accomplish a task. These could be given to another employee to see if he/she could follow them to a logical conclusion. Once the procedures are verified, they should be written down and filed in the departmental policy and procedural manual.

The following suggestions may prove helpful in writing procedures:

1. Determine all the steps required. Use only the minimum number needed for carrying out the procedure.
2. Determine the best sequence for the performance of these steps. Those, which are similar or closely related to each other, should be grouped together.
3. Review procedures that might be affected by changes in other procedures.
4. Test a procedure before putting it into everyday use; try to discover its flaws.
5. Evaluate the procedure after it has been used for several weeks. Employees who work with the procedure are good sources for identifying its possible problems and offering suggestions for its improvement.
6. Review and update policies and procedures on an annual basis, or sooner as it becomes necessary.