
Policy Framework Design and Governance Training Course

30 November – 11 December 2026
Amsterdam





Policy Framework Design and Governance Training Course

Ref: 9_10786 **Date:** 30 November – 11 December 2026 **Location:** Amsterdam **Fees:** 8640 GBP

Programme Summary

Policy framework design and governance is a ten-day training course for senior leaders working at strategic level, culminating in a policy framework blueprint for their organisation or public entity. Many organisations hold policies that overlap, contradict one another or have not been reviewed for years, leaving staff unsure which rule applies and leaving boards exposed. The approach treats policies and procedures as one governed system, from architecture and drafting through approval, rollout, monitoring and review. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme in policy framework design and governance.

The Business Case

Policies are the main channel through which a board or ministry turns its intent into daily behaviour. When the policy set is fragmented, decisions slow down, controls fail silently and audits find gaps that no one owns. Leaders who can design a coherent hierarchy, write documents people can follow and govern their lifecycle reduce exposure while freeing managers to act with confidence.

- Control Failure and Audit Findings: Falls when every control activity is anchored in a current, owned policy or procedure.
- Decision and Approval Cycle Time: Shortens through clear delegation of authority and standard document routes.
- Policy Currency and Attestation Rates: Rise when review cycles, owners and acknowledgement are tracked in one register.

Principles and Evidence Base

- COSO Internal Control Integrated Framework: Frames policies and procedures as the means of deploying control activities, applied in Sessions 1 and 7.
- ISO 37301 Compliance Management Systems: Guides the monitoring, escalation and continual improvement loop built in Sessions 8 and 9.
- ISO 9001 Documented Information Control: Informs version control, document identification and retention rules in Session 6.
- RACI Responsibility Assignment: Clarifies policy ownership, approval and consultation roles in Sessions 2 and 5.



Intended Participants

- Executives who sponsor or approve organisation-wide policies.
- Leaders responsible for governance, compliance or internal control frameworks.
- Heads of function who own policy sets for finance, people, procurement, operations or technology.
- Senior officials who issue regulations, circulars or administrative procedures within public bodies.
- Organisational development and quality leaders rebuilding a policies and procedures manual.

The programme serves government entities, financial services, energy and utilities, and healthcare organisations.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to diagnose gaps, overlaps and conflicts in an existing policy set.
2. Participants will be able to construct a policy hierarchy that separates policies, standards, procedures and work instructions.
3. Participants will be able to draft policy and procedure documents in plain language that users can apply without interpretation.
4. Participants will be able to justify an approval and delegation route that matches the risk of each document.
5. Participants will be able to design a rollout and communication plan that secures acknowledgement and adoption.
6. Participants will be able to evaluate policy effectiveness through compliance monitoring and periodic review.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Policy as a Governance Instrument

What role do policies play in steering an organisation?

- Policy, Strategy and Risk Appetite Linkages
- Control Activities in the COSO Internal Control Integrated Framework
- Board, Executive and Management Policy Roles
- Consequences of Policy Gaps and Overlaps
- Policy Maturity Self-Assessment

Day 2: Diagnosing the Current Policy Set

How sound is the policy set the organisation holds today?

- Policy Inventory and Register Build
- Gap, Overlap and Conflict Mapping
- Owner and Review Date Audit
- Stakeholder Interviews on Usability
- RACI Analysis of Current Ownership



Day 3: Designing the Policy Framework Architecture

How should policies, standards and procedures fit together?

- Four-Tier Document Hierarchy
- Enterprise, Functional and Local Policy Scopes
- Policy on Policies as the Master Rulebook
- Taxonomy, Numbering and Classification Schemes
- Framework Blueprint Drafting

Day 4: Drafting Clear Policy Statements

How is a policy written so that its intent cannot be misread?

- Standard Policy Template Sections
- Purpose, Scope and Applicability Statements
- Mandatory Language: Must, Should and May
- Plain-Language Principles and Readability Testing
- Definitions and Cross-Reference Control

Day 5: Writing Procedures and Work Instructions

How are policy requirements turned into steps people can follow?

- Process Mapping Before Procedure Writing
- Step Sequencing, Decision Points and Exceptions
- Swimlane Charts and Checklists
- Role Assignment Within Each Procedure
- Procedure Walk-Through Testing With Users

Day 6: Document Control and Version Management

How does the organisation keep one current version of every document?

- ISO 9001 Documented Information Principles
- Version Numbering and Change Logs
- Retention, Archiving and Withdrawal Rules
- Central Policy Repository Design
- Access Rights and Publication Controls

Day 7: Approval, Delegation and Policy Governance

Who approves which document, and on what evidence?



- Delegation of Authority Matrix
- Risk-Based Approval Routes
- Policy Committee Terms of Reference
- Impact Assessment Before Approval
- Waivers and Exception Handling

Day 8: Rollout, Communication and Adoption

How is a new or revised policy embedded in daily work?

- Change Impact Analysis by Audience
- Communication Channels and Messaging
- Targeted Training and Briefing Packs
- Staff Acknowledgement and Attestation
- Adoption Indicators and Feedback Loops

Day 9: Compliance Monitoring and Periodic Review

How is policy effectiveness measured and improved over time?

- ISO 37301 Monitoring and Escalation Practices
- Policy Breach Reporting and Root Cause Review
- Second- and Third-Line Assurance Inputs
- Review Cycle Scheduling and Triggers
- Policy Effectiveness Dashboard

Day 10: Applying Policy Framework Design

How are the tools combined into a framework ready for approval?

- Applying the Gap Map to a Participant Policy Set
- Redrafting a Priority Policy and Its Procedure
- Setting the Approval Route and Rollout Plan
- Peer Review Against the Framework Blueprint
- Policy Framework Blueprint Presentation

Methodology

The programme relies on structured exercises using participants' own policy documents alongside cases from public and private sector organisations. Participants diagnose policy sets, redraft live documents, test procedures with peers acting as users and defend approval decisions before a mock policy committee.

- Suggested activity: Mapping overlaps and conflicts across three policies drawn from different functions.
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Suggested activity: Rewriting a dense procedure in plain language and testing it with a colleague unfamiliar with the process.

- Suggested activity: Presenting a policy waiver request to a simulated policy committee.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a policy framework blueprint for their organisation. It contains a policy register with gaps identified, a document hierarchy and taxonomy, one redrafted policy with its procedure, an approval and delegation route, a rollout plan and a review schedule, ready to table at an executive or policy committee.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the policy framework design and governance programme suitable for senior leaders?

Yes. It is designed for directors, heads of function and senior officials who own or approve policies. It assumes you have authority over at least one policy set, but no prior training in technical writing or compliance management.

Which models underpin this policy framework design and governance programme?

It rests on the COSO Internal Control Integrated Framework, ISO 37301 for compliance management, ISO 9001 principles for controlling documented information, and RACI for assigning ownership and approval roles.

How is the policy framework blueprint used at work?

You can table the blueprint at an executive or policy committee to approve a new hierarchy, assign owners and schedule reviews. The redrafted policy and procedure serve as a model for the remaining documents in your policies and procedures manual.

How does policy framework design differ from a business writing programme?

Policy framework design covers the whole governed lifecycle of policies and procedures: architecture, approval, rollout, monitoring and review. A business writing programme focuses on general correspondence and reports, not on controlled documents that carry authority.