Sample policy commentary

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Summary

If few or no AUPs are available from participants, then you should distribute a number of sample documents. A selection are provided from URLs below and as PDF documents with the workshop materials. Feel free to use other documents that you feel are appropriate e.g. ones that are known directly to you (perhaps your own institutional one?).

UNAM

A **bad policy document** is the University of Namibia's: <http://www.unam.na/centres/computer_centre/EIpolicy.pdf>

Why? Because it's too long; it rambles; it doesn't clarify the enabling purpose that underpins policy; it has been cut and pasted (take a look at <http://techrepublic.com.com/5102-6299-1033914.html> to see an example of a possible source) and not only that, it has been badly cut and pasted; they have run a search and replace command to replace "CIO" (Chief Information Officer" with "IT Manager". The command has caught the "cio" in the middle of "malicious", with hilarious results that have not been edited out.

UCT

A **fair policy document** is UCT's: <http://www.icts.uct.ac.za/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=633>

It is short, very explicit in what it prohibits, and is clear about the source of its authority, but it still doesn't establish the enabling purpose that one wants. Also it rambles - there is stuff there that has nothing to do with the Internet - and parts are massively obscure (the bit about senior professors, for example, though in fairness this may make perfectly good sense within the organisation.)

University of Natal

A **good policy document** is the old University of Natal one (attached as: natal-AUP-old.pdf)

I'm biased when it comes to good documents - I'm attaching the one that I wrote for the University of Natal. It's no longer in use, having been superseded by something I think is less satisfactory: <http://www.nu.ac.za/itd/policies/ecommunications.pdf>

For what it's worth, the attached document underlines the enabling purpose of the policy, is short, strikes a balance that is appropriate to a University, emphasises the consistency of the policy with the wider legal framework, is clear on what is prohibited, and embeds the committee process of authorisation within the document.

The reason why parts of it are so similar to the UCT document is that UCT cut-and-pasted from it. The current UKZN document is not bad, but it is still a cut-and-paste document. The source is a standard document that TENET had prepared by lawyers for the use of our clients. It's too legalistic, in my view, and fails the test of good policy on several points, but at least it is strong.