Bandwidth management and optimisation

Policy development workshop

Unit 2b: The role and characteristics of appropriate supportive policy within Bandwidth Management and Optimisation

Exercise: sample policies

In this session we will break into small groups and examine some examples of policies that are currently in use other institutions.

Document Notes

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Summary

On completion of this session the learner will have:

1. Reviewed the characteristics of good policy – and if necessary, identified additional characteristics
2. Assessed the degree to which the policy documents under discussion meet the definition of good policy
3. Considered ways in which the policy documents could be improved.

Expected time to complete all parts of this exercise is 2 hours.

**Note:** If no institutions have policies to review, then only this exercise should be undertaken in this unit.

Introduction

After the facilitator has introduced some of the characteristics of good policies, any questions regarding these issues can be answered.

Participants should then examine and assess Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) or similar documents **provided by the facilitator**. Discussion should focus on the degree to which these documents meet the criteria for good policy, and how they could be improved.

Each group should record their conclusions (flip charts will be provided) and nominate one person from their group to provide short summary feedback of these.

Depending on the number of policies to be reviewed, times should be as follows:

* Review and discussion of policy: 60 mins
* Group presentation and discussion: 45 mins
* Summary and discussion: 15 mins

It is likely that each group will need to review at least two documents and some of these will be long. In order to ensure keeping to time, groups should ensure that they work quickly through these documents. It may not be necessary to read every word or every document if there is not time.

Facilitation

It is important that groups review the documents effectively but do not spend too much time on them. The facilitator should move from each group to group and advise them that they do not need to read every word or every document, rather that they should concentrate on reviewing the documents effectively and that might need to start by quickly reading them and then groups splitting to review each document.

The facilitator should try and ensure that groups do not try to review the longer documents by reading them all word for word, as that will waste a great deal of time and may not add much to the understanding of the key issues.

Sample policy documents should be given to each group so that each group has one long and one short document. The following may be useful groupings:

* Group 1: bristol-AUP.pdf and JANET-AUP.pdf
* Group 2: natal-AUP-old.pdf and namibia-AUP.pdf
* Group 3: uct-AUP.pdf and natal-AUP.pdf
* Group 4: KIST Computer Use Policy.pdf and KIST Computer Use Regulation.pdf and JANET-AUP.pdf

Each group should be no more than 6 participants, so depending on numbers, there may be 3-5 groups. If there are not enough policies for two per group, then give all groups one or more of the same policies for them to review.

If there are representatives of a national research and education network (NREN) or similar organisation, then it may be worth all members being asked to review the JANET-AUP.pdf.

Group discussion

As directed by the facilitator, **break into groups** of 3 to 5 participants each, and **consider the examples of Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) or related documents.** Consider the following criteria from the presentation:

* Good policy has an enabling purpose
* Good policy is linked to a wider objective
* Good policy has clear ownership
* Good policy is short
* Good policy is clear
* Good policy arises from a process
* Good policy works within the confines of a defined authority
* Good policy is enforced
* Good policy is adaptable

Then ask each of these questions regarding each policy document under consideration:

1. Are there any criteria that should be added?
2. How well does each policy document under discussion match these criteria?
3. How could the documents be improved?

Record you conclusions and be prepared to provide a short feedback summary on each document.

Plenary discussion

Each group representative should present the results of their group discussion to all workshop participants. Each presentation should take **no more than 10 minutes** to allow time for questions/discussion from both the other workshop participants and the workshop facilitator.

During the discussion of other groups’ results you may want to **focus on the following**:

1. Have additional characteristics of good and bad policies been mentioned?
2. Are there lessons that you can learn?
3. How do the group’s existing policies and the sample policies compare?

Conclusion

The purpose of these activities has been to evaluate actual examples of Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) currently in use in other institutions, and to consider ways in which they could be improved.