



# POLICY BRIEF COMPONENTS

**While there is no standard format for a policy brief, the typical components are as follows:**

*Adapted from 'GOVtalk & Queen's Policy Studies Policy Briefs Guide:  
[https://www.queensu.ca/sps/sites/spswww/files/uploaded\\_files/GovTalk/3\\_%20PB\\_INT02021.pdf](https://www.queensu.ca/sps/sites/spswww/files/uploaded_files/GovTalk/3_%20PB_INT02021.pdf)*

<b>Title Page</b>	Be brief/concise – your title should clearly indicate what the contents will say. Focus on use/audience.
<b>Summary / Overview</b>	Why read this now? What is the problem? What does the brief do? (Inform, direct, synthesize, recommend, etc) What's next/what do you require from the decision maker? (Confirmation, decision, direction, etc)
<b>Context / Consideration</b>	How did we get here? Clear statement of the problem and its roots Clear statement of the policy implications of the problem Statement of the context in which the policy is being considered and managed: risks, interests, past efforts, present positions
<b>Quick Review of Policy Options</b>	Analysis of current approach and gaps Argument for changing options Short overview of policy options
<b>Recommendations</b>	Will vary with the use/purpose of the brief – sometimes no action is required Policy options should be strategic: how to move from status quo/current position to another option Practical considerations of timing, consultation, engagement, broader government agendas, costs have to be outlined Next steps need to be outlined
<b>Prepared By</b>	Give the reader a name – may not be the author, but should be the person who is most capable of speaking to the issue
<b>Appendices &amp; Attachments</b>	Appendices should be avoided unless absolutely critical Generally, sources aren't included except where highly relevant or required by the audience. You can include a short bibliography.