

University of Sussex Scheme of Delegation

1. Introduction and Scope

The Scheme of Delegation (the “Scheme”) documents decision making authority in relation to key University matters. No scheme can be fully comprehensive; where there is uncertainty, the University Secretary will advise on the appropriate decision-making authority.

The Scheme is part of the University of Sussex’s governance framework. This document should be consulted alongside the University’s governing documents (its [Charter and Statutes](#)) and other supporting decision-making documents, such as the [Regulations](#) and [Financial Regulations](#). The Financial Regulations also contain delegations and financial authority limits, set out responsibilities and delegations in relation to financial transactions, budgets, capital projects and property and must be consulted alongside this Scheme. The Scheme sets out where final authority sits for each decision but allows for onward delegation unless otherwise stated. For example, Council delegates most matters to the Vice-Chancellor and President or to Senate. Where the Vice-Chancellor and President sub-delegates any decision-making authority, they retain that authority and may exercise it at themselves any time.

2. Principles of Delegation

The following principles underpin this Scheme of Delegation and govern how authority is exercised across the University:

a. Ultimate Authority and retention of powers

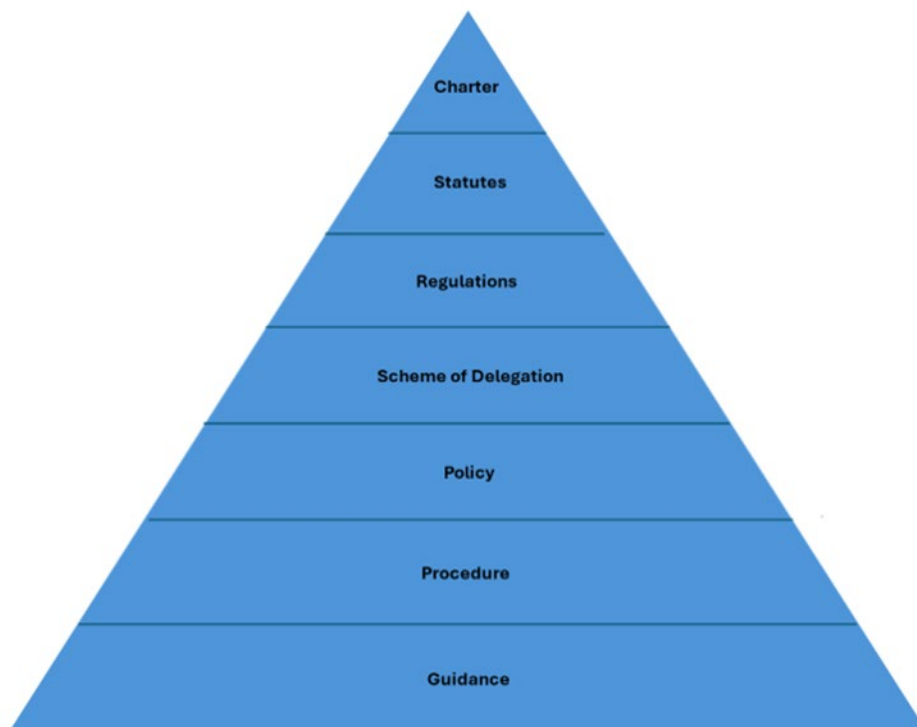
Council is the University’s supreme governing body, with ultimate authority under the Charter and Statutes. Certain decisions are reserved to Council and cannot be delegated. Council delegates strategic leadership and day to day management of the University to the Vice-Chancellor and President, who may further delegate authority to members of the [University Executive Board \(UEB\)](#) or to any suitably qualified member of staff. UEB is ordinarily advisory unless authority is formally delegated. Delegation does not remove accountability: Council, Senate, and the Vice-Chancellor and President each retain the right to exercise their authority directly.

b. Clarity and Transparency

Delegations should be defined and documented, and, where appropriate, published so that members of the University and stakeholders can identify decision-making authority.

c. Hierarchy of Norms

The Charter and Statutes sit at the apex of the University's hierarchy of norms, followed by Regulations, this Scheme of Delegation, and the University's approved policies and procedures. Where conflict arises, the higher order norm prevails.



d. Limits of Authority

Decisions must remain within delegated limits; matters exceeding financial, strategic, or risk thresholds must be escalated to an individual or body with appropriate authority.

f. Legal, Regulatory and Governance Compliance

All decisions must comply with legal and regulatory requirements.

g. Accountability and Reporting

Where authority is delegated to committees, decisions must be recorded. Where authority is delegated to specific role-holders, accountability remains with that role-holder, and decisions must be reported through the relevant governance channels.

I. Alignment with Sussex 2035

All delegated decisions should support with the University's strategy and strategic plans.

j. Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

All decision-making authority must be exercised in a manner consistent with the University's foundational commitment to, and statutory and regulatory duties in relation to freedom of speech and academic freedom and in accordance with the University's Statutes and [Freedom of Speech Code of Practice](#).

k. Delegation and Sub-Delegation

Delegations must be clearly defined. Authority may be sub-delegated where appropriate, provided this is formally recorded by the University Secretary, within the limits of the Scheme, and consistent with any restrictions set by Council or law. If there is doubt about delegated authority, it should be assumed none exists and the matter escalated to the person or body with appropriate authority. Where a delegate is unavailable due to absence, vacancy or a conflict of interest, authority passes to the designated acting member of staff or another of equivalent or higher seniority, consistent with this Scheme, and recorded accordingly by the University Secretary.

3. **Financial Authority Limits**

Financial authority limits are defined in the Scheme of Delegation and the Financial Regulations. Authority for lower-value transactions is implemented through the University's financial system.

4. **Signature of contracts and other agreements**

Signature authority in relation to a contract or agreement is derived from Financial Regulations. The decision to enter into an agreement does not in itself confer authority to execute the agreement, and vice versa. Therefore, a decision to enter into a contract must be taken by a person or body with the relevant decision-making authority and the relevant signature authority identified before a contract is entered into. Detailed arrangements, including for nil-value agreements, are set out in the Financial Regulations and related frameworks.

Where the authorised signatory is unavailable, the authority may be exercised by an acting or equivalent member of staff formally designated for that purpose, provided this is documented by the University Secretary.

5. Committee Delegation

Council and Senate may delegate responsibilities to sub-committees through their Terms of Reference. Sub-committees may only act within these delegated powers; otherwise, they are advisory and must refer matters to their parent body. All decisions under delegated authority must be reported through the relevant sub-committee's standard reporting process.

6. Role-based delegations

Faculty and professional services staff exercise role-based delegated authority from Council, Senate, and the Vice-Chancellor and President in relation to academic, financial, and operational matters within their remit. Where authority is delegated by virtue of a role, delegation shall be subject to the limits set out in this Scheme the Financial Regulations and University policies.

7. Review and Assurance

The Scheme will be reviewed at least every two years. The University Secretary will lead the review in consultation with the Chair of Council and Vice-Chancellor and President. Compliance will be assured through existing reporting (e.g. existing committee reports to Council) and, where appropriate, through Internal Audit review.

REVISED SCHEME OF DELEGATION



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1	Matters which Council <u>cannot</u> delegate (ie. the power remains with Council)	Route to Decision
1.1	Appointment and removal of the Vice-Chancellor, the Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost, the Vice-Chair of Council, Council members, Pro Vice-Chancellors and the Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary	Non-delegable. Must follow Charter, Statutes, and agreed HR procedures.
1.2	Amendments (including revocation of) to University's Charter and Statutes (subject to Privy Council approval)	Senate to be consulted on academic matters in line with Charter.
1.3	Amendments to Regulations	Senate to be consulted on academic matters in line with Charter and Regulation 8.
1.4	Approval of the University's budget	Presented on VC recommendation and consistent with Financial Regulations.
1.5	Appointment of the internal and external auditors of the University	ARC to recommend appointment and terms of engagement in line with statutory requirements.
1.6	Approval of the University's annual audited accounts	Must comply with OfS and Charity Commission reporting regulations.

1.7	Establishing and abolishing Faculties, School of Studies or other academic units			Senate consulted on academic implications.
1.8	Establishment, abolition, reporting, composition and changes to Council's committee structure			Terms of Reference must be consistent with Charter/Statutes and the Scheme of Delegation.
1.9	Approval and amendment of the Constitution of the Students' Union			Following engagement with Senate and the Student's Union.
2	Strategy and Performance	Limit	Delegation to:	Route to Decision
2.1	Approval of University Strategy		Council	Senate must be consulted on academic aspects. VC to recommend.
2.2	Approval and monitoring of the University Strategy Success Indicators/ KPIs		Council	
2.3	Approval of the University's Risk Appetite Statement		Council	Council approval required. ARC to review and recommend. Must align with OfS conditions and risk management framework
2.4	Approval of strategic plans		Vice-Chancellor	Function and Faculty level strategic plans align with University Strategic Plan and within budget/risk parameters approved by Council.
3	Governance, Management and Controls - Privy Council	Limit	Delegation to	Route to Decision
3.1	Amendments to the governing documents of the University - the Charter and Statutes (by resolution of Council)		Approval by Privy Council	Senate consulted on academic matters.
3.2	Amendments to Academic Regulations (taught and research) and Student Regulations		Senate	UEC and URIC may review and recommend amendments
3.3	Custody and use of the University Seal		University Secretary	Use must be formally authorised and recorded.

3.4	Approval of Terms of Reference for University level sub-committees			
3.4.1	Council sub-committees		Council	Terms of Reference must be consistent with Charter/Statutes and the Scheme of Delegation.
3.4.2	Senate sub-committees		Senate	
3.4.3	University Executive Board and its sub-committees		Vice-Chancellor	
3.5	Approvals reserved to the University in relation to University subsidiaries		As per relevant subsidiary governance documents, and in the absence of provision, the Vice-Chancellor	See Financial Regulations
3.6	Approval of acquisition and disposal of assets (land and buildings) by subsidiaries		As per relevant subsidiary governance documents for approvals and limits	See Financial Regulations
3.7	Establishing University subsidiary undertakings and joint venture entities and undertaking ancillary activities to such establishment (which does not extend to the operation of the subsidiaries)		Council	Business case to be reviewed by FRPC and recommended by UEB. Must comply with Charity Commission/OfS guidance.
3.8	Approval of (i) contracts, excluding research contracts and awards, and (ii) transactions for acquisition and disposal of assets (land and buildings) including leases and to sell, buy, exchange real and personal property on behalf of the University			
3.8.1		Over £10m	Council	Confirm with Office of General Counsel for definition of assets if needed

3.8.2		From £1.5m to £10m	Vice-Chancellor	
3.8.3		Under £1.5m	In accordance with the Financial Regulations	
3.9	Granting leases or licences for the use of University space for any purpose		Chief Operating Officer	
3.10	Instigate and defend legal claims by and against the University		Vice-Chancellor	
3.11	Settle legal claims by and against the University		In accordance with the financial limits set out within the Financial Regulations	
3.12	Approval of student accommodation rates as part of budget setting process		Council	On the recommendation of Finance, Resources and Performance Committee
3.13	To borrow money from time to time on behalf of the University and for that or any other purpose, if Council thinks fit, to mortgage or charge all or part of the property of the University, whether real or personal, and to give such other security as Council shall think fit		Council	

3.14	Approval of the academic components of collaborative provision of higher education within the UK and overseas		Senate	
3.15	Approval of the non-academic components of collaborative provision of higher education within the UK and overseas		Vice-Chancellor	Taking into account Senate's views of the academic components of any collaborative provisions at 3.14
3.16	Approval of (i) mergers with other educational institutions and (ii) the creation of branch campuses in the UK and overseas either independently or in collaboration with third parties		Council	
3.17	Approval of HESA, TRAC and TRAC-T returns		Vice-Chancellor	
3.18	Approval of the Student Protection Plan		Council	Taking into account the views of Senate
3.19	Approval of University pension schemes		Council	
3.20	Approve (i) a strategy for borrowing, investing and raising funds (ii) the principles under which investment managers will operate and (iii) the appointment of bankers and the provisions of the bank mandate		Finance, Resources and Performance Committee	
3.21	Approval of the University's Financial Regulations at least once every five years. In addition to all matters set out in the Financial Regulations, they will contain delegations and approval limits to enter into, vary, carry out, or cancel contracts on behalf of the University (save for International contracts detailed below)		Council	On recommendation of Finance, Resources and Performance Committee
3.22	Administrative updating of the Financial Regulations within the five year Council		Chief Financial Officer	

	approval cycle - such amendments to be notified to the Audit and Risk Finance and Resources Committee as soon as practicable			
3.23	Approval of the University's risk register and risk appetite statement		Council	On the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee
3.24	Agree with the auditors the nature and scope of audit work (including external and internal) and relevant reports and provide the same to Council as required		Council	On the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee
3.25	Assurance of Student's Union governance, including quinquennial review of governing instruments		Council	
3.26	Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the Students' Union		Vice-Chancellor	
3.27	Approval of the receipt and use of expendable endowment capital			
3.27.1		Over £5m	Council	
3.27.2		Up to £5m	Vice-Chancellor	
4	Policies and Procedures	Limit	Delegation to:	Route to Decision
4.1	Approval of Policies and related procedures	As per relevant Regulations and the University's Framework for the Creation and Management of Policies.	Council, Senate or the Vice-Chancellor (as named in the delegation)	

4.2	Approval of changes to the basis of accounts preparation e.g. due to changes in external accounting standards		Audit and Risk Committee	
5	Appointments, awards and staff related matters	Limit	Delegation to:	Route to Decision
5.1	Appointments to Council and Council sub-committees (non-executive)		Council	
5.2	Appointment of co-optees to Council or Council sub-committee		Council	
5.3	Appointment of directors to University wholly owned subsidiaries		Vice-Chancellor on behalf of the University shareholder unless subsidiary governance documents provide otherwise	
5.4	Award of Professorships, Associate Professorships and Distinguished Chair status		Vice-Chancellor	
5.5	Approval of remuneration and contract terms of all Officers of the University (the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost, Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary)		Remuneration Committee on recommendation from the Vice-Chancellor (save in their own case)	Recommendation of Vice-Chancellor except in own case
5.6	Approval of the Vice-Chancellor salary and conditions (Vice-Chancellor to be excluded from discussion)		Chair of Council on recommendation of Remuneration Committee	
5.7	Framework for remuneration of all Executive Deans, Professional Services Directors at grade 10, the Librarian and the Professoriate		Remuneration Committee	
5.8	Severance payments (for staff earning in excess of £95k)		Remuneration Committee	Recommendation of Vice-Chancellor
6	Academic and Student Matters	Limit	Delegation to:	Route to Decision

6.1	Approval of suspension and time limited exclusion of students		Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education & Students)	
6.2	Approval of permanent withdrawal (expulsion) of students on grounds of disciplinary action under the applicable Regulations		Relevant Panel or Appeal Panel	
6.3	Approve the circumstances in which a student may be required or permitted to withdraw temporarily or permanently (conditionally or unconditionally) from all or part of their course (other than for disciplinary grounds)		Senate on recommendation of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education & Students)	
6.4	Design and approval of new and major amendments to programmes, including Doctoral programmes		Senate	
6.5	Approval of withdrawal or suspension of programmes		Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education & Students)	
6.6	Direct and regulate the examinations held by the University		Senate	
6.7	Approval of tuition fees		Council	Finance, Resources and Performance Committee in consultation with Senate
6.8	Approval of teaching collaborative provision, including termination of collaboration (save for matters dealt with below)		Senate	
6.9	Approval of the submissions of our Quality Frameworks (including Teaching Excellence Framework, Research Excellence Framework and Knowledge Excellence Framework)		Vice-Chancellor	
6.10	Approval of entrance grade requirements – Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught		Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost	With report to Senate to notify

6.11	Confer Honorary Degrees and other distinctions		Senate on recommendation of the Honorary Degrees Committee	Recommendation of Honorary Degrees Committee
6.12	Removal of degrees and distinctions (save for Honorary Degrees or distinctions)		Senate	
6.13	Removal of Honorary Degrees or distinctions		Council on recommendation of Senate	
6.14	Approval of the naming or renaming of Academic Operating Units		Senate	
7	Marketing & Communications	Limit	Delegation to:	Route to Decision
7.1	Approval of changes to University logos		Vice-Chancellor	
7.2	Approval of the use of University logos by third parties		Chief Operating Officer	
8	Research & Innovation	Limit	Delegation to:	Route to Decision
8.1	Approval of research contracts and grants			
8.1.1		High value (over £10m)	Vice-Chancellor	
8.1.2		Medium value (over £5m)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost	
8.1.3		Low value (up to £5m)	Director of Research and Innovation	
8.2	To approve the establishment, amendment or closure of Centres of Excellence for research		University Research and Innovation Committee	
8.3	Approval of Annual Research Integrity Statement		Council	Consult with Senate

8.4	Sponsorship of clinical research & innovation including trials		Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost (or delegate)	
9	Approval for spend and write offs	Limit	Delegation to:	Route to Decision
9.1	Approval within an agreed budget envelope:			
9.1.1		Over £10m	Council	
9.1.2		Up to £10m	Vice-Chancellor	
9.1.3	<i>In all events the Purchasing Procedure must be followed.</i>	Up to £2m	Chief Financial Officer	
9.2	Approval for spend incremental to agreed budget envelope <i>Refers to agreed budget envelopes for departments/schools/faculties, etc.</i>		Decision maker as at 9.1	
9.3	Approval for write offs		In line with Financial Regulations	
10	Provision of Services by the University	Limit	Delegation to:	Route to Decision
10.1	Approval of provision of non-primary trading services by the University			
10.1.1		Above non-taxable de minimis	Vice-Chancellor	
10.1.2		Below non-taxable de minimis	Chief Financial Officer	
10.1.3	<i>Consultancy and expert services, excluding research contracts. Risk relates to contract terms. Services provided on University standard terms and conditions are deemed low risk</i>	In accordance with any applicable policy and financial regulations.	Executive Dean	

11	Other matters	Limit	Delegation to:	Route to Decision
11.1	Appoint appropriate and required individuals to serve on relevant outside bodies where approval of governing body required by outside body		Nominations and Governance Committee	