

Finance Update for Directors of Professional Service and Heads of School

Dear Colleagues

I am writing to you with:

- An annual recap of the main responsibilities that attach to your position under the [Financial Regulations](#) and how we will support you. We will also be writing directly to all finance systems users with a recap of their responsibilities, and a shortened version of this will be published as a staff news story so that we can also reach those who are not enrolled on the finance system. It's really important that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Financial Regulations so I'd appreciate your support in bringing this to their attention.
- A link to a 'road map' setting out actions we will be asking you to take throughout the remainder of the financial year.
- A reminder of the help and support available to you.

Summary of responsibilities under the Financial Regulations:

As a Head of School or Director of Professional Service your primary responsibilities over and above those of any member of staff are as follows:

Responsibility	How Finance will support you
Financial planning, budgeting and financial management	Your Business Partner (FBP) is your first port of call to understand your needs and provide support.
Maintaining the financial control environment in your area of responsibility	
Ensure compliance in your area of responsibility.	<p>Non-compliance puts the University and its staff at financial and reputational risk – we ask for your support in maintaining compliance in your area of responsibility by advocating and modelling good practice, acting promptly where issues are raised with you and proactively seeking advice about any concerns. Advice on any aspects of the Financial Regulations and policies can be sought from your FBP or directly with Allan Spencer or Sian Thomas in the first instance.</p> <p>Where Finance identifies issues of non-compliance through our regular monitoring or ad hoc checks we will resolve this with the staff concerned and their line manager where appropriate. We will notify you where there is a breach of the Financial Regulations (these are reported to Audit and Risk Committee) and/or your action is needed.</p> <p>We produce periodic purchasing compliance reports at a school and divisional level – these are shared with the Provost and the Chief Operating Officer and may be reviewed at Heads of School and Professional Service leadership meetings. You may request sight of your own report(s) through your Finance Business Partner.</p>
Ensure your staff understand their responsibilities, and the implications of non-compliance.	<p>All staff: All staff (including visiting and honorary staff, temporary staff, contract staff and contractors' staff acting on behalf of the University, and others with a contractual relationship) have responsibilities to the University under the Financial</p>

Regulations, even where their roles do not include direct financial responsibility.

We provided [relevant text](#) for you to circulate to staff in May 2022 to enable you to meet this requirement and will continue to do this annually.

Staff with financial responsibilities

All staff with financial responsibilities delegated by you (including for purchasing using out of pocket expenses) have received an email this month from the Director of Finance setting out their basic responsibilities and advising them where to get support. We ask that you reinforce the importance of understanding responsibilities and action that staff need to take.

All new staff with financial responsibility are required to attend an on-line induction before finance system access is granted. Over 400 new joiners have attended this training since August 2021. We are currently updating our e-learning off and all staff may access this at any time or request an online 'refresher' through the Finance Service Desk – we recommend a refresh on training every 2 years.

Staff involved in purchasing

All staff allocated to authorisation groups have been offered a short training session to ensure they understand their responsibilities and how to meet them. We are now following up where staff did not attend to ensure that no one is able to commit University funds without training to ensure compliance and Value for Money.

Finance and Research Finance will be working together to extend authorisation groups to all research expenditure during 2022/23 to ensure resilience, transparency and good practice across all of our purchasing. Staff will be requested to attend training as these groups are created.

You are asked to review purchasing card holders (Barclaycard) every year with your FBP to make sure that arrangements are still appropriate. All new purchasing card holders receive an induction and are required to accept the declaration of use before their card can be used. All card holders are also asked to confirm their understanding of the requirements which attach to them annually. You will be notified where requirements have not been met and asked to agree to withdraw the card in the case of misuse or persistent non-compliance.

Senior staff:

We have updated our 'In-Tray' refresher training to support the day-to-day finance tasks required of you and your senior team. Please contact the Finance Service Desk or your Finance

	Business Partner to arrange a session. Many senior leaders have found it useful to include their Executive Assistants, Finance Business Partners and other colleagues.
Review delegations to staff annually to make sure their responsibilities continue to be appropriate.	<p>Authorisation groups have now been created for all non-research expenditure. This means that only a light touch annual review of delegations will be required to ensure staff capability, capacity, responsibility, and financial risk continue to be aligned. This will be led by your business partner in Spring/Summer 2023.</p> <p>The extension of authorisation groups to all research expenditure will include a review of delegations this year.</p>
Maintain University standards of conduct.	Please contact the governance team for support
Ensuring the care and custody of assets, avoiding loss, achieving Value for Money	
Ensure the care, custody and security of the assets within your control. This includes buildings, IT equipment and assets purchased from all sources, including research grants.	<p>We plan to communicate some updated guidance on expectations and requirements this year.</p> <p>In the meantime your FBP can advise and facilitate what is needed.</p>
Overall responsibility for achieving Value for Money in your area of responsibility and ensuring the requirements of the Purchasing Policy are met.	<p>You received a short update on VfM from the Director of Finance in June. In addition to continuing to promote good VfM understanding and practice you were asked to support the use of the GCGC cover sheet Value for Money section at all University committees you chair or attend. Use of the template is a University requirement for all University Committees and should help to develop our thinking and provide evidence that we are embedding VfM in decision making and achieving VfM across the University.</p> <p>The 'all staff' text we asked you to distribute in May 2022 included guidance for staff with no financial responsibility and a 'five minute guide' to achieving VfM for those involved in purchasing.</p> <p>Again this is intended to support the achievement of VfM in your school or service. This can be found here.</p> <p>For further advice and support you should contact your FBP or Sian Thomas.</p>
Providing information to Directors of Finance and Human Resources	
Provide information in connection with the appointment, resignation or dismissal of members of staff, and on any contractual change.	Your FBP can advise and facilitate this with your HR Business Partner.
Research, consultancy and other income	
Where a Head of School is acting as PI, ensure that their line manager takes on the relevant responsibilities for authorisation etc.	Support is within the responsibility of the Director of Research and Enterprise. Your FBP can advise and facilitate this.
<p>Approve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> proposed consultancy activity 	Support is within the responsibility of the Director of Research and Enterprise. Your FBP can advise and facilitate this.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the terms of funding of successful bids for external funding. <p>Be responsible for any loss to the University resulting from a failure to meet conditions of funding</p>	
<p>Ensure that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> best value is obtained for the sale of any goods to external bodies or to members of staff an approved commercial agreement is put in place for the use of University premises or facilities in their control any agreements entered into with external bodies mitigate commercial risk and cover any legal liabilities to which the University may be exposed. 	Your FBP can advise and facilitate this.
Risk management and insurance	
<p>Take advice from the Director of Finance to ensure that any agreements with external bodies contain adequate insurance provisions to cover legal liabilities and indemnities to which the University may be exposed.</p>	Your FBP can advise and facilitate this.
<p>Notify the Director of Finance of any</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential new risks and additional property and equipment that may require insurance and of any alterations affecting existing risks event that may give rise to an insurance claim and prepare a claim in conjunction with the Director of Finance for submission to the insurers. 	You can contact the Insurance team through the Finance Service Desk or your FBP can advise and facilitate this.
Tuition fees (Schools only)	
<p>Consult re individual fees and seek approval of procedures for the application of fee waivers and discounts.</p>	Your FBP can advise and facilitate this.

Finance Engagement Roadmap:

Our [Resources webpage](#) contains an archive of all central Finance communications sent to Heads of School and Directors of Professional Services since March 2020. It also contains Engagement Roadmaps which set out actions we will be asking you to take throughout the financial year.

[Engagement Roadmap for Director of Professional Services](#)

[Engagement Roadmap for Heads of School](#)

To avoid sending emails if we need to update these roadmaps, we will update the documents directly onto this webpage so please do check back to see what's coming up.

Help and support:

I hope this has been helpful to you. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if my team or I can support you in any way.

The [Finance Service Desk](#) is always there for you or your staff to support any finance-related enquiry, including contact with the Insurance and Procurement teams.

Finance Business Partners work principally to support senior staff, but you are also very welcome to contact my senior team directly:

- Steve Law (financial planning and reporting, income and treasury, finance system)
- Carey McLaughlin (major projects, taxation, counter fraud, risk and insurance)
- Ian McKee (procurement, purchase to pay and commercial services)
- Sian Thomas (Financial Regulations, financial literacy, Finance Service Desk, Value for Money)

Best regards,

Allan Spencer, Director of Finance