Approved by Council 16 November 2026

University of Surrey Scheme of Delegation

1. Introduction and Scope

This Scheme of Delegation outlines where final authority sits for key decisions made within and on behalf of the University. It consists of -

- a set of overall principles;
- tables of final approval;
- financial authority tables; and
- delegation structure schematic

In all cases the final level of authority is shown. In some instances, the prior recommendation is also given where it is important to evidence consultation and for transparency.

Whilst every attempt has been made to include all key high-level approvals, it is not possible for any Scheme of Delegation to be exhaustive in its coverage. This Scheme does not deal with responsibilities delegated to individuals through their role descriptions (this is a management responsibility). Nor does it cover the underlying processes and procedures that lead to the final approval point (the responsibility for the adequacy of which lies with the relevant executives). This Scheme also does not apply to internal accounting activities which are deemed business as usual (e.g. payroll, budget journals, etc.)

2. Principles of Delegation

Council is the governing body of the University and is its highest decision-making authority. Acting in accordance with the governing instruments, it is responsible for the general control of University affairs. A number of decisions are reserved to Council for approval which means they cannot be delegated (these are included in table 1 below). Although Council may retain authority over any decision, in reality it delegates the daily operation of the University to the Vice-Chancellor who in turn delegates to the Senior Executive Team. Council also delegates some of its activities and certain approval authorities to its own sub-committees. The Terms of Reference for Council and its sub- committees can be found here.

The Senate is the senior academic body responsible for the oversight and good governance of the University's academic mission, including learning, teaching and research, and for the regulation and direction of the education and conduct of students. It delegates some of its activities and certain approval authorities to its sub-committees and these are outlined in the Code of Practice for Academic Governance. The Chair of Senate is the Provost, by delegation from the Vice-Chancellor. The Terms of Reference for Senate can be found here.

The Vice-Chancellor is the Chief Executive and is the University's Accountable Officer as defined by the Office for Students. In accordance with the University's Ordinances, the Vice-Chancellor has delegated authority from Council for the daily operation of the University. The Vice-Chancellor delegates to the Senior Executive Team the responsibility for delivery of activities within their individual remits. As a collective, in accordance with the University's Ordinances, the Executive Board is advisory to the Vice-Chancellor and assists the Vice-Chancellor to discharge their obligations to Council. Throughout the document, this is reflected using the term "VC sitting as Executive Board". However, any delegation to the VC includes the VC acting alone or the VC sitting

as Executive Board. The intention behind the term 'VC sitting as Executive Board' is to indicate that the expectation is that decisions will usually be made in consultation with the Executive Board.

In general, those individuals or bodies shown in this Scheme to hold authority may delegate to others as long as such delegation remains in line with University policy, procedure and regulation and that delegation is reported and recorded appropriately.

3. Financial Authority Limits

At a general level, unless otherwise stated in this Scheme of Delegation, any transaction for goods and services with a value of over £10m must be approved by Council; between £5m and £10m must be approved by the Finance Committee and between £1m and £5m must be approved by the Executive Board. Transactions below £1m are subject to the limits defined for Senior Executives, Heads of Schools, Heads of Departments, Managers and budget-holders by local procedures and the University financial systems. Budget-holders may further delegate spend authority to members of their teams within the limit of their allocated budgets. Further detail on specific approval limits is included in the tables of authority below.
For all financial values, approval limits should be assessed against the higher of total contract values being entered into or the likely total cost.

4. Risk Authority Limits

In some cases, the value of a transaction is not a reliable determining factor in assessing the level of risk it poses to the University. ***Unless*** otherwise provided for in the Scheme, the Executive Board, is the primary forum where transactions with heightened risk levels are assessed against PESTLE.

5. Physical signature of contracts and other agreements

- Contracts and agreements with associated spend: Approval to sign the contract must be in accordance with Section 12. Physical signature may be delegated by the individual or body approving the contract.
- Contracts and agreements with no associated spend (excluding research contracts and those covered in Section 8 of the tables): Signature to be at Director level.
- Contracts and agreements with or for individual students for mobility activities can be signed by appropriate individuals within the relevant contracting department.
- Research contracts may be signed by the individual approving the research activity or post-approval:
    - Up to £1m: Director of RII, RII Head of Operations, RII Head of Assurance, RII Head of Corporate and Research Finance
    - Over £1m Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Innovation or above.
- Requests for signature by "authorised representatives" about University legal and fiscal status (usually for international activities, EU grants, etc.): Signature to be a member of Council or University Secretary & General Counsel.

6. Other general principles

- Council and Senate retain the power to exercise delegated functions other than through the delegate.
- The Vice-Chancellor retains the power to exercise delegated functions other than through the delegate.

- In line with the Vice-Chancellor's accountability to Council, where delegations are to the Executive Board, the Vice-Chancellor is the primary delegate.
- Decisions must not exceed the stated level of authority.
- Decisions of Committees may be delegated to individuals or groups in appropriate circumstances. Such delegations must be approved by the Chair of the Committee and formally recorded in minutes.
- Decisions of post holders may be delegated to those with acting or interim responsibility.
- The Terms of Reference for committees must include reference to any specific decision-making authority delegated to it in line with this Scheme, especially where financial limits apply
- Decisions should be consistent with the University's mission, vision and strategic plan.
- Decisions must consult and adhere to relevant regulatory, legal and policy frameworks.
- Decisions must be taken in line with University policy and procedure.

Index of Tables

1. Statutory matters which Council cannot delegate
2. Strategy and Performance
3. Governance, management and controls
4. Corporate policies and procedures
5. Appointments, awards and staff related matters
6. Academic and student matters
7. Marketing & communications
8. International and Partnerships
9. Research & Innovation
9A. Borrowing and Leasing
10. Commercialisation and investment
11. External Engagement and Advancement
12. Contracts and spend on goods and services from third parties
13. Provision of services by the University

Tables of final approval authority

1	**Statutory matters which Council cannot delegate**
1.1	Appointment of the Vice-Chancellor
1.2	Amendments to Charter (Privy Council retains final approval)
1.3	Approval of the University's financial budget
1.4	Approval of the University's annual audited accounts
1.5	Appointment of the University's External Auditor

2	**Strategy and Performance**	**Limit**	**Final authority**
2.1	University Mission, Vision and Strategy and associated business plan	-	Council
2.2	Approval and review of the University level Key Performance Indicators	-	Council
2.3	Approval of the University's Risk Appetite Statement	-	Council
2.4	Approval of function/faculty level and academic strategies	-	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board

3	**Governance, Management and Controls**	**Limit**	**Final authority**
3.1	Amendments to Charter (by resolution of Council)	-	King's Privy Council
3.2	Amendments to Student Regulations	-	Senate
3.3	Amendments to Academic Regulations (taught and research)	-	Senate
3.4	Custody and use of the University Seal	-	Uni Secretary & General Counsel
3.5	Approval of Terms of Reference for University level sub-committees		
	Council sub-cttees		Council
	Executive Board sub-cttees		Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
	Senate sub-cttees		Senate
3.6	Approval of expenditure by subsidiaries *"Subsidiary" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 1159 of the Companies Act 2006.* *"Subsidiary governance documents" means Articles of Association, Governance Agreement or equivalent (e.g. Partnership Agreement for LLPs), setting out matters requiring University consent and the approval process which determines which individual or body within the University exercises the consent on behalf of the University.*		As per relevant subsidiary governance documents
3.7	Approvals reserved to the University (VC or Council) in relation to subsidiaries		As per relevant subsidiary governance documents

3	**Governance, Management and Controls – continued**	**Limit**	**Final authority**
3.8	Approval of the creation or discontinuation of Academic Operating Units (excluding modules and programmes) *The specific form of an AOU is determined through EB-approved organisational design and may include schools, departments, professional services directorates or other equivalent organisational units.*		Council
3.9	Approval of acquisition and disposal of assets (land and buildings) including leases	Over £5m	Council (on recommendation of Finance Committee)
		£2m to £5m	Finance Committee (on recommendation of Executive Board)
		£1m to £2m	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
		Up to £1m	Chief Operating Officer
3.10	Approval of acquisition and disposal of assets (land and buildings) by subsidiaries		See section 10.7 or as per subsidiary governance documents approved by Council
3.11	Approval of associated institutions to grant educational awards		Council (on recommendation of Senate)
3.12	Approval of mergers with other educational institutions		Council (on recommendation of Senate)
3.13	Approval of HESA returns		Vice-Chancellor
3.14	Approval of returns where obligated by Office for Students		Council
3.15	Approval of the Student Protection Plan		Council
3.16	Approval of pension scheme changes		Council
3.17	Appointment of bankers (current accounts) and designation of banking signatories		Council (on recommendation of Finance Committee)
3.18	Approval of the University's Financial Regulations		Finance Committee
3.19	Approval of the Students' Union budget and subvention (as part of annual budget recommendation to Council)		Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
3.20	Approval of accommodation rates		Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
3.21	Approval of TRAC process		Finance Committee
3.22	Approval of TRAC returns		TRAC Review Group
3.23	Assurance of Student's Union governance, including quinquennial review of governing instruments		Council
3.24	Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the Students' Union		Executive Board on Student Matters

3	**Governance, Management and Controls – continued**	**Limit**	**Final authority**
3.25	Approval of the use of expendable endowment capital	Over £1m	Council
		Up to £1m	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
		Up to £500k	Provost
3.26	Approval of the commencement of litigation not in the normal course of business *On recommendation of the General Counsel*		Vice-Chancellor
3.27	Approval of the settlement of litigation not in the normal course of business *On recommendation of the General Counsel*		Vice-Chancellor

4	**Corporate Policies and Procedures**	**Limit**	**Final Authority**
4.1	Approval of Policy Statements	-	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
4.2	Approval of Procedures (see Procedure of Policies and Procedures for more information)	Within criteria for Our Operations, Colleagues, Data, Safety	Executive Board Sub-Committee or Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
		Within criteria for Our Research & Innovation, Students or Education	Senate (or Senate sub- Committee in accordance with Code of Practice and Procedure of Policies and Procedures)
		Exceptional to criteria for Policy Statement areas	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
4.3	Approval of policies and procedures relating to corporate governance compliance	-	Council
4.4	Approval of changes to the basis of accounts preparation e.g. due to changes in external accounting standards	-	Audit & Assurance Committee
4.5	Approval of the Treasury Management Procedure	-	Finance Committee
4.6	Approval of the Philanthropic Gifts Procedure	-	Council

5	**Appointments, awards and staff related matters**	**Limit**	**Final Authority**
5.1	Appointment of the Chancellor	-	Council
5.2	Appointment of the Pro-Chancellors	-	Council
5.3	Appointments to Council and Council sub-committees (non-executive)	-	Council
5.4	Appointment of co-optees to Council or Council sub-committee	-	Council

5	**Appointments, awards and staff related matters continued**	**Limit**	**Final Authority**
5.5	Appointment of Chair and directors to University wholly owned subsidiaries	Directors	Subsidiary Chair
		Chair	Council (on recommendation of Nominations and Governance Committee)
5.6	Appointment of Council Chair, Senior Independent Member, Treasurer and any other Council officers	-	Council
5.7	Appointment of the University Secretary & General Counsel	-	Council
5.8	Appointment of Executive Board members	-	Vice-Chancellor (in accordance with Ordinances)
5.9	Award of Emeritus Professorships, Reader status and Distinguished Chair status	-	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board (on recommendation of Promotions Committee)
5.10	Award of Honorary Degrees	-	Council
5.11	New and major adjustments to terms and conditions of employment	-	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
5.12	Approval of Executive Board salaries and contract terms	-	Vice-Chancellor (on recommendation of Remuneration Committee)
5.13	Approval of the VC salary and conditions (VC excluded from discussion)	-	Chair of Council (on recommendation of Remuneration Committee)
5.14	Professorial and senior academic salaries and contract terms	-	Provost
5.15	Professional Services level 7 salaries and contract terms	-	Chief Operating Officer
5.16	Severance payments that would breach the University's Management of Change Policy, or that are considered exceptional or outside normal guidelines.	-	Vice-Chancellor (on the recommendation of Remuneration Committee)

6	**Academic and Student Matters**	**Limit**	**Final Authority**
6.1	Approval of Managed Exclusion Orders of students	-	PVC Education
6.2	Approval of Expulsions of students *Including the outcomes of Disciplinary, Support to Study, Fitness to Practise Panel, and Academic Misconduct Panel hearings.*	-	Relevant Panel or Appeal Panel (as per Regulations)
6.3	Programme validation and major amendments to taught and research programmes	-	Senate (delegated to University Education Committee)
6.4	Approval of withdrawal or suspension of programmes (programmes means degree options within a discipline).	-	Senate (delegated to University Education Committee)
6.5	Approval of fees, and the envelope for bursaries and scholarship schemes	-	VC sitting as Executive Board
6.6	Approval of teaching collaborative provision, including termination of collaboration		Senate
6.7	Approval of academic related collaboration agreements other than collaborative provision		Senate

6	Academic and Student Matters continued	Limit	Final Authority
6.8	Approval of the University of Surrey Quality Framework	-	Senate (Academic and Student Regulations) Delegated to University Education Committee (Codes of practice and Student Procedures)
6.9	Approval of significant changes to published entrance grade requirements – Undergraduate and Postgraduate - Taught	-	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board (on the recommendation of Admissions Steering Group)
6.10	Conferment and recission of awards (excluding honorary awards)	-	Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (delegated from Senate)
6.11	Approval of library and learning provision and procedures	-	University Education Committee
6.12	Approval of the naming or renaming of Academic Operating Units	-	Senate
6.13	Approval of Teaching Excellence Framework submissions	-	Vice-Chancellor

7	Marketing & Communications	Limit	Final Authority
7.1	Approval of changes to University logos	-	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
7.2	Approval of the use of University logos	-	Chief Operating Officer
7.3	Authorisation of media releases	-	Provost or Chief Operating Officer

8	International and Partnerships	Limit	Final Authority
8.1	Approval of Collaborations/Partnerships (post academic due diligence)	High risk	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
		Medium risk	Provost
		Low risk	VP Global for international Relevant EB member for national
8.2	Research collaborative arrangements including termination of collaboration	High risk	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
		Medium risk	Provost
		Low risk	PVC R&I

9	Research & Innovation	Limit	Final Authority
9.1	Matched funding approval of Research & Innovation contracts pre-award	Over £1m	Council
		Up to £1m	Vice Chancellor
		50% and over and up to £500K	PVC R&I
		Up to 49.99% and up to £250K	Executive Dean
9.2	Approval of research contract risk *Risk relates to contract terms as assessed by Research Contract Services. Contracts on University templates (unamended) are deemed low risk. Risks related to the subject matter of the research or identity of contracting parties are assessed under item 8.2 above.*	Over £1m	Council
		Very high risk and up to £1m	Vice-Chancellor
		High risk and up to £500K	PVC R&I
		Medium risk and up to£500	Executive Dean
		Low risk and up to £250K	Head of School
9.3	Approval of Research & Innovation ethical policies and procedures		Senate
9.4	Approval of Annual Research Integrity Statement		Council
9.5	Responsibility for ethical compliance under human and animal regulatory requirements (HTA, AWERB, NASPA)		PVC R&I
9.6	Sponsorship of clinical research & innovation including trials		PVC R&I
9.7	Approval of Research Excellence Framework / Knowledge Excellence Framework submissions		Vice-Chancellor

10	Commercialisation and Investment	Limit	Final Authority
10.1	Approval of subsidiaries *Low risk applies where:* • *No investment is being or will be sought (see 10.2 for approvals)* • *No assets (including staff, IP, goodwill) will be transferred to the subsidiary* • *The default governance documentation applies* • *The subsidiary will not require a bank account (see 10.6 below)* • *It is wholly owned limited liability company*	Medium & high risk	Council
		Low risk	Vice-Chancellor

10	Commercialisation and Investment continued	Limit	Final Authority
10.2	Approval of equity investment or loan capital into subsidiaries	Over £1m	Council
	Any investment should be approved by CFO as being in accordance with University covenants. Any borrowing over £500k is subject to Finance Committee scrutiny and recommendation, and be in accordance with the University's financial covenants	Up to £1m	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
10.3	Establishment of spin-out companies (no investment)		PVC Research and Innovation or Director of Research & Innovation (on recommendation of Innovate Surrey Board)
10.4	Establishment of spin-out companies (with investment) or investment in spin-out companies (post establishment)	Over £1m	Council
		Up to £1 million	VC sitting as EB (on recommendation of Innovate Surrey Board)
		Up to £100k	PVC Research and Innovation (on recommendation of Innovate Surrey Board)
10.5	Establishment of spin-in companies (no investment) *Due diligence will be carried out and high risk matters (such as restricted sectors or sensitive jurisdictions) will be referred to VC sitting as Executive Board for sign off.*		PVC Research and Innovation or Director of Research & Innovation (on recommendation of Innovate Surrey Board)
10.6	Establishment of spin-in companies (with investment) or investment in spin-out companies (post establishment) *Due diligence will be carried out and high risk matters (such as restricted sectors or sensitive jurisdictions) will be referred to VC sitting as Executive Board for sign off.*	Over £1m	Council
		Up to £1 million	VC sitting as EB (on recommendation of Innovate Surrey Board)
		Up to £100k	PVC Research and Innovation (on recommendation of Innovate Surrey Board)
10.7	Sale of shares in spin-out companies	Over £1m	Council
		Up to £1m	Finance Committee
		Up to £500k	Innovate Surrey Ltd Board
10.8	Licensing of University Intellectual Property to third parties *Due diligence will be carried out and high risk matters (such as restricted sectors or sensitive jurisdictions) will be referred to VC sitting as Executive Board for sign off.*		PVC Research and Innovation or Director of Research & Innovation (on recommendation of Innovate Surrey Board)
10.9	Approval of non-default Governance Documentation for Subsidiaries		Council

10	Commercialisation and Investment continued	Limit	Final Authority
10.10	Approval for subsidiaries to set up a bank account		CFO on recommendation of Subsidiary Board
10.11	Default position for approval of acquisition and disposal of assets (land and buildings and including leases) by subsidiaries. *Default position may be overridden by bespoke governance agreements approved by Council.*	Up to £1m	VC on recommendation of Subsidiary Board
		Up to £5m	Finance Committee (on recommendation of Subsidiary Board and VC)
		Over £5m	Council (on recommendation of Subsidiary Board, VC and Finance Committee)
10.12	Approval of investment into joint ventures or partnerships of the University *Any investment should be approved by CFO as being in accordance with University covenants. Any borrowing over £500k is subject to Finance Committee scrutiny and recommendation, and be in accordance with the University's financial covenants*	Up to £1m	VC sitting as EB
		Over £1m	Council
10.13	Approval of investment into joint ventures or partnerships of subsidiaries *Any investment should be approved by CFO as being in accordance with University covenants. Any borrowing over £500k is subject to Finance Committee scrutiny and recommendation, and must be in accordance with the University's financial covenants*	Up to £1m	Subsidiary Board
		Over £1m	Council

10A	Borrowing and Leasing	Limit	Final Authority
10A.1	Approval of all borrowing *Any borrowing should be approved by CFO and University Secretary as being in accordance with the pre-existing consents and covenants of all other lending agreements.*	Over £1m	Council on recommendation of Finance Committee
		Up to £1m	VC sitting as EB
		Up to £500k	Chief Financial Officer
10A.2	Approval of all leasing *Once the new SORP is adopted, this will apply to all leases.* *If there is ambiguity over the type and value of the lease, Finance must be consulted.*	Over £1m	Council on recommendation of Finance Committee
		Up to £1m	VC sitting as EB
		Up to £500k	Chief Financial Officer

11	External Engagement and Advancement	Limit	Final Authority
11.1	Approval of the acceptance of donations (financial and/or benefits in kind) to the University *Subject to attestation of Advancement of completion of applicable due diligence and documented via approved form of gift agreement as set out in the Philanthropic Gift Procedure and Financial Crime, Compliance and Anti-Money Laundering Procedure*	Over £1m	Council, on the recommendation of EB
		£500k-£1m	Vice-Chancellor sitting as EB
		£250k-500k	Vice-Chancellor
		£50k-250k	COO or Provost
		Up to £50k	Director of Advancement

12	Contracts and spend on goods and services from third parties	Limit	Final Authority
12.1	Approval for contracts and spend **within** an agreed budget envelope – *Limit values relate to total committed costs over the life of a project or activity and any associated contracts, including VAT. In all events the Purchasing Procedure must be followed.*	Over £10m	Council
		Up to £10m	Vice-Chancellor as Executive Board
		Up to £5m	Chief Operating Officer
		Up to £2m	Chief Financial Officer
		Up to £500k	Executive Board Member
		Below £100k	Defined by Agresso and Purchasing Procedure
12.2	Approval for contracts and investment in projects incremental to annual budget envelope *Limit values relate to total committed costs over the life of a project or activity and any associated contracts, including VAT. In all events the Purchasing Procedure must be followed.*	Over £10m	Council
		Up to £10m	Finance Committee
		Up to £5m	Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board
		Up to £500k	Capital and Resources Group/Digital Resource Group

13	Provision of Services by the University	Limit	Final Authority
13.1	Approval of provision of non-primary trading services by the University or University staff member *Consultancy and expert services, excluding research contracts.* *Risk relates to contract terms. Services provided on University standard terms and conditions are deemed low risk*	Over £1m	Council
		Very High risk and up to £1 million	Vice-Chancellor
		High risk & up to £500k	Provost
		Medium Risk & up to£250K	Executive Dean
		Low risk & up to £50K	Head of School