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University of Aberdeen

Delegated Authority Schedule

Index

Introduction & Scope	4
Status of Delegations under the Schedule	4
Principles of Delegation.....	4
Responsibility to Inform.....	5
Legal Contracts and Risk.....	5
Guarantees and indemnities	6
Structure and Levels of Delegation.....	6
Sub-delegation	6
Disputes.....	8
Novel & Contentious Arrangements.....	8
Strategic UK or International Bids	8
Mergers & Strategic Alignments.....	8
Section A: Matters Reserved to Court	9
Strategy & Risk	9
Court Governance.....	9
Academic Governance	9
Staff Appointments and Remuneration	10
Finance & Estates.....	10
Section B: Matters Delegated to the Principal	11
Status of Delegations to the Principal	11
Principles of Delegation.....	12
Section C: Matters Delegated to the University Secretary & COO	13
Status of Delegations to the University Secretary & COO	13
Use of the University Seal	14
Section D: Matters Delegated to Senate	15
Section E: Delegated Authority Schedule.....	17
Financial Planning.....	17
Revenue Budgets & General Expenditure.....	17
Expenditure	18
Financial Statements & Records	18
Capital Plan.....	18
Treasury and Banking	20
Treasury Management.....	20
Borrowing, Investment & Financing.....	20
Banking Arrangements	20
Income Management	21
Student Fees.....	21
Research Grants, Consultancy & Service Contracts.....	21
Donations & Endowments.....	22
Debt Collection	23
Estates	24

Land, Buildings and Projects.....	24
Land Owned by Wholly Owned Subsidiary Companies	24
Building and Commercial Property Contracts	24
Land and Property Disputes and Disposals.....	24
Commercialisation	25
Intellectual Property Rights & Patents	25
Companies, Joint Ventures & Consortium Arrangements	25
Legal Agreements	26
Student & Academic Activities.....	27
Admissions.....	27
Fees and Refunds	27
Staff Matters	28
Appointments and Promotions	28
Employment Disputes.....	28
Appendix 1: Delegated Authority Tables	29
Delegated Authority Table: Governance.....	29
Delegated Authority Table: Financial Planning	31
Delegated Authority Table: Treasury & Banking	34
Delegated Authority Table: Income Management.....	36
Delegated Authority Table: Estates and Capital Projects.....	38
Delegated Authority Table: Commercialisation	40
Delegated Authority Table: Student and Academic Activities	42
Delegated Authority Table: Staff Matters.....	45
Appendix 2 Glossary of Terms.....	48
Appendix 3 Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland	54
Appendix 4 Guidance on the Use of the University Common Seal.....	55
Appendix 5 University Wholly Owned Subsidiaries and Arms-Length/Associated Bodies.....	57

Introduction & Scope

Status of Delegations under the Schedule

This Schedule lists those Committees or individuals to whom authority has been delegated by the University Court to commit the University to a contractual or quasi-contractual arrangement that may result in a liability to the University.

The document also supports the proper implementation of the University's [Financial Regulations](#), as approved by University Court, on the recommendation of the Audit & Risk Committee. It summarises the level of delegation authorised by the Financial Regulations.

Section A of the Schedule sets out matters which are reserved to the University Court and which are not normally delegated. The signing/implementing authority for the University Court shall be the University Secretary & COO, unless an alternative is identified in Section A, or by resolution of the Court (as recorded in the minutes for that meeting).

Section B of the Schedule sets out matters which are delegated to the Principal, by virtue of their authority and responsibilities as the Chief Executive and designated Accountable Officer of the University, and to empower them to discharge their duty to ensure the orderly conduct of the business of the University in a timely and efficient manner.

Section C of the Schedule sets out matters which are delegated to the University Secretary & COO, by virtue of their authority and responsibilities as the Principal Officer of Court and to empower them to discharge their duty to ensure that the Court acts within its powers and follows proper procedures.

Section D of the Schedule sets out matters which are delegated to the University Senate, to empower it to discharge its statutory powers to regulate and superintend the education (encompassing teaching, learning and assessment) and discipline of the University, the promotion of research, and the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the institution, subject to the general control and direction of the Court.

Section E of the Schedule sets out, by operational theme, the designated authorised role-holders and Committees within the University who are entrusted by the University Court to exercise its powers in respect of relevant delegated business. Within this section, delegation thresholds are also detailed.

The Schedule applies to all activities set out herein and all University funds, regardless of source (restricted or non-restricted funds). It treats all delegations as non-exclusive.

Principles of Delegation

Any delegate of University Court (including the Principal and University Secretary & COO) shall exercise their delegated powers on behalf of the University at all times in accordance with the following overarching principles:

- The University Court shall retain ultimate oversight of the business of the University.
- The Principal shall exercise general supervision over the University and shall be generally responsible for maintaining and promoting the efficiency and good order of the University.
- All actions will not exceed the level of authority delegated by the University Court.
- Authorities not delegated under this Schedule and authorities for all commitments and transactions above the maximum delegated monetary values within this Schedule remain with the University Court.
- All actions must be contained within the allocated and approved University budget unless otherwise stated.

- All actions shall be in the best interests of the University and consistent with the University's values, charitable purposes, Strategic Plan, and the institutional objectives and priorities contained in the Plan.
- Any decision or action should be consistent with the Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland ([Appendix 2](#)).
- All decisions or actions must not give rise to a conflict of interest which has not been declared and managed under the University's [Code of Practice on Conflicts of Interest](#).
- All decisions should be consistent with the University's Risk Appetite Statement and comply with legal and funding body obligations.
- Approval must be obtained before the point of committing to any transaction unless otherwise stated. All Procurement should be undertaken in line with the University's Procurement Strategy and associated [Procurement Policy and Procedures](#).
- The total transaction cost over the full period of commitment and options for extensions must be detailed and any transactions of value over £1m should be notified to the Chief Financial Officer.
- Sufficient detail, evidence and relevant level of prior review and confirmation to support any action being requested must be provided to the delegated authority to allow them to make an informed decision and to allow them to demonstrate to Court, auditors or funders that an appropriate course of action is taken.
- Detailed financial sub-delegations are approved by the relevant delegated authority holder and cannot exceed the value of delegation held by the delegated authority holder. This does not delegate the overall responsibility of the delegated authority holder.
- All delegated authority holders named in this document are responsible for ensuring that appropriate business continuity plans are in place should they not be available to undertake their roles. In the absence of the Principal, the Delegated Authority is sub-delegated according to the Principal's deputising arrangements.
- Notwithstanding any delegations under this Schedule, the University Court reserves at all times:
 - The reserved powers set out in Section A;
 - The power to suspend, amend or withdraw a delegation under this Schedule;
 - The general delegation of authority to the Principal and the University Secretary & COO, as set out in Statute
 - The power to exercise any business or function delegated under this Schedule.

Responsibility to Inform

It is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team and relevant delegates to keep the University Court (through reporting to relevant Committees) appropriately informed as to activity arising within the scope of the delegated authority under this Schedule, and to provide appropriate reports as required and/or as requested.

It is the responsibility of the delegate to obtain sufficient detail, evidence and relevant level of prior authorisation to support any action or decision taken in respect of a delegated matter.

The delegate shall be required to be able to demonstrate to University Court, auditors or funders that an appropriate course of action is taken when exercising its powers under this Schedule.

Legal Contracts and Risk

It is acknowledged by the University Court that certain delegates under this Schedule will ostensibly sign contracts which create legal and quasi-legal obligations on behalf of the University which could have significant financial and reputational impact for the University.

It is important for the wellbeing and sustainability of the University that such commitments and the legal risks that they create are understood and managed appropriately.

The University Secretary & COO is responsible for the management of legal risk on behalf of the University. Any delegation which creates legal obligations on behalf of the University (including but not limited to commercial contracts and other types of agreements) are therefore to be taken forward in accordance with the advice from the University Secretary & COO to ensure they are created on a valid legal basis.

Guarantees and indemnities

The University will not give any guarantees or indemnities incurring contingent liabilities other than those in the normal course of business.

Employees of the University must not sign any disclaimer, form of indemnity or guarantee or other document which transfers legal liability onto the University (except where these are contained in the University's standard terms and conditions). Any such document must be signed by the University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer.

All members of the University must consult with the University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer concerning the terms of any guarantee or indemnity which the University has been requested to give.

Approval for any guarantee or indemnity will only be given once appropriate due diligence has been carried out. Approval will only be given by the University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer as required.

The Chief Financial Officer will maintain a record of all guarantees and indemnities given by the University within a contract register.

Structure and Levels of Delegation

The Delegated Authority Schedule is structured to show:

- The Committee or individual which must approve the transaction, arrangement or project, and;
- The individual who holds the delegated signing authority to execute the transaction once approval has been given. The Court Signatories for transactions reserved to Court, the signing of deeds, or otherwise not delegated are a member of Court, plus the University Secretary & COO or the Head of Governance in the absence of the University Secretary & COO. The nature of the transaction will determine whether this also requires a witness and/or the application of the seal.
- The individuals who need to be informed or consulted by a delegated signing authority or approver for transactions of certain types or above certain values.

Useful definitions of terms are contained within [Appendix 2](#).

Sub-delegation

The University Court regards each Head of School or Director of Professional Services as the designated main budget holder for their respective School or Directorate. The Principal is the designated budget holder for the University Budget and the Capital Budget.

Budget Holders have delegated authority to approve virements between activities within their respective budget and to approve transactions/projects within that budget up to the levels outlined below, in line with the University's legal obligations in relation to procurement. A delegate should normally follow the sub-delegation in this Schedule (where listed). Otherwise, the authority to determine how to delegate rests with the named delegate. Individuals may, from time to time, set out schedules for the sub-delegation of their authorities. For example, a Head of School may regularly delegate authority to an appropriate member or members of the School Executive.

Individuals and bodies in whom authority is vested by this Schedule are authorised to sub-delegate to other individual office holders, provided that:

- The sub-delegation is reasonable and appropriate.
- The delegate gives due consideration to supervision/provision of appropriate challenge.
- The delegate in this Schedule remains ultimately responsible for the acts and omissions of the sub-delegate.
- Any sub-delegation will not prevent the delegate from also discharging those functions.
- The sub-delegation can be revoked at any time without prejudice to any previous decisions made under that authority.

Disputes

If there is a question or dispute regarding whether a decision taken, or proposed to be taken, by a delegated Committee or individual contravenes the provisions of this Schedule, it will be escalated to the University Secretary & COO, who shall decide on behalf of the University Court, in consultation with the Principal and/or Senior Governor as appropriate, if the decision contravenes the provisions and how to proceed.

The University Secretary & COO has delegated authority for decisions and document management relating to the settlement of court actions or other disputes not falling within the remit of other parts of this Schedule.

Novel & Contentious Arrangements

Where a decision or action proposed to be taken under delegated powers is likely to be regarded as controversial or is a material decision that will have or is likely to have:

- a significant effect on financial, reputational or operational risk; and/or
- a significant impact on academic and/or service delivery or performance;

the matter will be referred to the Senior Management Team for consideration. The Senior Management Team may then decide to escalate the matter to the Senior Governor and/or the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee to consider the appropriate approval mechanism. However, as outlined in the Financial Regulations, it should be noted that any projects exceeding £5m in total cost, or which are novel or contentious regardless of their costs, are subject to final approval by Court.

Examples of novel or contentious arrangements might include:

Strategic UK or International Bids

Large strategic, one-off calls for funding bids including joint bids with other institutions or agreements with institutions or other parties regarding sharing of monies or other University resources provided by external agencies for infrastructure for research or education.

Mergers & Strategic Alignments

Proposals in this area are likely to involve in the UK or overseas:

- legal or reputation commitments (Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding);
- creation of a visible entity or joint venture;
- delivery or shared significant education, research or operational activities out with the University of Aberdeen campus locations; or
- the award of dual/joint degrees for multiple programmes.

Fees Increases

The amendment of tuition fees and rents, if in the normal range of increases of up to 5%, or in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI) if higher, is delegated to the Senior Management Team. In the case of strategic or material changes to fees, delegated authority passes to the Finance & Resourcing Committee, for onward endorsement by Court. Increases above 7% should be treated as novel and contentious.

In the case of a novel change to fee structures, for example the introduction of a new fee model or structure for students from the Rest of UK (RUK), the authority for approval rests with University Court.

Section A: Matters Reserved to Court

The University Court is the University's Governing Body and has ultimate responsibility for the University. The powers of Court are defined in accordance with The Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions of the University of Aberdeen, 1858-1990, the Court's Statement of Primary Responsibilities, and the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

The high-level articulation of the University Court's role is to set the mission, strategic direction and values of the University, and to monitor and challenge the execution of the strategy by the Principal and Senior Management Team. The Court must secure appropriate assurance on academic governance and quality from Senate.

To support effective decision-making, Court composition brings independent perspectives as well as those from individuals in academic, professional services, Trade Union and student roles. While on Court, all Court members are required, as charity trustees, to act in the best interest of the University, its beneficiaries and charitable objects.

The following areas of business are reserved to Court to approve:

Strategy & Risk

- The approval of the University's Strategic Plan and areas of reporting via Key Performance Indicators.
- The approval of the University's Risk Appetite Statement and consideration of reports on Risk Management.
- The appointment of the Internal and External Auditors and their annual fees, on the recommendation of the Audit & Risk Committee.
- The approval of the Internal Audit Annual Report for submission to the Scottish Funding Council.

Court Governance

- The appointment and terms of reference of designated Standing Committees of Court.
- The approval, on the recommendation of the Governance and Nominations Committee, of the appointment of independent members of Court, changes to the remits and compositions of Standing Committees and appointment of the membership of Standing Committees.
- The approval of arrangements for the election of the Senior Governor of Court (in accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016).
- The approval of the removal of a member of Court from office in accordance with Resolution No 288 Procedure for Removal of Members of Court.
- The approval of Ordinances and Resolutions, following consultation with Senate and the General Council.
- Delegation arrangements to Committees, the Principal and other senior officers and the Delegated Authorisation Schedule.
- The approval of any changes to the Standing Orders of the University Court, on the recommendation of the Governance and Nominations Committee.
- The approval of the Schedule of Delegation and decision-making powers, and any ad hoc delegation, provided this is within the terms of the Ordinances and Resolutions.

Academic Governance

- The approval of major academic re-organisations of the curriculum, on the recommendation of the Senate.
- The approval of the annual institution-led Review of Academic Quality.

- The approval of the academic structure of the University in consultation with the Senate, in particular changes to the Schools as the formal academic governance and management structure of the University, and including the creation or amendments of Schools and constituent disciplines.

Staff Appointments and Remuneration

- The approval of the appointment, re-appointment or dismissal of the Principal as the Chief Executive of the University.
- The approval of Severance Terms and substantial changes to pay and/or terms and conditions of the Principal, on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee.
- The approval of the appointment or dismissal of the Secretary to the Court (University Secretary & COO).
- The approval of the Senior Staff Pay Policy on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee for implementation by the Committee at an individual level.
- The oversight and approval of strategic People issues.

Finance & Estates

- The approval of the Annual Report and Financial Accounts.
- The approval of the University's Budget and financial forecasts.
- The approval of the University's Financial Strategy.
- The approval of changes to accounting policies, as recommended by the Audit & Risk Committee.
- The approval of the University's borrowing commitments, including re-financing or material variation to existing arrangements, any new borrowing arrangements, and any transaction involving any "sale or lease-back" of material assets.
- The approval of business plans for proposed expenditure out with the agreed revenue and capital budget with a value over £5 million, and the approval of all material asset sales with a value in excess of £1 million, on the recommendation of the Finance & Resourcing Committee.
- The approval of use application, or change in application, of funds raised by Private Placement or bond issue.
- The approval of the University's Capital Plan and Estates Strategy for the management and development of the University's land and buildings.
- The approval of the establishment of new campuses, whether overseas or in the UK.
- The approval of the Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council.
- The approval of the University's Modern Slavery Statement for annual publication on the University webpages.

NB: The above does not preclude Court from discussing or seeking reports on any matter it deems relevant that are not specified here or which are delegated to Committees.

Section B: Matters Delegated to the Principal

The Court recognises that the Principal is the Vice-Chancellor of the University, the designated Accountable Officer and the Chief Executive Officer, and that as such, the Principal is responsible for the effective working, management and good order of the University. The Principal therefore has authority from the Court for the academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource management of the University which may, in turn, be discharged through the Senior Management Team and through the academic leadership of the Senior Vice-Principal and Vice-Principals.

Status of Delegations to the Principal

The Court delegates to the Principal the following:

- Authority to lead development of the University's vision, mission, Strategic Plan and values, ensuring the support and engagement of the Court in the relevant processes.
- Authority to lead the University's engagement with legal and other agreements and affiliations with academic and other partners.
- Authority to lead the development of a rolling operational plan for the University, including short and longer term budgets, ensuring the support and engagement of the Court in the development process.
- Authority for the virement of budgets within the financial framework approved by Court.
- Authority to lead development of strategic key performance indicators, against which University performance will be measured at least annually, ensuring the support and engagement of the Court in the relevant development and review processes.
- Authority to provide the academic leadership of the University in such a way as to ensure delivery of excellence in education, scholarship, research, engagement, innovation and impact, and the student experience.
- Authority to lead the Senate as its Convener in fulfilment of the role and responsibilities of the Senate;
- Authority to determine the optimum operational structure of the University and to organise the distribution of all required staff and other resources in the delivery of the strategic objects of the University.
- Authority for the engagement of staff, the determination of their number and their terms and conditions of employment, and the variance of any individual contract of employment.
- Authority to take all necessary steps to ensure that the University has policies and procedures and other controls in place to support delivery of the objects of the University and to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, constitutional rules and legal and contractual agreements with which the University must comply.
- Authority to oversee the processes associated with the maintenance of good order in the University, including those associated with staff and student discipline.
- Authority as the designated Accountable Officer in respect of Scottish Funding Council funds for compliance with the Scottish Funding Council Financial Memorandum. In accordance with the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance, the Principal shall be formally responsible for alerting the Court if any action or policy is incompatible with the terms of the Financial Memorandum;
- Authority to represent the interests of the University externally, engaging with stakeholders as a strong advocate and ambassador for the University.

- Authority to advise the Senior Governor of Court in respect to any matters where conflict, actual or potential, may occur between the Court and the University Secretary & COO in their role as Secretary to the Court.
- Authority, on behalf of the Court, to carry the prime responsibility for health and safety throughout the University.
- Authority to review the performance of the Principal's direct reports in accordance with agreed objectives and to establish and maintain an equivalent system of staff performance review.
- Authority to undertake such other responsibilities as may be determined by the Court from time to time which are commensurate with the role of Principal, designated Accountable Officer and Chief Executive Officer of the University.

Principles of Delegation

In delegating authority to the Principal to act on its behalf in matters affecting the well-being of the University as outlined above, the Court exercises this delegation subject to the following principles:

- The Principal will act within the terms of the prescribed conditions of his or her appointment.
- The Principal's actions will be:
 - consistent with the University-level Strategic Plan and the institutional objectives and priorities as expressed in this approved Plan;
 - consistent with the University's approved budget;
 - in conformity with relevant legislation and externally prescribed conditions, including the Principal's responsibilities as the designated accounting officer under the Scottish Funding Council's Financial Memorandum and other funding documents including the approved outcome agreement.
- The Principal's actions will be consistent with the Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland ([Appendix 2](#)).
- The Principal will at all times act in accordance with the best interests of the University, its staff and students, and will be mindful of the importance of preserving the University's reputation.
- The Principal will report to the Court all significant decisions thus taken, and will be accountable to the Court for such decisions.
- In cases of doubt, for example in regard to novel or potentially contentious matters, the Principal will consult with the Senior Governor of the Court, whom failing an external member of the Court nominated for the purpose by the Senior Governor.
- In accordance with the arrangements agreed by the Governance & Nominations Committee, in cases of the absence of the Principal, whether by incapacity, leave or conflict of interest, the Senior Vice-Principal may deputise for the Principal. The Principal also retains the authority to delegate to another appropriate senior officer, acting on behalf of the Principal.

Section C: Matters Delegated to the University Secretary & COO

The University Secretary & COO is responsible for the administration of the University, compliance with all procedures and the provision of governance and administrative services for the Court, Senate and General Council.

In providing governance services for the Court, the University Secretary & COO is the Secretary to the Court and in that role carries out the duties and has the responsibilities of the secretary to the governing body in accordance with the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance. The University Secretary & COO, in carrying out their role as Secretary to the Court, is solely responsible to the Court and, acting independently, has a direct reporting link to the Senior Governor of the Court for the conduct of Court business.

The University Secretary & COO is also the Establishment License Holder for the University, and the holder of the institutional Immigration License.

Status of Delegations to the University Secretary & COO

The Court has delegated to the Secretary the following:

- Authority to advise the Court and to take steps to ensure compliance of the Court with all applicable internal constitutional documents, codes, policies and procedures, and all applicable external legislation, governance codes, memoranda and grant conditions etc. The latter includes the Scottish Funding Council Financial Memorandum, where the Secretary is responsible for assisting the Principal to fully discharge their responsibilities, as the designated officer in respect of Scottish Funding Council funds, for compliance with the Scottish Funding Council Financial Memorandum, and for alerting the Court if any action or policy is incompatible with the terms of the Financial Memorandum.
- Authority to advise the Court on all matters relating to the Remit and Terms of Reference of Court Committees, ensuring that those Committees conduct business appropriately within the defined limits of their Terms of Reference.
- Authority to ensure that members of the Court are supplied with appropriate information in such a form and of such quality as to enable the Court to discharge its duties.
- Authority to maintain a Register of Interests of all members of the Court and its standing Committees, and senior officers of the University, and to publish these on the University's webpages.
- Authority, in their role as Secretary to the Court, to advise the Senior Governor of Court in respect to any matters where conflict, actual or potential, may occur between the Court and the Principal.
- Authority to be solely responsible for providing legal advice or for obtaining it for the Court and advising the Court on all matters of procedure.
- Authority to advise the Senior Governor of Court and the Governance and Nominations Committee on, and to administer all aspects of the Court's membership and succession planning for the Court and Court Committees. The responsibilities shall extend to cover arrangements for the recruitment of new members and maintenance of the register held on the skills and experience of Court and Court Committee members.
- Authority to advise the Senior Governor of Court and the Governance and Nominations Committee on, and to administer all aspects of the development and delivery programmes of induction and development for all members of the Court.

- Authority to report to the Court on any conflict of interest, actual or potential, on any matter between the University Secretary & COO's managerial responsibilities within the University and their responsibilities as the Secretary to the Court;
- Authority to sign any contract or agreement or other legal instrument on behalf of the University, subject to the University Financial Regulations, or to delegate such authority to an appropriate individual in writing.
- Authority to undertake such other responsibilities, as may be determined by the Court from time to time, to support the proper and effective operation of the Court in accordance with its responsibilities.

Use of the University Seal

In accordance with Ordinance No. 113, deeds, contracts and documents reserved for approval only by University Court are only deemed to be validly executed when sealed with the Common Seal of the University and bearing the signature of one member of the University Court plus the University Secretary & COO (or, in the absence of the University Secretary & COO, their appointed representative).

The signatures should be witnessed, in line with best practice, but it should be noted that the Ordinance states that the application of the Seal and signatures as outlined above is binding, whether attested by witnesses or not.

The use of the Seal should be accompanied by an appropriate, signed register entry to record the details of the date, document, transaction, signatories and witnesses.

Where appropriate, the requirement to use the University Seal is outlined within the *Guidance on the Use of the University Common Seal* in [Appendix 4](#), and relevant supporting tables of the Delegated Authority Schedule in [Appendix 1](#) below.

Section D: Matters Delegated to Senate

Defined by the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 as the body which ‘is responsible for the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the institution’, the Senate is convened by the Principal and is constituted to discharge the functions of the University Court relating to the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the University. As such, it is the supreme academic body of the University and has delegated authority for all academic matters relating to education and research.

In fulfilling its duties, Senate, convened by the Principal, brings together academic office holders with the perspectives of individual elected Senators, and through them their constituents, and student representatives. It is required to provide appropriate assurance on academic governance to University Court, and to seek approval from University Court for any material or strategic changes to the following key activity:

- The direction, regulation, approval and promotion of the policies and practices for education, learning and research of the University, including assessment.
- Discussions regarding matters of strategic importance for education and research.
- Approvals of the award of degrees, including honorary degrees.
- The maintenance of the quality and standards of the University’s awards.
- The setting and upholding of the academic regulatory framework of the University, including regulations that govern Students’ programmes of study, their progress and their awards.
- The regulation of the conduct of the students of the University.
- The approval of admission requirements to the University’s various degrees (known as “Going Rates”).
- The strategic oversight of appropriate and effective arrangements for student support (academic and non-academic).
- The setting of high-level academic policy and strategy, under the strategic direction contained within the University’s Strategic Plan, as approved by University Court.
- Reporting to the University Court on any matter referred to the Senate by University Court.
- Any requests to University Court for a Resolution or the amendment of a Resolution.
- The approval of the conferment of emeritus status on retiring professors of the University.
- The policies approved by Senate or its standing sub-committees, including policies relating to student academic appeals, discipline and complaints, and the hearing and determination of outcomes of related issues through sub-committees (the Senate Appeals and Complaints Panel, the Students’ Progress Committees and the Student Disciplinary Committee).

After each meeting, Senate reports to Court on matters approved as part of its delegated authority, as outlined above, referring on items endorsed by Senate requiring further approval from Court.

Senate also delegates some of its work to sub-committees, which draw in specialist expertise and school input, while providing an academic view through the debate of issues at full Senate. Much of the detailed work in regard to the above matters is delegated by the Senate to the University Committees of Research, Education and Quality Assurance.

The University Education Committee is responsible to the Senate for the strategic oversight of education provision and its alignment to the University’s Strategic Plan. Together with its sub-committees for Employability and Entrepreneurship and Student Support and Experience, it also oversees innovation, academic development and enhancement, together with a focus on the wider

student experience, including employability and entrepreneurship, student mobility and student support.

Assurance of the quality of the University's educational provision, particularly in relation to the design, implementation, evaluation and review of mechanisms for quality assurance and quality control, for the enhancement of the quality of education, and for the safeguarding of academic rests with the Quality Assurance Committee and its working sub-group, the Academic Policy and Regulations Group.

The research aspects of the Senate's remit are covered through the Research Committee, and its sub-committee the Postgraduate Research Committee in regard to research students. Non-student research interests are overseen by the Senate through regular reports from the Vice-Principal (Research) who chairs the Research Committee and through consideration of national initiatives as and when appropriate, e.g. in regard to the research assessment exercise.

Section E: Delegated Authority Schedule

Financial Planning

Revenue Budgets & General Expenditure

Court has the overall authority for University finance and it delegates responsibility for monitoring of these finances to the Finance & Resourcing Committee. The Finance & Resourcing Committee also has delegated authority for the approval of all expenditure above the threshold of £1M, and in turn may delegate relevant matters to its standing sub-committee, the Investment Committee.

Additional specific responsibilities are delegated via the Principal directly to the Executive Committees relating to Estates and Digital Strategy. It is a requirement that Project Boards are established to manage strategically important projects and these Boards will report to the relevant executive Committee, with escalation to the Senior Management Team, Finance & Resourcing Committee and Court depending on their financial value, novelty and strategic impacts.

Prior to the commencement of the Financial Year, Court will approve the 3-year revenue budget and the 10-year capital investment plan. This will include the budgets for projects contained either within the revenue or capital plan.

The Chief Financial Officer ensures that detailed budgets are prepared to reflect the outcome of the budget process and that these are communicated to budget holders as soon as possible following their approval by Court. Financial plans should be consistent and enable delivery of the University's Strategic Plan approved by Court.

Heads of School/Directorate and budget holders are not authorised to commit the University to expenditure without first ensuring that there are sufficient funds to meet the purchase cost. In practice, this means that purchase orders cannot be placed beyond the revenue, capital or project budget allocations approved by Court or the Finance & Resourcing Committee.

During the year, the Chief Financial Officer, following discussion with budget holders, is responsible for coordinating the submission of significant budget revisions to the Finance & Resourcing Committee for consideration before submission to Court for approval.

The agreed thresholds for any required approvals of budget variance are as follows:

- Any forecast of a departure (greater than £100K or 10% whichever is lower) from the overall budget target (including project budgets) must be reported immediately to the Head of School or Chief Operating Officer by budget holders and, if necessary, corrective action agreed and taken.
- Any variances over £500K need to be referred to the Senior Management Team and over £1M reported to the Finance & Resourcing Committee.
- Any expenditure out with the agreed revenue and capital budgets with a value between £1M and £5M must be approved by the Finance & Resourcing Committee. Any expenditure out with agreed budgets in excess of £5M must be approved by Court. Projects planned within the overall approved budget, with a total cost between £1m and £5m, must also be approved by Finance & Resourcing Committee. Projects over £5m in total cost or which are novel or contentious are subject to approval by Court.

When the Head of School/Directorate or Chief Financial Officer is on annual or other long-term leave, delegated authority must be agreed with the Chief Financial Officer. For the Chief Financial Officer, authorisation is delegated to a member of the Finance Management Team.

Leases of assets are revenue expenditure, and as such are approved through the revenue budget. Leases for land and buildings are approved by the Estates Committee, for onward recommendation to the Finance & Resourcing Committee.

Resources for planned capital expenditure on land, buildings, equipment, digital infrastructure, furniture and associated costs will be allocated as part of the 10-year capital programme approved by Court.

With appropriate input from the Senior Management Team via the Estates and Digital Strategy Committees, the Finance & Resourcing Committee has delegated authority to endorse the University's Annual and 10-Year Capital Plans for recommendation to Court for approval.

During the year, the Chief Financial Officer along with the Senior Vice-Principal are responsible for submitting capital programme amendments to the Estates and/or Digital Strategy Committee for approval and to the Finance & Resourcing Committee as required. An annual capital plan is produced on a rolling basis detailing the infrastructure projects approved for that financial year.

Treasury and Banking

Treasury Management

The Finance & Resourcing Committee is responsible for approving the [Treasury Management Policy](#) which sets out the strategy and policies for cash management, long term investments and borrowings. The policy must ensure compliance with any funding body approval for any secured or unsecured loans that go beyond the general consent levels set out in the Financial Memorandum.

Borrowing, Investment & Financing

All executive decisions concerning borrowing, investment or financing are delegated to the Chief Financial Officer with the appropriate approval from the Finance & Resourcing Committee and Court. All borrowing shall be undertaken in the name of the University and conform to funding body requirements.

On an annual basis, the University will prepare a Financing Report for approval by the Finance & Resourcing Committee and Court, which will include the following items:

- Compliance with the SFC's financial memorandum, external lenders covenant restrictions and the University's own internal covenant requirements.
- An assessment of progress against the approved repayment strategy.
- Where covenants are breached, or are projected to be breached and/or if there are any shortfall in debt repayment contributions, a recovery plan will be implemented over a maximum period of 3 years.
- An assessment of risks associated with the borrowing strategy.
- Any possible refinancing options which are optimal for the University.

The Investment Committee has delegated authority to implement investment recommendations made by the University's investment advisors within the existing investment strategy.

The Chief Financial Officer has delegated authority to manage investment maximisation of existing investments within existing mechanisms, with the appropriate approval of the Investment Committee.

The Investment Committee recognises the autonomy of the University and The Development Trust. As a consequence, decisions impacting on The Development Trust require the attendance and endorsement of at least one Development Trust appointee.

Start-Up Loans

Under its remit and delegated authority from Court, via the Finance & Resourcing Committee, the Start-Up and Spin-Out Panel has the authority to make decisions on loans or temporary financing where the sum involved exceeds £10,000 or where a loan of any value is converted to equity, up to a maximum of £100,000. In line with usual delegations for expenditure out with agreed revenue and capital budgets, above £100,000 approval rests with the Chief Financial Officer and University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer, above £500,000 with the Senior Management Team and above £1m with the Finance & Resourcing Committee.

Banking Arrangements

Court is responsible for the appointment of the University's bankers and other professional financial advisers (such as investment managers) on the recommendation of the Finance & Resourcing Committee. The appointment will initially be for a five-year period and reviewed annually thereafter.

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible, on behalf of the Finance & Resourcing Committee, for liaising with the University's bankers in relation to the operation of bank accounts. Only the Chief Financial Officer may open or close a bank account for dealing with the University's funds. All bank accounts shall be in the name of the University or its subsidiary companies.

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for ensuring that all bank accounts are subject to regular reconciliation and that large or unusual items are investigated as appropriate.

Income Management

All income streams, including research grants and commercial income should be assessed under the appropriate due diligence ethics and procedures.

Student Fees

The amendment of tuition fees and rents, if in the normal range of increases of up to 5%, or in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI) if higher, is delegated to the Senior Management Team. In the case of strategic or material changes to fees, delegated authority passes to the Finance & Resourcing Committee, for onward endorsement by Court. Increases above 7% should be treated as novel and contentious.

In the case of a novel change to fee structures, for example the introduction of a new fee model or structure for students from the Rest of UK (RUK), the authority for approval rests with University Court.

Research Grants, Consultancy & Service Contracts

Delegated authority for the submission and acceptance of research grants is held by the Director of Research & Innovation. All sources of income will be subject to the University's processes for ethical review. Revenue and capital expenditure for individual transactions are subject to standard financial authority limits. Approval for submission to the funder is subject to the following threshold approvals:

- For the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, applications under the value of £350k may be approved by the Head of School.
- For all Schools and Institutes, applications over the value of £350k but under £1m must be approved by the Head of Institute/Head of School and the Director of Research & Innovation.
- Higher value applications over £1m must be referred to the Chief Financial Officer and Senior Vice-Principal for approval.

A framework for the costing and pricing of all work done with commercial and other external partners, that is not covered by peer-reviewed competitively won research council or major charity funding, is provided within the institutional Costing and Pricing Policy for Work with External Entities.

The Policy provides an overview of the different types of externally funded activity and guidance on categorisation and key pricing principles. Business Development Executives (BDEs) in Research & Innovation (R&I) can advise on the most appropriate activity category and pricing framework and should therefore always be consulted early in any discussions with external organisations.

Commercial Research

All costs for commercial research work must be calculated and recorded via the University's Worktribe system, using the same internal support mechanisms as for costing of research proposals to UKRI and other funders.

All commercially funded work must be discussed with Research & Innovation (R&I); a nominated Business Development Executive (BDEs) or Technology Transfer Executive will liaise with the academic to negotiate a price with the funder.

The system for approvals within Worktribe are as follows:

Green All projects meeting the minimum pricing requirements.

Amber Any project priced between 75% and the minimum pricing requirements, where approval is suggested by the relevant BDE as part of wider commercial considerations. In such cases, the Head of School still has the absolute right to reject.

Red Cases when the Head of School has explicitly accepted the losses to the school based on reduction of indirect costs, resulting in an overall recovery rate below the 75% threshold and the Vice-Principal Regional Engagement, or a nominated deputy acting with the explicit

authority of the VP, has approved. Approval can never be given on an open-ended or long-term basis beyond one specific project.

Consultancy

Consultancy is the provision of services for third parties which are not credit-bearing teaching or research. It does not involve the generation of new knowledge or original investigation or research but will involve at least one of the following:

- Use of the University, School or other University unit's name and/or logo.
- Use of any University facilities or staff (including the time and expertise of the colleague undertaking the consultancy). This includes staff secondments.
- University premises (including correspondence or contact through the University, e.g. email, telephone)
- Any consultancy which the member of staff wishes to undertake in order to be covered under the University's insurance policies (such as professional indemnity insurance).
- Emeritus staff may wish to undertake consultancy through the University, on a case-by-case basis.
- Expert witness work is covered under this policy.

All consultancy activities should be costed and priced via the Research Award Management System (Worktribe) and will include R&I and the Head of School approvals as part of this process.

All University consultancy contracts must be negotiated and approved through Research & Innovation (R&I), who draw on their knowledge of the market and work with the colleague to secure the most suitable price for such work.

Approval by an individual's Head of School must be given for all consultancy activity prior to carrying out the work. In certain cases, where it is anticipated that there will be a series of consultancy engagements with a particular partner over a period of time, generic approval may be given rather than having to seek approval for each specific instance.

Continuing Professional Development

New CPD courses, developed specifically for groups of learners and requiring the production of new course material, require the approval of the Head of School, in the context of the workload modelling mechanism. If the course is credit bearing, i.e. it can lead in any way to an academic award, then additional approvals will be required via Planning and Academic Services. If the course is accredited by another partner organisation, e.g. a professional body, additional approvals might be required by the University and/or the partner organisation. For specific advice contact the CPD Services team.

Donations & Endowments

The Investment Committee is responsible for proposing and agreeing investment objectives with the University Court and Development Trust and has delegated authority to recommend through the Finance & Resourcing Committee a long-term investment strategy appropriate to meet these objectives, including benchmarks and targets for the investment managers and/or advisors.

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for maintaining a record of the terms for each endowment fund and for ensuring that funds are appropriately accounted for and disbursed. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the monitoring the performance of Fund Managers and advising the Finance & Resourcing Committee on the control and investment of the endowment fund portfolio, via the Investment Committee.

The Finance & Resourcing Committee, via its delegated authority to the Investment Committee, is responsible for ensuring that all the University's endowment funds are operated within any relevant legislation and the specific requirements for each endowment.

Due diligence in respect of large donations is delegated to the Governance and Nominations Committee. When shares are offered by a donor, the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the same procedures they would normally undertake for monetary donations. This includes, if necessary, approval by the Governance and Nominations Committee.

Debt Collection

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the co-ordination of credit control and debt collection and will ensure that effective procedures are in place. Credit arrangements will be approved by the Finance & Resourcing Committee. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for implementing agreed credit arrangements.

Requests to write-off debts in excess of £50,000 must be referred in writing to the Chief Financial Officer for submission to the Finance & Resourcing Committee for consideration. Debts below this level may be written off with the permission of the Chief Financial Officer, and authorised by the Assistant Director, Financial Accounting. In exceptional cases not related to debt, the University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer should be consulted and has decision-making authority.

Estates

Land, Buildings and Projects

The purchase, sale of land or buildings, or other items of equipment should be undertaken in line with the following authority and with reference to Funding Council requirements where exchequer funded assets or exchequer funds are involved:

Value	Authorisation
Up to £500k (within existing approved budgets)	Estates Committee
Up to £1m	Senior Management Team
£1m - £5m	Finance & Resourcing Committee
Over £5m	Court

The Finance & Resourcing Committee can endorse individual land and property transactions and/or projects consistent with the direction of the Capital or Revenue Plan with a value between £1m and £5m.

Additionally, the Senior Management Team delegates approval authority to the Estates Committee for projects up to £500k in value, within existing budget plans.

Land Owned by Wholly Owned Subsidiary Companies

Decisions relating to the sale of land owned by a wholly owned subsidiary company of the University must be approved by the Finance & Resourcing Committee and Court, depending on value, in addition to gaining approval from the Board of Trustees of the wholly owned subsidiary. Any funds generated by disposals of land owned by a wholly owned subsidiary company with charitable status must be used in accordance with the purposes of that organisation's charitable objects.

Details of the University's subsidiaries and arms-length/associated bodies are provided in [Appendix 5](#).

Building and Commercial Property Contracts

Building and commercial property contracts are an executive responsibility and are administered by the Director of Estates and Facilities subject to the approval limits detailed in the [Budget Management section](#) of this Schedule.

Consultants may be appointed if the project, as determined by the Estates Committee, is too large or too specialised. Appointments shall be subject to tendering and other procedures where appropriate.

Major building contract payments shall be made only on receipt of an authorised certificate approved by the Director of Estates and Facilities (or other duly authorised officer).

Land and Property Disputes and Disposals

The University Secretary & COO should be consulted for all disputes on contracts involving land and property law, or where there are matters of concern.

The Chief Financial Officer has delegated authority to approve decisions regarding disputes with suppliers on framework agreements or approved contracts, in consultation with the University Secretary & COO.

Approval from the Scottish Funding Council must be sought for the disposal of property purchased with public funds.

Commercialisation

The Commercialisation Committee has the delegated authority from Court to consider and make recommendations to Court on the University's overall commercialisation strategy, and to have oversight of the monitoring of performance of the University consultancy, spin-out and joint venture companies, and the creation, dissolution or sale of University subsidiary companies (supported by relevant Executive Committees).

Any new aspect of business, proposed establishment of a company, joint venture or new overseas activity, which will require an investment in buildings, resources or staff time should be presented to the Finance & Resourcing Committee for approval and onward recommendation to Court.

Any projects that are unusual in nature, carry considerable financial and/or reputational risk, must be referred to Court for consideration (see section on [Novel & Contentious Arrangements](#)).

Intellectual Property Rights & Patents

Certain activities undertaken within the University including research and consultancy may give rise to ideas, designs and inventions which may be patentable. These are collectively known as intellectual property.

The Commercialisation Committee is responsible for approving the policy governing intellectual property accruing to the University from inventions and discoveries made by staff in the course of their work.

Companies, Joint Ventures & Consortium Arrangements

In certain circumstances it may be beneficial for the University to form a Company or joint venture to undertake services or commercialisation of intellectual property on behalf of the University. Court has approved an [Intellectual Property and Spin-Out policy](#) for the creation and governance of companies, including guidance on intellectual property exploitation and revenue sharing in respect of:

- the registration and all subsequent dealings with patents, design rights, trademarks and other intellectual property rights including licensing and outright transfer of such rights;
- Dealings with copyright, know-how and all other unregistered intellectual property rights (including in relation to software and teaching materials), licensing and outright transfer of such rights; and
- Technology transfer related agreements, including Confidentiality Agreements, Material Transfer Agreements and Heads of Terms.

It is the responsibility of the Commercialisation Committee to approve the constitution and shareholding arrangements and, if required, appoint University representative directors of companies, wholly or partially owned by the University. The Research & Innovation directorate have delegated authority to negotiate and accept the contractual relationship surrounding company spin-outs.

The formal link between a company and the University will be undertaken by a nominated Director appointed to the company board by the Start Up and Spin Out Group. The nominated Director will be responsible for attending company Board meetings and reporting to the University on the performance and activities of the company and will represent the University's shareholder interest. Where no Director is appointed, the University will receive periodic reports via a reporting requirement in the shareholders agreement.

The directors of companies where the University is the majority shareholder are required to submit a report to the University. Performance of University investments will be reported to both Commercialisation Committee, to inform strategy development, and Finance & Resourcing Committee.

Where the University is involved in a joint venture arrangement, a formal Joint Venture Agreement and Operating Agreement will be put in place with Finance & Resourcing Committee approval. This will include the reporting requirements to the Finance & Resourcing Committee on an annual basis.

Under its remit and delegated authority from Court, via the Finance & Resourcing Committee, the Start-Up and Spin-Out Panel has the authority to make decisions on loans or temporary financing where the sum involved exceeds £10,000 or where a loan of any value is converted to equity, up to a maximum of £100,000. In line with usual delegations for expenditure out with agreed revenue and capital budgets, above £100,000 approval rests with the Chief Financial Officer and University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer, above £500,000 with the Senior Management Team and above £1m with the Finance & Resourcing Committee.

Legal Agreements

The University's standard terms and conditions, as set out in the [Financial Regulations](#) and [Procurement Policy and Procedures](#) will apply to all legal agreements.

Legal agreements with no financial impact include all agreements not covered elsewhere in this schedule, with the exception of any bespoke contracts for services outside of the standard terms and conditions of the University. Any such agreements should be reviewed by the University Secretary & COO, who has the right to sign off such contracts following review.

Student & Academic Activities

Admissions

The principles underpinning the acceptance of prospective students to the University are set out within the [Admissions Policy](#) and accompanying [Guidance Notes for Admission](#).

Authority for the scrutiny and endorsement of amendments to the University's Admissions Policy and arrangements is delegated to the Student Recruitment Committee, according to its remit for oversight of the development and implementation of long-term strategy, policy, planning and process relating to all undergraduate and postgraduate student recruitment and admissions. Any such amendments recommended by the Student Recruitment Committee should be approved by the Senior Management Team, and in the case of strategic changes to Admissions and Recruitment Policies, must be approved by University Court.

The Head of School has the delegated authority (including signing authority for the relevant contracts; which may be sub-delegated) for individual student admission decisions for:

- Undergraduate
- Visiting undergraduate
- Taught postgraduate
- Research postgraduate
- Visiting postgraduate

As part of the planning and budgeting round the Head of School, Vice-Principal Global Engagement and Vice-Principal Education undertake a collaborative process to agree the volume of admissions appropriate to the School, based on an assessment of available resources, and the entry requirements for the School, according to a detailed understanding of its programmes and the academic market for each discipline.

Fees and Refunds

The amendment of tuition fees and rents, if in the normal range of increases of up to 5%, or in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI) if higher, is delegated to the Senior Management Team. In the case of strategic or material changes to fees, delegated authority passes to the Finance & Resourcing Committee, for onward endorsement by Court. Increases above 7% should be treated as novel and contentious.

In the case of a novel change to fee structures, for example the introduction of a new fee model or structure for students from the Rest of UK (RUK), the authority for approval rests with University Court.

The assessment and consideration of applications for the refund of tuition fees should be carried out by the relevant Head of School, subject to the University's eligibility criteria. Recommendations for the approval of fee refunds should be presented to the University Secretary & COO for final approval.

The authority arrangements for the write-off of fee debt are outlined within the [Income Management section](#) of this Schedule, under Debt Collection.

Staff Matters

Appointments and Promotions

Authority for the appointment and promotion of staff is delegated in accordance with the schedule outlined within the [Delegated Authority Table: Staff Matters](#) below.

In cases where the arrangement concerned relates to the Principal, the Principal shall withdraw from the Remuneration Committee and take no part in the discussions or any decisions.

Employment Disputes

Authority for the implementation of legally binding orders of courts, tribunals or other judicial bodies in relation to employment matters as well as extra-judicial settlement of employment disputes is delegated as outlined within the [Delegated Authority Table: Staff Matters](#) below.

The Director of People and Chief Financial Officer must be notified of all Awards prior to authorisation.

Authority in relation to other staff and salary decisions is delegated as detailed within the Delegated Authority Table: Staff Matters.

Staff and Court Member Expenses

Staff and Court Member expenses should be signed off in line with the University's [Expenses & Benefits Policy](#).

Staff expenses of Vice-Principals shall be authorised by the Principal, those of Heads of School shall be authorised by the Senior Vice-Principal, and those of Directors will be authorised by the University Secretary & COO. The expenses of the Principal shall be authorised by the Senior Governor of Court, and the expenses of the Senior Vice-Principal and University Secretary & COO shall be authorised by the Principal.

Claims for members of Court will be authorised by the University Secretary & COO or Head of Governance in their absence. Claims for meeting attendance will be based on out-of-pocket expenses but only reasonable expenses can be reimbursed.

Salaries and Pensions

All University staff will be appointed to the salary scales approved by Court and in accordance with appropriate conditions of service.

Court, supported by the Pensions Advisory Group, is responsible for undertaking the role of employer in relation to appropriate pension arrangements for employees.

Severance and other Non-recurring Payments

The approval of Severance Terms and substantial changes to pay and/or terms and conditions of the Principal & Vice-Chancellor are reserved to Court, on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee, under their delegated authority to oversee severance arrangements for senior staff and ensure that account is taken of the *SFC Guidance on Severance Arrangements in respect of Senior Staff*.

All other severance payments shall only be made in accordance with relevant legislation and funding body guidance and under the approved [Severance Policy](#) as approved by Court. All such payments shall be authorised and calculations checked by the Director of People or the Chief Financial Officer. Any individual amounts which do not fall within the parameters above or are in excess of £100,000 require approval by the Remuneration Committee.

Appendix 1: Delegated Authority Tables

Delegated Authority Table: Governance

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Appointment of designated Standing Committees of University Court		Governance & Nominations Committee AND University Court		University Secretary & COO	University Court Standing Orders	N
Approval of changes to remits and compositions of Standing Committees of University Court		Governance & Nominations Committee AND University Court		University Secretary & COO		N
Appointment or removal of individual members of Court		Governance & Nominations Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO	Senior Governor	University Court Standing Orders	N
Approval of arrangements for the election of the Senior Governor of Court		University Court	University Secretary & COO		Guidance and Rules for the Election and Appointment of the Senior Governor of Court	N
Approval of Ordinances		University Court AND Privy Council	Senior Governor AND University Secretary & COO	Senate AND General Council (to provide endorsement and comment)	University Court Standing Orders	Y
Approval of Resolutions		University Court	Senior Governor AND University Secretary & COO	Senate AND General Council (to provide endorsement and comment)	University Court Standing Orders	Y
Approval of the Schedule of Delegation and any amendments to delegation arrangements to Committees, the Principal and senior officers		University Court		University Secretary & COO		N
Approval of amendments to the Standing Orders of University Court		Governance & Nominations Committee AND University Court		University Secretary & COO		N

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Approval of any project, regardless of cost, which is considered novel or contentious		University Court	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 2.4.2	See Guidance on the Use of the University Common Seal

Delegated Authority Table: Financial Planning

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Strategy & Risk						
Approval of the University's Strategic Plan and areas of reporting via KPIs		University Court		Senior Management Team		N
Approval of the University's Risk Appetite Statement		University Court		Director of Planning		N
Appointment of Internal and External Auditors and agreement of annual fees		Audit & Risk Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer AND University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 1.7.1; 1.7.5	N
Approval of changes to accounting policies		Audit & Risk Committee AND University Court		Chief Financial Officer		N
Revenue Budgets & General Expenditure						
Approval of the University financial strategy, to include the 3-year revenue budget and 10-year capital investment plan		Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court		Principal Senior Vice-Principal Chief Financial Officer Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Systems	Financial Regulations 2.2.1; 2.3.1; 2.5.2	N
Approval of annual Capital Plan		Senior Management Team via Estates and Digital Strategy Committees AND Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Senior Vice Principal AND Chief Financial Officer	Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Systems	Financial Regulations 2.2.2; 2.3.2; 2.5.3	N
In-year amendments to capital programmes		Estates Committee AND/OR Digital Strategy Committee AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer AND Senior Vice-Principal		Financial Regulations 2.3.1	N
Virement of budgets within the financial framework approved by University Court		Principal	Chief Financial Officer	Assistant Director Financial Accounting Assistant Director Financial Planning & Budgeting		N

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Budget variance approvals (requests for additional revenue budget), approval of business plans for proposed expenditure out with the agreed revenue and capital budget	Up to £100k or 10% (whichever is lower)	Head of School/Director AND Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 2.2.4; 2.5.5; 2.5.6; 2.5.7	N
	£500k +	Senior Management Team	Chief Financial Officer			
	£1m +	Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer			
	£5m +	University Court	Chief Financial Officer			
Approval of material asset sales	Up to £1m	SMT	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer	Financial Regulations 5.1.1	N
	£1m - £5m	Finance & Resourcing Committee				
	Over £5m	University Court				
Leases of assets		Estates Committee AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
Purchasing authority for all revenue, capital and project expenditure within approved revenue budget, and formal acceptance of approved contracts and requisition of goods, services and works through an approved framework agreement	Less than £1k	Business Services Administrators	Business Services Administrators	Head of School/Director	Financial Regulations 4.2.1; 4.2.2; 4.2.6	N
	£1k to £25k	Budget Holder	Budget Holder	Head of School/Director		
	£25k to £100k	Head of School/Director (or Chief Financial Officer if absent)	Head of School/Director			
	£100k to £250k	Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO AND Chief Financial Officer (or delegate if absent)	Senior Vice-Principal OR Chief Financial Officer OR University Secretary & COO			
	Above £250k	Principal OR Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO AND Chief Financial Officer	Principal OR Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer		

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Formal acceptance of approved contracts and requisition of goods, services and works out with regulated procurement		Finance & Resourcing Committee OR University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 4.3.6	N
Financial Statements & Records						
Approval of the annual consolidated accounts for the University		Audit & Risk Committee AND Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Senior Governor AND Accountable Officer (Principal) AND Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer Assistant Director Financial Accounting	Financial Regulations 1.7.4; 2.5.1; 2.6.1; 2.6.2	Y (SFC copies)
Approval of the Internal Audit Annual Report for submission to the SFC		Audit & Risk Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer		N
Approval of the Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council		Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO		N
Modern Slavery Statement for annual publication on the University webpages		University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO		N

Delegated Authority Table: Treasury & Banking

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Bank Accounts						
Appointment of the University's banking providers and other professional financial advisers		Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 2.8.10	N
Operation of University bank accounts, including the opening and closing of accounts		Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 2.8.11; 2.8.12	N
Amendment of bank mandate(s)		Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 2.8.11	N
Set-up of direct debits or standing orders		Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 2.8.11	N
Borrowing, Investment & Financing						
Agreement of University Investment Strategy and investment objectives		Investment Committee AND Development Trust AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer	University's Investment Fund Managers		N
Approval of the University's borrowing commitments, including re-financing or material variation to existing arrangements, any new borrowing arrangements, and any transaction involving any "sale or lease-back" of material assets		Chief Financial Officer AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 2.8.2	Y
Approval of endowment fund transactions and authorisation to deal shares on behalf of the University through its nominated broker		Investment Committee AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer	University's Investment Fund Managers	Financial Regulations 3.4.6; 5.1.3	N
Maximisation of existing investments within existing mechanisms		Chief Financial Officer AND Investment Committee	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO AND University's Investment Fund Managers	Financial Regulations 3.4.6; 5.1.3	N
Investments into and withdrawals from the University's endowment funds		Investment Committee	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO AND University's Investment Fund Managers	Financial Regulations 3.4.6; 5.1.3	N

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Approval of annual Financing Report		Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 2.8.8	N
Approval of use application, or change in application, of funds raised by Private Placement or bond issue		Investment Committee AND University Court	Chief Financial Officer	Senior Vice-Principal University Secretary & COO		Y
Treasury Management						
Approval of Treasury Management Policy		Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 2.8.1	N

Delegated Authority Table: Income Management

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Debt Management						
Write-off of unpaid income due to the University	Up to £50k	Chief Financial Officer	Assistant Director, Financial Accounting		Financial Regulations 3.6.3	N
	Over £50k	Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer			N
Approval of credit arrangements		Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 3.6.2	N
Gifts & Donations						
Acceptance of gifts and donations	Over £100	Head of School/Directorate	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 1.6.14; 1.6.16	N
	Donation of large sums or shares	Governance & Nominations Committee (due diligence)	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 3.4.8	N
	Novel and contentious	Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO		N
Research						
Acceptance of research grants		Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation		Financial Regulations Section 3.3	N
Approval for submission of research grants to the relevant funding body	Under £350k	Head of Institute/School	Head of Institute/School	Director of Research & Innovation	Research Governance Handbook	N
	£350k to £1m	Head of Institute/School AND Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation			N
	Over £1m	Chief Financial Officer AND Senior Vice-Principal	Director of Research & Innovation			N
Approval of commercially funded commercial research work (all approvals via Worktribe system)	Projects meeting minimum pricing requirements	Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation		Financial Regulations Section 3.3 University Costing & Pricing Policy for Work with External Entities	N
	Projects priced between 75% and the minimum pricing requirements	Director of Research & Innovation AND Head of School retains absolute right to reject	Director of Research & Innovation	Head of School		
	Projects with recovery rate below 75% threshold	Head of School AND VP Regional Engagement (or nominated deputy)	Director of Research & Innovation			

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Approval of consultancy provision to third parties (non-credit bearing or research) (all approvals via Worktribe system)		Director of Research & Innovation AND Head of School	Head of School			
Approval of new Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses	Non-credit bearing	Head of School (workload modelling)	Head of School		University Costing & Pricing Policy for Work with External Entities	N
	Credit bearing	Head of School (workload modelling) AND Planning and Academic Services Team	Head of School	Planning and Academic Services Team		
	Accredited	Head of School (workload modelling) AND Planning and Academic Services AND Professional Body	Head of School	CPD Services Team Planning and Academic Services Team Professional Body		
Other University Income						
Approval of events contracts		Director of Estates	Director of Estates	University Secretary & COO		N

Delegated Authority Table: Estates and Capital Projects

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Strategic Approvals						
Approval of the University's Capital Plan and Estates Strategy for the management and development of the University's land and buildings		Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Services Chief Financial Officer	Financial Regulations 2.3.1	N
Approval of the establishment of new campuses, whether overseas or in the UK		University Court	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Services Chief Financial Officer		N
Land, Buildings and Projects						
The purchase or sale of land or buildings, or other items of equipment, or projects consistent with the direction of the Capital Plan	Approval of projects up to £500k (where resources available and previously agreed within the capital budget)	Estates Committee OR Digital Strategy Committee	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Senior Vice-Principal University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 5.1.1	N
	Up to £1m	Senior Management Team	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Services Chief Financial Officer		Y
	£1m to £5m	Finance & Resourcing Committee	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Services Chief Financial Officer		Y
	£5m +	University Court	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Services Chief Financial Officer		Y
Decisions relating to the sale of land owned by a wholly owned subsidiary company of the University	Up to £1m	Senior Management Team AND Trustee Board of wholly owned subsidiary	University Secretary & COO	Estates Committee OR Director of Estates (if a single property)		Y

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
	Up to £5m	Finance & Resourcing Committee AND Trustee Board of wholly owned subsidiary	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
	£5m +	University Court AND Trustee Board of wholly owned subsidiary	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
Entering into or exiting from leases for land & buildings		Estates Committee AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
Renting or leasing University space for commercial purposes	Up to £100k	Director of Estates	University Secretary & COO			Y
	Up to £1m	Estates and/or Digital Strategy Committee AND Senior Management Team	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
	£1m to £5m	Finance & Resourcing Committee	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
	£5m +	University Court	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
Disputes on contracts involving land and property law, or where there are matters of concern		University Secretary & COO	University Secretary & COO	Principal AND/OR Senior Governor		N
Decisions regarding disputes with suppliers on framework agreements or approved contracts		Chief Financial Officer AND University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer AND University Secretary & COO			N

Delegated Authority Table: Commercialisation

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Strategic Approvals						
Strategic UK or International Bids: large strategic, one-off calls for funding bids including joint bids with other institutions or agreements with institutions or other parties regarding sharing of monies or other University resources provided by external agencies for infrastructure for research or education.		SMT AND Commercialisation Committee WITH escalation as required to Senior Governor AND/OR Chair of Audit & Risk Committee For final approval by University Court	Principal OR Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Senior Management Team	Financial Regulations 2.4.1; 6.4.1-6.4.8	Y
Mergers & Strategic Alignments: proposals involving in the UK or overseas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legal or reputation commitments (Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding); • creation of a visible entity or joint venture; • delivery or shared significant education, research or operational activities out with the University of Aberdeen campus locations; or • the award of dual/joint degrees for multiple programmes. 		SMT AND University Court	Principal OR Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Senior Management Team		Y
Dissolution or sale of University subsidiary companies		Commercialisation Committee AND University Court	Principal OR Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Senior Management Team	Financial Regulations 5.1.4; 6.4.1-6.4.8	Y
Approval of Start-Up Loans or temporary financing, or where a loan of any value is converted to equity	Over £10k	Start-Up and Spin-Out Panel	Chief Financial Officer OR University Secretary & COO	Vice-Principal Regional Engagement Director of Research & Innovation		N
	Over £500k	Chief Financial Officer OR University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer OR University Secretary & COO	Vice-Principal Regional Engagement Director of Research & Innovation		

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
	Over £1m	Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer OR University Secretary & COO	Start-Up and Spin-Out Panel Vice-Principal Regional Engagement Director of Research & Innovation		
Intellectual Property						
Registration and all subsequent dealings with patents, design rights, trademarks and other intellectual property rights including licensing and outright transfer of such rights		Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 5.2.4	Y
Dealings with copyright, know-how and all other unregistered intellectual property rights (including in relation to software and teaching materials), licensing and outright transfer of such rights		Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 5.2.4	N
Technology transfer related agreements including Confidentiality Agreements, Material Transfer Agreements and Heads of Terms		Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 5.2.4	N
Approval of Intellectual Property Policy		Commercialisation Committee	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 5.2.2	N
Corporate Governance						
Agreements related to University spin-out companies including company formation documents, shareholder agreements and other documents establishing investment and equity distributions in such companies		Commercialisation Committee	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 5.1.4; 6.4.1-6.4.8	Y
Appointment of University representative directors of companies wholly or partially owned by the University		Commercialisation Committee	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 6.4.1-6.4.8	N
Negotiation and acceptance of contractual relationships surrounding company spin-outs		Research & Innovation Directorate	Director of Research & Innovation		Financial Regulations 6.4.4	N
Legal Agreements						
Approval of bespoke contracts for services outside of the standard terms and conditions of the University		University Secretary & COO	University Secretary & COO			N

Delegated Authority Table: Student and Academic Activities

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Academic Governance						
Approval of major academic re-organisations of the curriculum on the recommendation of Senate		Senate AND University Court	Senior Vice-Principal AND Vice-Principal Education	Vice-Principal Research		N
Approval of the annual institution-led Review of Academic Quality		University Court	Senior Vice-Principal AND Vice-Principal Education	Vice-Principal Research		N
Approval of the academic structure of the University in consultation with Senate, in particular changes to Schools, and including the creation or amendments of Schools and constituent disciplines		University Court	Senior Vice-Principal AND Vice-Principal Education	Vice-Principal Research AND Senate (as advisory body)		N
Direction, regulation, approval and promotion of the policies and practices for education, learning and research of the University, including assessment		Senate	Senior Vice-Principal AND Vice-Principal Education	Vice-Principal Research		N
Setting and approval of the academic regulatory framework of the University, including regulations governing Students' programmes of study, progress and awards		Senate	Senior Vice-Principal AND Vice-Principal Education	Vice-Principal Research		N
Approval of partnership proposals and renewals of partnership agreements		Student Recruitment Committee AND/OR International Partnerships Committee	Senior Vice-Principal AND/OR Vice-Principal Global Engagement	University Secretary & COO		Y
	Novel and contentious	University Court	Senior Vice-Principal AND/OR Vice-Principal Global Engagement	University Secretary & COO Senior Management Team		Y
Admissions						
Routine approval of admissions strategy, associated policy and amendments		Student Recruitment Committee AND Senior Management Team	Vice-Principal Global Engagement			N

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Strategic changes to admissions policies and/or entry criteria		Student Recruitment Committee AND Senior Management Team AND University Court	Vice-Principal Global Engagement	Heads of School		N
Authority for individual student admissions out with standard conditions		Heads of School	Heads of School	Vice-Principal Education		N
Agreement of individual School entry requirements		Head of School	Vice-Principal Education	Senior Vice-Principal Vice-Principal Global Engagement		N
Agreements involving agencies and equivalents for the recruitment of international students		Student Recruitment Committee	Vice-Principal Global Engagement	University Secretary & COO		Y
Fees and refunds						
Approval of refunds of student tuition fees		Head of School AND University Secretary & COO	University Secretary & COO			N
Approval of tuition fees (degree courses) and accommodation fees for onward endorsement by University Court	Normal range of increases (up to 5% or in line with RPI)	Senior Management Team	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 3.1.8	N
	Strategic or material changes (over 5%)	Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO			N
	Novel change to fee structures (including increases of 7% or above)	University Court	University Secretary & COO			N
Agreement of tuition fees for short/summer courses		Heads of School	Heads of School		Financial Regulations 3.5.5 – 3.5.9	N
Approval of write-off of tuition fee debt	Up to £50k	Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary for exceptional cases not related to debt		N
Awards and Conferment						
Approvals of the award of degrees, including honorary degrees		Senate	Academic Registrar			N

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Approval of the conferment of emeritus status on retiring professors of the University		Honorary Awards Committee AND Senate	Principal			N
Student Appeals and Complaints						
Approval of policies relating to student academic appeals, discipline and complaints, and the hearing and determination of outcomes of related issues through sub-committees (Senate Appeals and Complaints Panel, Students' Progress Committees and Student Disciplinary Committee)		Senate	Academic Registrar			N
Approval of policies relating to research complaints and appeals		University Research Committee AND Senate	Vice-Principal Research			N
Oversight of complaints of unacceptable research conduct	Staff complainant	Nominated person: School/Directorate Director of Research	School/Directorate Director of Research	Vice-Principal Research	Research Governance Handbook (4.2.2 for nominated complaints handlers) AND/OR Code of Practice on Student Discipline AND/OR Whistleblowing Policy	N
	Student complainant	Nominated person: Dean for Postgraduate Research	Dean for Postgraduate Research	Vice-Principal Research		N
	In case of conflict of interest	Nominated person: Dean of Research of relevant University area	Dean of Research of relevant University area	Vice-Principal Research		N
	External complainant	Nominated person: Dean of Research of relevant University area	Dean of Research of relevant University area	Vice-Principal Research		N

Delegated Authority Table: Staff Matters

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Strategic Approvals						
Oversight and approval of strategic People issues		Staff Experience Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO	Principal Senior Vice-Principal University Secretary & COO Director of People		N
Appointments and Severance						
Approval of the appointment, re-appointment or dismissal of the Principal		University Court	Senior Governor	University Secretary & COO		N
Approval of severance terms and substantial changes to pay and/or terms and conditions of the Principal		Remuneration Committee AND University Court	Senior Governor	University Secretary & COO Director of People		N
Approval of the appointment or dismissal of the Secretary to the Court		University Court	Senior Governor	Principal Director of People		N
Staff appointments	Grades 1-9	Financial Planning Committee	University Secretary & COO (PS) Senior Vice-Principal (Academic)	Salary authorised through HR for new appointments. Pay Policy approved by SMT. Approval rests with Head of HR.		N
Approval of severance arrangements and terms	Under £100k	Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Principal Director of People	Financial Regulations 4.15.12 Severance Policy	N
	Over £100k OR SMT Member OR Novel and contentious	Remuneration Committee	Principal (as Accountable Officer)	Principal (or nominee) WITH Senior Governor Director of People		N
	Professorial/Professional G9	Remuneration Committee	Principal (as Accountable Officer)	Senior Vice-Principal (or nominee) OR University Secretary & COO (or nominee) WITH Principal Director of People		

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Pay						
Approval of the Senior Staff Pay Policy		Remuneration Committee AND University Court		Principal Director of People Chief Financial Officer		N
Salary approvals	G1-9	Head of HR				N
	SMT appointments	Remuneration Committee agree thresholds for advertisement and are notified of appointment level	Head of HR			N
Promotions, re-gradings or offers to increase salary or make other payments to staff over and above contracted entitlement		Promotion Committee OR Regrading Panels	Head of HR			N
Implementation of nationally negotiated pay awards		SMT		Included within the budget presented to FRC and Court		N
Approval of expenses						
Court Members		University Secretary & COO OR Head of Governance	University Secretary & COO OR Head of Governance	N/A		N
Principal		Senior Governor of Court	Senior Governor of Court	University Secretary & COO OR Head of Governance		N
Senior Vice-Principal		Principal	Principal			N
University Secretary & COO		Principal	Principal	Head of Governance		N
Vice-Principals		Principal	Principal			N
Heads of School		Senior Vice-Principal	Senior Vice-Principal			N
Directors		University Secretary & COO	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 4.12.3	N
Individual staff members		Main budget holder	Main budget holder			N
Disputes						
Approval of payment of awards from employment disputes and other legally binding decisions		Director of People AND Chief Financial Officer	Director of People			Y
Pensions						
Agreement of pension arrangements for employees		University Court	Principal AND Chief Financial Officer	Director of People AND Pensions Advisory Group		Y

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Consultancy						
Approval of private consultancies or other paid work out with an individual's contract of employment		Head of School/Directorate AND Senior Vice-Principal	Head of School/Directorate		Financial Regulations 3.5.2; 3.5.3; 3.5.4	N

Appendix 2 Glossary of Terms

The following general terms have been used in this document:

Term	Description
Academic Governance	The framework of policies, structures, relationships, systems and processes that collectively provide leadership to and oversight of a higher education provider's academic activities (teaching, learning and scholarship, and research) at an institutional level.
Accountable Officer	The accountable officer is a person, normally the head of the institution (the Principal), who reports to the regulatory and funding bodies on behalf of the institution.
Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions	The set of Acts of Parliament and other legislative documents that set confer powers and responsibilities to University Court.
Annual Report and Accounts	A corporate document that details the company's financial condition and operations over the previous year.
Approver	The Committee or individual which must approve the transaction, arrangement or project.
Audit & Risk Committee	A committee of Court that provides advice on the effectiveness of the University's procedures for audit, financial control, governance and risk management, and provides assurances in these key areas through its annual report to the Scottish Funding Council, which is approved by Court.
Budget Holder	The member of staff who has been assigned their own budget other than a Head of School or Directorate and is accountable to their Head of School or Directorate for it.
Capital Plan	The plan which identifies and prioritises capital projects which will help achieve the University's strategic objectives. Resources for planned capital expenditure on land, buildings, equipment, digital infrastructure, furniture and associated costs will be allocated as part of the 10-year capital programme approved by Court.
Charity Trustees	The people who share ultimate responsibility for governing a charity and directing how it is managed and run.
Chief Financial Officer	The chief financial officer of the University.
Chief Executive Officer	The highest-ranking executive of a company or institution. At the University of Aberdeen, the Principal is the Chief Executive Officer.
Commercialisation	The process of bringing new products or services to market, or of turning something into a product or service.
Conflict of Interest	A situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity.
Convener	The member of a committee with responsibility to call and chair meetings.

Term	Description
Covenants	Financial covenants, are restrictions that lenders can include within a loan deal. They tie the borrower into an agreement in order to approve the loan. With regard to pensions, the covenant sets out the employer's legal obligation and financial ability to support their defined benefit scheme now and in the future.
Delegated Authority	The ability to delegate responsibility to subordinates in a manner that supports their success and holds them accountable for results.
Digital Strategy Committee	The Committee with responsibility for the strategic direction of all digital activities guided by the Aberdeen 2040 strategic goals and associated implementation plans, commitments and key performance indicators.
Dual/joint degree	A degree that involves studying at two universities, one of which may be located in a different country.
Endowment Funds	An investment portfolio with the initial capital deriving from donations. Endowment funds are established to fund charitable and non-profit institutions such universities.
Estates Committee	The Committee responsible for the oversight of the University's estate in order that it can support world-class academic, teaching and research activity in accordance with the University's foundational purpose and strategic plan.
External Auditors	External auditors inspect the University's accounting records and express an opinion as to whether financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with applicable accounting standards.
Finance & Resourcing Committee	A committee of University Court with authority to oversee the University's financial affairs with a focus on ensuring that University's approach to revenue, resource and capital planning mature in support of Aberdeen 2040.
Financial Memorandum	Sets out the formal accountability relationship between the SFC and institutions, and the requirements with which institutions are expected to comply in return of payment of grant by SFC.
Financial Regulations	A set of requirements, restrictions and guidelines to maintain the stability and integrity of the University's financial systems.
Framework Agreement	An agreement or arrangement between one or more procurers and one or more suppliers that establishes the requirement and contract conditions that will apply to future orders or tasks during an agreed period.
General Council	A Council established by the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858 consisting of all graduates and most of the University's academic staff. All graduated of the University of Aberdeen automatically become members of the General Council.
Going Rates	The admission requirements to the University's various degree programmes.

Term	Description
Governance	A system that provides a framework for managing organisations. It identifies who can make decisions, who has the authority to act on behalf of the organisation and who is accountable for how an organisation and its people behave and perform.
Governance & Nominations Committee	A committee of University Court with a standing role to advise Court on matters of governance and to conduct on its behalf, reviews of the University's governance. The Committee also has responsibility for considering nominations for vacancies in Court membership and vacancies in the membership of Court sub-committees.
Head of School/Directorate	Head of School/Directorate of the University who is responsible for the budget of their whole School/Directorate.
Heads of Terms	A document which sets out the terms of a commercial transaction agreed in principle between parties in the course of negotiations.
Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016	The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act sets down the requirements for universities in Scotland in terms of how their Courts and Senates should be constituted.
Independent Members of Court	A member of the University's board of directors who does not have a material relationship with the University and is neither part of its executive team nor involved in its day-to-day operations.
Individuals for Consultation	The individuals who need to be informed or consulted by a delegated signing authority or approver for transactions of certain types or above certain values.
Institution-led Review of Academic Quality	The review method for higher education institutions in Scotland as set out by the Scottish Quality Assurance Agency (SQAA).
Internal Auditors	Auditors appointed by the University to monitor and evaluate how well risks are being managed, how well the University is running and if internal processes are working. This function also includes a consulting service, advising management on how to improve systems and processes.
Investment Committee	A committee that provides advice and makes recommendations to University management on the investment of University funds.
Material/Technology Transfer Agreement	Legally binding contracts where the owner of intellectual property (IP) in a valuable material or technology (the licensor), gives someone else (the licensee) permission to use that IP in ways (terms) that are spelled out in the agreement.
Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding	A document that describes the broad outlines of an agreement that two or more parties have reached.
Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland	Nine principles of conduct identified by the Scottish Executive to underpin public life "for the benefit of those who serve the public in any way", recommended for inclusion in the Codes of Conduct of public bodies.

Term	Description
Novel and Contentious Arrangement	A decision or action proposed to be taken which will have or is likely to have a significant effect on financial, reputational or operational risk; and/or a significant impact on academic and/or service delivery or performance.
Principal	The chief executive of the University responsible to Court for maintaining and promoting the efficiency and good order of the University.
Private Placement or Bond Issue	A private placement is a sale of stock shares or bonds to pre-selected investors and institutions rather than on the open market. A bond functions as a loan between an investor and a corporation. The investor agrees to give the corporation a certain amount of money for a specific period of time. In exchange, the investor receives periodic interest payments.
Procurement	The act of obtaining goods or services for business purposes.
Project Boards	Oversight boards established to manage strategically important projects.
Register of Interests	An annually updated register to give board members the mechanism to publicly declare any private interests which may conflict, or may be perceived to conflict, with their public duties.
Remit and Terms of Reference	A document which sets out the purpose, scope and authority of a committee.
Remuneration Committee	A committee of University Court responsible for overseeing the pay, benefits and conditions of employment of the Vice-Chancellor and other senior staff.
Research Grant	A grant obtained for conducting scientific research generally through a competitive process.
Rest of UK (RUK)	Students from England, Wales and Northern Ireland are called "Rest of UK" / "RUK" students. For undergraduate degrees, they have to pay higher fees than Home students, but they usually pay the same for postgraduate degrees.
Retail Price Index (RPI)	A measurement of inflation used to calculate cost of living and wage escalation.
Risk Appetite Statement	A framework agreed by University Court which enables the University to make informed management decisions by defining the optimal and tolerable levels of risk associated with the pursuit of its strategic objectives.
Roleholder with Signing Authority	The individual who holds the delegated signing authority to execute the transaction once approval has been given.
Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance	A specific code of governance applying to the Scottish Higher Education sector.
Scottish Funding Council (SFC)	The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is the national, strategic body that is responsible for funding teaching and learning provision, research and other activities in Scotland's colleges and universities.
Senate	The body responsible for academic matters whose role is to direct and regulate the education and research work of the University.

Term	Description
Senior Governor	The senior independent member of University Court responsible for the leadership and effectiveness of the Court as the University's governing body, with a key role in building a successful relationship between Court and the senior management of the University.
Senior Management Team	The Senior Management Team ensures the effective leadership, co-ordination and management of the University's activities. It acts as the formal executive decision-making body of the University and ensures that all University initiatives are considered, approved, implemented and monitored in line with the University's strategic, regulatory and policy framework and recognised best practice guidelines.
Senior Vice-Principal	Responsible for providing direct line management to all Heads of School and ensuring the delivery of School plans and budgets. Has strategic oversight of the People and Estates Strategies and also the institutional strategic planning processes. Deputises when the Principal is unavailable.
Severance	Pay and benefits that an employee may be entitled to receive when they leave employment at a company early or unwillingly.
Standing Committee	A permanent committee that meets regularly, usually with responsibility for a particular area.
Standing Orders of Court	A document which sets out the basic rules and procedures for the operation of the University Court.
Start-Up and Spin-Out Panel	An operational panel to oversee the University's support for student and staff spin-out and subsidiary companies.
Student Recruitment Committee	A committee with primary responsibility for the development and monitoring of implementation of the University's strategy and policy for student recruitment across the University, in support of the University's student recruitment and admissions objectives.
Treasury Management	The practice and oversight of strategies, policies and compliance requirements for cash management, investments and borrowings.
Universities (Scotland) Act 1966	An Act to amend the law relating to the Universities of St. Andrews, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh to make provisions for the foundation of the University of Dundee.
University Court	The governing body of the University. It is charged to oversee the management of the revenue, property and other resources of the University. It approves the mission and strategic vision of the University and has a number of corporate and legal responsibilities.

Term	Description
University Court Statement of Primary Responsibilities	A document to set out the primary functions of University Court to approve the mission and strategic vision of the University, including institutional and longer-term academic and business plans, and key performance indicators, and to ensure that they meet the interests of stakeholders, including students, staff, alumni, local and national communities and funding bodies.
University Ordinances	Ordinances provide the constitutional framework that allows the University to govern its affairs. Ordinances are detailed regulations and procedures covering all aspects of University business. Ordinances are ultimately approved by the Higher Education Privy Council.
University Education Committee	The Committee responsible to the Senate for the strategic oversight of education provision and its alignment to the University's Strategic Plan.
University Quality Assurance Committee	The Committee responsible for the assurance of the quality of the University's educational provision.
University Research Committee	A standing Committee of Senate established to oversee the research aspects of Senate's remit.
University Seal	A device for embossing the University's name and shield in paper when formally executing deeds, contracts and documents reserved for approval only by University Court.
University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer	The chief administrative officer of the University and principal officer of Court.
Virement of Budgets	An agreed practice in which funds may be transferred from one part of the budget to another during a financial year to allow additional expenditure in a particular budget area to take place.
World Trade Organisation Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA)	A binding international treaty for procurement based on the principles of non-discrimination, transparency and procedural fairness.

Appendix 3 Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland

The Scottish Government's Model Code of Conduct for Members of Devolved Public Bodies indicates that the following nine general principles of conduct should be observed in public life:

Duty

You have a duty to uphold the law and act in accordance with the law and the public trust placed in you. You have a duty to act in the interests of the public body of which you are a member and in accordance with the core functions and duties of that body.

Selflessness

You have a duty to take decisions solely in terms of public interest. You must not act in order to gain financial or other material benefit for yourself, family or friends.

Integrity

You must not place yourself under any financial, or other, obligation to any individual or organisation that might reasonably be thought to influence you in the performance of your duties.

Objectivity

You must make decisions solely on merit and in a way that is consistent with the functions of the public body when carrying out public business including making appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits.

Accountability and Stewardship

You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public. You have a duty to consider issues on their merits, taking account of the views of others and must ensure that the public body uses its resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Openness

You have a duty to be as open as possible about your decisions and actions, giving reasons for your decisions and restricting information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

You have a duty to act honestly. You must declare any private interests relating to your public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

You have a duty to promote and support these principles by leadership and example, and to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the public body and its members in conducting public business.

Respect

You must respect fellow members of your public body and employees of the body and the role they play, treating them with courtesy at all times. Similarly, you must respect members of the public when performing duties as a member of your public body.

Appendix 4 Guidance on the Use of the University Common Seal

Introduction

The University holds a Common Seal (“the University Seal”) under its founding Ordinances and Resolutions.

The University Seal is a device for embossing the University’s name and shield in paper when formally executing deeds, contracts and documents reserved for approval only by University Court.

This guidance outlines how and when the University Seal should be used.

Legal Basis

Historically, under common law, any contract entered into by a company had to be under seal. Since the Companies Act 1989 was introduced there is no legal requirement to use a seal. Although a company can still have a seal it is not bound to do so. However, in practice many organisations still use a common seal for deeds, share certificates and other important documents.

The use of the Common Seal of the University of Aberdeen is set out in Ordinance 113 (Execution of Deeds) of the *Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions Affecting the University of Aberdeen 1858-1990*, which states:

“A deed, instrument or document shall be validly executed on behalf of the University Court if it is Sealed within the Common Seal of the University Court and signed by one member of the University Court and the Secretary to the University, or *some other person in place of the Secretary duly appointed by the University Court for the purpose, and such subscription on behalf of the Court shall be binding whether attested by witnesses or not.

The University Court shall provide for the safe custody of the Common Seal.”

Ordinance 113 provides that documents for which approval is reserved to University Court and which require formal execution require application of the Seal and signature by a member of Court and the University Secretary or one of their deputies. Documents which require formal execution are not set out.

The formal execution of a deed is a complex area of law currently covered by a range of legislation including the Companies Act 2006 and the Requirements of Writing (Scotland) Act 1995. In most circumstances the University Seal should be used primarily on legal documents relating to property or financial transactions, however there is no legal requirement for documents to be signed as set out above for formal execution. A document only needs be signed in accordance with the Requirements of Writing Scotland Act, which stipulates that subscription by (or on behalf of) the granter is the only requirement for the valid execution of a document. For the document to be probative, it should also be witnessed.

The source document will therefore impact on the requirement for use of the Seal, however a list of exemplars of those deeds and documents for which the University suggests a Seal should be applied is provided in the section below and outlined within the University’s Delegated Authority Schedule. In addition, the Seal may be applied in situations where the contracting party specifically requests its use.

All other legal or contractual documents should be signed as follows:

- A document which is in relation to a matter reserved to Court (one of its reserved areas of business) or where authority in respect of that matter has not been otherwise delegated (i.e. is not provided for within the Delegated Authority Schedule) should be signed by a Member of Court, or the University Secretary or one of their deputies, and witnessed.

- A document in respect of which authority has been delegated by Court should be signed by a Member of Court, or the University Secretary or one of their deputies, or a person authorised by the Court to do so (i.e. under the Delegated Authority Schedule) and witnessed.

Guidance on the Custody and Use of the Common Seal

The University Secretary is responsible for the secure custody of the University Seal, and for regulating its use. The University Seal is held by the Governance team.

The following list of exemplars is suggested by the University as requiring execution under the Seal:

- Deeds (especially those relating to land or buildings)
- Legal documents relating to property such as leases or licences
- Legal documents relating to the establishment of a new company, spin out, joint venture or overseas activity
- Documents/certificates relating to shares/dividends/stocks
- Legal agreements involving agencies and equivalents for the recruitment of international students
- Legal documents relating to pension schemes
- Legal documents relating to the registration, licensing or outright transfer of patents, design rights, trademarks and other intellectual property rights
- Special resolutions relating to the Ordinances and Resolutions
- Other documents as required by Court or approved by the University Secretary (or deputy), particularly those relating to long-term contracts, those concerning borrowing, investments or financing.

Other legal documents such as those relating to academic agreements, commercial contracts, student recruitment etc. would not normally require the use of the University Seal.

The wording on documents being Sealed should be “Executed by affixing the common Seal of the University of Aberdeen in the presence of:”.

Officers authorised to authenticate the Seal are specified within the University Court’s Delegated Authority Schedule.

The Head of Governance should maintain a Register of Sealings by recording the details of the date, document Sealed, transaction, signatories and witnesses. A list of those documents Sealed should be reported to University Court upon request.

Appendix 5 University Wholly Owned Subsidiaries and Arms-Length/Associated Bodies

Wholly Owned Subsidiaries	Arms-Length/Associated Bodies
Rowett Research Institute Ltd (Active)	University of Aberdeen Superannuation & Life Assurance Scheme (Pension Trust)
Aberdeen University Research & Industrial Services Ltd (Dormant)	University of Aberdeen Development Trust (Independent Charity)
King's College Centre Ltd (Dormant)	University of Aberdeen Development Trust Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation – SCIO
Aberdeen University Press Ltd (Active)	University of Aberdeen Foundation (USA Charity)
	Aberdeen Sports Village Ltd (Joint Venture with City Council and Charity)
	Rocking Horse Nursery (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation - SCIO)