

LASE CONTRACT SIGNING PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In the normal course of its business the University Group enters into contracts of various types. It is important that these are consistent with its business objectives and carry no onerous obligations. To ensure that contracts are properly authorised, this Contract Signing Procedure has been approved by the Group Chief Financial Officer. It is subject to the Financial Regulations and policies of the relevant University Group academic division: [Financial Regulations | Documents | University of Greenwich](#) and [University of Kent Finance Documents](#).
- 1.2 To protect the interest of the University Group it is important that the following principles are observed:-
- (a) Where required, approval of the transaction must first be obtained under the University Group Delegation Framework. **Please note that the individual or committee whose approval is required under the Delegation Framework may be different from the individual who is authorised under this Procedure to sign the contract once the transaction has been approved;**
 - (b) Where procurement of goods or services is involved, the procurement policy and procedures of the relevant academic division must be followed: Greenwich: [Procurement Policy and Standard Procedures](#); Kent: [Procurement Regulations](#).
 - (c) The party with whom the University Group is contracting is a bona fide organisation that is financially sound, legally compliant and capable of meeting its obligations under the contract;
 - (d) Contracts are understood and evaluated for risk before entering into them. Where contracts are not on the University Group's standard templates (e.g. contracts provided by suppliers themselves), legal advice should be sought from relevant internal legal advisors¹ or appointed external legal advisors (the in-house legal advisors of the relevant academic division should be consulted before any new external legal advisors are appointed). The Group Chief Financial Officer (or delegate) should be consulted where there are financial considerations;
 - (e) Services to be provided by the University Group are clearly defined and costed, and reflect as far as possible the full economic cost of providing it;
 - (f) Sufficient funds are available to meet the University Group's obligations under the contract;
 - (g) Only officers authorised to do so in this Procedure may enter into contracts on behalf of the University Group;
 - (h) The officer or Governor entering into the contract on the University Group's behalf has no conflict of interest. Further information about what is a conflict of interest and how one should be declared is provided in the Financial Regulations and procedures of the relevant academic division (see links above);
 - (i) Expressions/letters of intent that allow work to proceed before the details of a contract are agreed and signed must be avoided. If in very exceptional circumstances a letter of intent is required, advice from the relevant Procurement team should be sought and approval obtained from an Executive Signatory (see 1.3(c)). The letter of intent must provide some limit to the University Group's obligations (e.g. by including a clause that limits work to an agreed financial sum)

¹ Internal legal advice may be sought from Dan Scannell, General Counsel, Greenwich academic division or David Emanuel, Deputy Director, Legal & Compliance Services, Kent academic division.

and be copied to the relevant Procurement team (Associate Director of Procurement (Greenwich) or the Assistant Director of Finance (Procurement) (Kent));

- (j) An original copy of the signed contract should be retained for safekeeping by the lead Faculty/Professional Service and a copy sent to the relevant Procurement team (Associate Director of Procurement (Greenwich) or the Assistant Director of Finance (Procurement) (Kent)) to be added to the corporate contracts register.

1.3 Contracts should be signed in accordance with the procedures set out below. Please note that:

- a) As indicated, contracts should only be signed following approval of the transaction by the person/committee authorised to give approval under the University Group Delegation Framework;
- b) Where levels are indicated for the signing of agreements, a staff member who is authorised to sign at a higher level can also sign contracts at a lower level. Staff members who are responsible for signing contracts may delegate that responsibility to other staff but remain accountable for any agreements entered into;
- c) The value of contracts in this procedure represents the total value of the contract over its lifetime, not the annual value of the contract;
- d) Roles referred to in this procedure will be kept under review and updated in response to changes in roles and structures following the implementation of LASE;
- e) While contracts should normally be signed as indicated in the following sections, this may not always be possible or practicable. With the exception of deeds, the following staff ('Executive Signatories' for the purposes of this procedure) are authorised to sign any contract on behalf of the University Group where approval has been given under the University Group Delegation Framework, including any type of contract not specified in this procedure:
 - Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer
 - Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Chief Executive Officer
 - Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
 - Group Chief Financial Officer
 - Group Chief Operating Officer
 - Group Chief People Officer
 - Group University Secretary

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2. Execution of Contracts

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- [Partnerships](#)
- [People](#)
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2.1 Estates

2.1.1 Deeds relating to freehold or leasehold interests in land and/or buildings

- Signatory: **Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Chair or Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors (or another Independent Governor nominated by the Chair/Vice-Chair) plus one other Governor or the Group University Secretary.**

Deeds are executed without the seal being affixed (as allowed by the Companies Acts). Company law requires that deeds are signed by two members of the University Group's Board of Governors (i.e. directors) or one Governor plus the Group University Secretary (company secretary).

Property acquisitions and disposals over £3m require approval by the Finance and Estates Committee/Board of Governors under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework.

2.1.2 Other agreements related to freehold or leasehold interests in land and/or buildings (e.g. non-binding heads of terms, exclusivity agreements, leases) which are not in the form of a deed

- Signatory: **Chief Estate and Facilities Officer / Group Chief Operating Officer / Group Chief Financial Officer**

Property acquisitions and disposals over £3m require approval by the Finance and Estates Committee/Board of Governors under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework.

2.1.3 Property interests in the form of licences, easements or wayleaves following legal review

- Signatory: **Chief Estate and Facilities Officer**

If the agreement is in the form of a deed, the signatories are as for 2.1.1.

Under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework, Finance and Estates Committee approval is required except for licences etc that are for up to 12 months and/or are typically of the type granted in the normal course of business such as for student accommodation or for the carrying out of works, etc.

2.1.4 Building and other Estates and Facilities contracts

- Signatory – up to £500k: **Chief Estate and Facilities Officer**
- Signatory – over £500k: **Vice Chancellor and CEO or Group Chief Financial Officer**

If the contract is in the form of a deed, the signatories are as for 2.1.1.

Under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework, approval of expenditure by Finance and Estates Committee is required if over £3m and by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of Finance and Estates Committee if over £5m. Under £3m: see the Executive Delegation Framework for approval.

All procurement of goods and services must comply with the relevant University Group procurement policies and procedures (Greenwich: [Procurement Policy and Standard Procedures](#); Kent: [Procurement Regulations](#)).

2.2 Finance

2.2.1 Procurement of goods and services (excluding land, buildings, and building contracts), including non-property leasing arrangements

- Signatory – up to £1k: **budget holders**
- Signatory – up to £100k:
 - Greenwich academic division: **Heads of School and Institutes / Faculty Operating Officers / Senior Managers (Associate Directors, grades SG10 or above)**
 - Kent academic division: **Heads of School / Directors of professional service directorates**
- Signatory – up to £300k: **DVCs and Provosts / Group University Secretary / Chief Officers & Directors of professional services**
- Signatory – up to £500k: **Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy CEO / Group Chief Operating Officer / Group Chief Financial Officer**
- Signatory – over £500k: **Vice Chancellor and CEO or Chief Financial Officer**

Under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework, approval of expenditure by Finance and Estates Committee is required if over £3m and by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of Finance and Estates Committee if over £5m. Under £3m: see the Executive Delegation Framework for approval.

Applies to either Purchase Orders or Supplier Contracts, which are two aspects of the same legal relationship. Includes contracts with consultants but excludes contracts for employee services (see 2.6).

All procurement of goods and services must comply with the relevant University Group procurement policies and procedures (Greenwich: [Procurement Policy and Standard Procedures](#); Kent: [Procurement Regulations](#)). Originals of all Procurement Contracts to be held by the relevant Procurement team and sent to the Associate Director of Procurement (Greenwich) or the Assistant Director of Finance (Procurement) to be added to the corporate contracts register.

2.2.2 Agreements relating to gifts, legacies and endowments

- Signatory – up to £50k: **Associate Director, Alumni and Fundraising (Greenwich) / Head of Development and Alumni Relations (Kent)**

- Signatory – up to £300k: **DVCs and Provosts / Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy CEO / Group Chief Operating Officer / Group Chief Financial Officer**
- Signatory – over £300k: **Vice Chancellor and CEO**

Under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework, Finance and Estates Committee approval is required if over £1m and the Board of Governors on the recommendation of Finance and Estates Committee if over £5m. Under £1m: see the Executive Delegation Framework for approval.

Donations should only be accepted following the completion of due diligence and preparation of a gift agreement where required by the University Group's procedures for the acceptance of donations (Greenwich academic division: [Procedure for the Acceptance of Donations](#); Kent academic division: [Acceptance of Gifts Policy](#)).

2.2.3 Agreements related to giving guarantees

- Signatory – up to £50k: **Group Chief Financial Officer / Deputy Finance Director (Greenwich) / Director of Finance (Kent)**
- Signatory – over £50k: **Vice Chancellor and CEO**

Under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework, approval by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of Finance and Estates Committee is required if the guarantee is over £50k. Under £50k: see the Executive Delegation Framework for approval. Advice should be sought from the University Secretary for any guarantees over £50k.

2.2.4 Joint Venture Agreements

- Signatory: **Vice Chancellor and CEO or Group Chief Financial Officer**

Under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework, Finance and Estates Committee approval is required if the University Group's investment in the joint venture is over £3m and the Board of Governors on the recommendation of Finance and Estates Committee if over £5m. Under £3m: see the Executive Delegation Framework for approval.

2.2.5 Agreements related to financial borrowing/lending

- Signatory: **Vice Chancellor and CEO / Group Chief Financial Officer**

Under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework, capital finance/borrowing including decisions to mortgage or charge assets and any ancillary or incidental financial instruments must be approved by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of Finance and Estates Committee. Finance and Estates Committee approval is required for short-term working capital loans/overdrafts. See the Board of Governors Delegation Framework and the Executive Delegation Framework for approval of lending by the University Group to subsidiary/spin out companies and other organisations.

2.2.6 Agreements with the University Group's bankers, investment managers and credit card companies

- Signatory: **Group Chief Financial Officer / Deputy Finance Director (Greenwich) / Director of Finance (Kent)**

Under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework, the appointment of the University Group's bankers and investment managers must be approved by Finance and Estates Committee. Under the Executive Delegation Framework, the Group Chief Financial Officer can approve the agreements and mandates of the University Group's bankers, investment managers and any credit card companies having consulted with the Vice-Chancellor and CEO.

2.3 Research and Innovation

2.3.1 Research and innovation contracts (contract signing stage)

- Signatory – up to £1m:
 - Greenwich academic division: **Director of NRI / Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation**
 - Kent academic division: **Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation**
- Signatory – over £1m: **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)**
- Signatory - memoranda of understanding (where no financial liability): **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) / Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation**

Under the Board of Governors Delegation Framework, Finance and Estates Committee approval is required if over £3m and the Board of Governors on the recommendation of Finance and Estates Committee if over £5m. Under £3m: see the Executive Delegation Framework for approval. See the Executive Delegation Framework for approval at the bid/application stage.

Note: the financial limits for grants/contracts refer to limit of the contracted liability to the University Group.

2.3.2 Assignment or licensing of University Group intellectual property rights (IPR) to third parties

- Signatory: **Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation / Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) / Group University Secretary**

Greenwich academic division: approval required by board of Greenwich University Enterprises Ltd (GUEL) and by Finance and Estates Committee if over £50k (under the Memorandum of Understanding with GUEL).

2.3.3 IPR assignment agreements with students

- Signatory: **Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation / Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) / Group University Secretary**

2.3.4 Reversion of IPR to inventor/creator

- Signatory: **Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation / Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) / Group University Secretary**

Greenwich academic division: approval required by board of Greenwich University Enterprises Ltd (GUEL) and by Finance and Estates Committee if over £50k (under the Memorandum of Understanding with GUEL).

2.3.5 Sale of IPR based assets

- Signatory: **Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation / Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) / Group University Secretary**

Greenwich academic division: approval required by board of Greenwich University Enterprises Ltd (GUEL) and by Finance and Estates Committee if over £50k (under the Memorandum of Understanding with GUEL).

2.3.6 Material transfer agreements

- Signatory: **Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation / Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) / Group University Secretary**

2.3.7 Spin out company agreements (e.g. shareholders' agreements, licence agreements, services (premises and facilities) agreements)

- Signatory: **Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation / Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) / Group University Secretary**

Greenwich academic division: approval required by board of Greenwich University Enterprises Ltd (GUEL) and by Finance and Estates Committee if over £50k (under the Memorandum of Understanding with GUEL).

2.4 Partnerships

2.4.1 Partner/link colleges and academic collaborative agreements/contracts/memoranda of understanding

- Signatory – up to £500k: **Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy CEO**
- Signatory – over £500k: **Vice Chancellor and CEO**

New educational partnerships must be approved by the Partnerships and Development Board under the Academic Board Delegation Framework.

2.4.2 Agency agreements for the recruitment of international students

- Signatory – up to £150k and on University Group terms and conditions: **Chief Marketing Officer**
- Signatory – £150k-£500k: **Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy CEO / Group University Secretary / Group Chief Operating Officer**
- Signatory – over £500k: **Vice Chancellor and CEO**

Advice should be sought from the relevant Procurement team (Greenwich or Kent) before signing agreements over £150k.

2.4.3 Other agency agreements

- Signatory – up to £500k: **Group University Secretary / Group Chief Operating Officer / Group Chief Financial Officer**
- Signatory – over £500k: **Vice Chancellor and CEO**

2.6 People

2.6.1 Employment-related contracts with University Group staff including employment contracts, severance agreements and settlement agreements

- Signatory: **Group Chief People Officer**

Approval of remuneration and severance payments for Senior Staff falling within the Senior Staff Remuneration Framework is set out in the Framework.

2.7 Other agreements

2.7.1 Powers of attorney

- Signatory: **Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation / Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) / Group University Secretary**

2.7.2 Confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements

- Signatory: **Group Director of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation / Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) / any Executive Signatory**

Legal advice should be sought where the confidentiality agreement/NDA is not on the University Group's standard templates.

2.7.3 Data sharing and data processing agreements

- Signatory: **Group University Secretary / General Counsel (Greenwich) / Deputy Director, Legal and Compliance Services (Kent)**

Legal advice should be sought where the data sharing/processing agreement is not on the University Group's standard templates.

2.7.4 Agreements in the form of a deed which are not property/estates-related

- Signatories: as for 2.1.1.

2.7.5 Other agreements not listed above

- Signatory – up to £50k: **any Executive Signatory**

- Signatory – £50k-£500k: **Group Chief Financial Officer / Group Chief Operating Officer**
- Signatory – over £500k: **Vice Chancellor and CEO**