



Delegation Framework

Outcome requested:	Audit and Risk Committee is asked to consider and comment on an update to the Delegation Framework before it is presented to Council for approval.
Executive Summary:	<p>[a] Following the grant to the University of a Supplemental Charter and the approval by Council of new Ordinances, the Governance Committee last year endorsed an approach to review the Delegation Framework. The objectives have been to update the Delegation Framework in line with the new Charter and Ordinances, making the source of each delegation clear; and to update terminology, removing content that is redundant or belongs elsewhere and adding content that is relevant to new and emerging areas of activity.</p> <p>[b] While the review is not yet complete, we are seeking to approve an interim version at this stage which brings the current Delegation Framework fully up to date. In the next year it is the intention to subsume the Schedule of Delegation of Financial Authority into the Delegation Framework and to include further detail on delegations in relation to research, partnerships and staffing matters.</p> <p>[c] The version of the Delegation Framework currently before the Committee has been reviewed by relevant managers internally and also incorporates external legal advice. The draft has also been considered by Governance Committee.</p> <p>[c] Noteworthy changes in the Delegation Framework are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new section (A3) on the establishment of subsidiary entities to clarify how Council assures itself that the articles of association of subsidiaries align with the Charter and Ordinances of the University; • a proposal (A4.5) that approval of the Naming Policy (for naming spaces on campus, scholarships, prizes and chairs) is reserved to Council; • a proposal (A7.4 and A7.7) to lower the threshold requiring Finance and Investment Committee and Council to approve the composition of boards overseeing strategic and capital projects so that it aligns with the threshold for consideration of business cases.
QMUL Strategy:	Good governance supports all aspects of the strategy

Internal/External reference points:	Charter and Ordinances Regulatory Framework of the Office for Students CUC Higher Education Code of Governance
Strategic Risks:	Compliance with the Charter and the conditions of registration with the OfS
Equality Impact Assessment:	Not required.
Subject to prior and onward consideration by:	The Delegation Framework will be presented to Council for approval on 10 July 2025 after Audit and Risk Committee and Finance and Investment Committee have been given the opportunity to comment. Earlier drafts of the Delegation Framework have been considered by Governance Committee.
Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA:	No
Timing:	Occasional paper
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Date:	12 June 2025
Senior Management Sponsor:	Jonathan Morgan, Chief Governance Officer and University Secretary

Introduction

This Delegation Framework, along with the Charter and Ordinances, is one of the key pillars of the University's governance framework. It defines how the Council, which is established through the Charter as the University's supreme governing body, delegates its powers in relation to key decisions across various areas of activity. This includes matters that require formal approval by a body or group, and other formal transactions that require effective governance and recording processes around them.

The Delegation Framework applies to all University activity, irrespective of how it is funded, or by whom. It does not deal, however, with responsibilities delegated to individuals through their role descriptions, which is a management responsibility. Nor does it cover the underlying processes and procedures that lead to the final approval point, the responsibility for the adequacy of which lies with the relevant executives. The Delegation Framework also does not apply to internal accounting activities which are deemed business as usual, such as payroll or budget journals.

The Delegation Framework is maintained by the Secretary to Council and approved by the Council. It is subject to regular review to ensure that governance, policy, management and organisational changes are reflected, and decision-making arrangements continue to support effective delivery of the University's purpose and strategic ambitions.

Whilst every attempt has been made to include all key decisions in the tables within this Delegation Framework, it is not possible for any delegation framework to be exhaustive in its coverage. Questions and advice regarding the interpretation and use of the Delegation Framework should be directed in the first instance to Danny Hassell, Policy and Governance Lead d.hassell@qmul.ac.uk. The Chair of Council, on the advice of the Secretary to Council, is responsible for the final ruling on any question of interpretation of the Delegation Framework.

Principles

The following principles apply to all decision-making at the University.

1. Decisions should sit at the right level of authority to provide an appropriate level of scrutiny, with the most significant decisions being taken by the senior bodies at the University to ensure collective accountability and to enable senior championing and support for these decisions once agreed.
2. Decision-making should also be streamlined where possible, with sub-groups and individuals empowered to take decisions, while recognising that more significant, complex, contentious and high-risk decisions will need to be escalated to a higher level of authority on a case-by-case basis.
3. Bodies, groups or individuals that delegate decision-making authority to others retain ultimate accountability and responsibility for the decisions being taken on their behalf and must take action to satisfy themselves that the decisions being taken are in the University's best interests.

4. Bodies, groups or individuals to whom decision-making authority has been delegated are responsible for putting appropriate frameworks and procedures in place to enable them to make effective decisions within their area of responsibility.
5. Before taking a decision, decision-makers must:
 - assemble all necessary information, advice and evidence to make an informed assessment and judgement;
 - take action to understand any implications beyond their area of responsibility and ensure that they do not exceed the level and scope of their authority;
 - consider and assess the potential strategic, financial and reputational implications of a decision against the University's risk framework to identify whether escalation to a higher level of authority would be appropriate.
6. All decisions must:
 - be made with integrity, honesty and objectivity;
 - be consistent with the University's overall strategy, objectives and priorities, placing the University's interest above that of its constituent parts;
 - align with the University's Regulations, Code of Practice and Policies and comply with relevant legal, regulatory and funding body obligations;
 - demonstrate value for money considerations.
7. No-one should take part in decisions in which they have a potential conflict of interest.
8. A record should be retained in accordance with the University's Records Retention Schedule of how, why, when and by whom a key decision was made to demonstrate, if required, that an appropriate course of action was taken.
9. Where powers are reserved to individuals, it should be assumed that a nominated deputy or alternate may exercise the same power in the absence of the role-holder.

Lines of delegation are either through the line management hierarchy based on a cascade or operate through functional relationships where there is a senior lead for a key strategic theme. Individuals and bodies in whom authority is vested may sub-delegate to others provided that such sub-delegation is consistent with the Charter, Ordinances, Regulations, Codes of Practice and Policies of the University, including this Delegation Framework and the Scheme of Delegation of Financial Authority. There must be a written record of all sub-delegations.

A: Governance, Organisation and Strategy

The Council

Council is the University's supreme governing body with ultimate responsibility for the strategic direction and affairs of the University. The powers and responsibilities of Council are set out in Ordinance 2. Council also has certain responsibilities towards regulatory bodies, in particular the Office for Students (OfS), which is the regulator for higher education in England and the University's principal regulator as an exempt charity under the Charities Act 2011.

Council delegates much of its detailed assurance work to five standing committees:

- Audit and Risk Committee;
- Finance and Investment Committee;
- Governance Committee;
- Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee;
- Remuneration Committee.

Although the Council may retain authority over any decision, it delegates to the Senate responsibility for governing the academic activity of the University and appoints the President and Principal as the chief academic and accounting officer to carry out the academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource management of the University. The Charter identifies the following decisions that cannot be delegated by the Council:

- to elect the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council (Article 13);
- to appoint the President and Principal and to approve their terms and conditions of appointment (Article 15);
- to approve the University's annual budget (Article 15);
- to petition the Privy Council to add to, amend or revoke provisions in the Charter (Article 15);
- to make Ordinances (Article 15);
- to adopt the University's annual accounts (Article 15);
- to appoint the University's auditors (Article 15; which is interpreted as applying to both the internal and external auditors);
- to prescribe by Ordinance the constitution, membership, powers and functions of the Students' Union (Article 19).

Through Ordinance 2, the Council also reserves to itself powers to approve certain Codes of Practice, Policies and Regulations in recognition of their importance for ensuring effective governance and safeguarding the good name of the University.

The Senate

The Senate is the University's most senior academic body with responsibility, subject to the general superintendence and control of the Council, for the academic activity of the University. The Senate is supported in its work by boards and standing committees, each with delegated powers:

- Education Quality and Standards Board;
- the Degree Examination Boards, which in turn delegate specific responsibilities to Subject Examination Boards;
- Taught Programmes Board;
- Partnerships Board;
- Research Degrees Programme and Examinations Board;
- Ethics of Research Committee.

The Executive

The President and Principal is appointed by Council as the University's Chief Executive and the Accountable Officer as defined by the Office for Students. The President and Principal delegates responsibility for defined areas of activity, including the leadership and overall management of faculties and professional services, to the other Senior Officers of the University (see Ordinance 3) who in turn delegate specific responsibilities to Deputy Vice-Principals, Deans, Heads of Schools, Directors of Institutes, Directors of Professional Services and their equivalents. In the absence or incapacity of the President and Principal, another Senior Officer of the University designated for the purpose acts for and on behalf of the President and Principal.

The Senior Executive Team comprises the Senior Officers of the University and others invited by the President and Principal to bring together the University's most senior leaders. It is advisory to the President and Principal and assists in discharging the President and Principal's obligations to Council. The Senior Executive Team co-ordinates the delivery of the University's overarching strategy by approving enabling plans and establishing enabling plan steering groups, each led by the relevant member(s) of the Senior Executive Team, with a portfolio of aligned projects and programmes. The Senior Executive Team monitors the delivery of the enabling plans, strategic projects and programmes through the planning and strategic risk management processes while delegating responsibilities for detailed project governance to the Strategy Programme Board (for revenue projects) and the Infrastructure Steering Group (for capital projects).

Ref	Function	Authority	Process	Source
A1	The Council			
A1.1	To appoint the Officers of Council	Council	See Ordinance 5	Charter, Article 13
A1.2	To appoint external and nominated members of Council	Council	See Ordinance 4	Charter, Article 9
A1.3	To elect staff members of Council	All current staff	See Ordinance 4	Charter, Article 9
A1.4	To remove a member of Council	Council	See Ordinances 4 and 7	Charter, Article 11
A1.5	To convene ad hoc panels and groups to undertake work on behalf of Council	Council	See Ordinance 6	Charter, Article 14
A2	The committees of Council			
A2.1	To establish and approve the terms of reference of committees of Council	Council	See Ordinance 6	Charter, Article 14
A2.2	To appoint and co-opt members of committees of Council	Council	Governance Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 14
A2.3	To convene ad hoc panels and groups to undertake work on behalf of committees of Council	The relevant committee	See Ordinance 6	Charter, Article 14
A3	Subsidiary entities of the University			
A3.1	To establish and approve the articles of association of subsidiary entities	Council	Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 8
A3.2	To nominate University members of the boards of subsidiary entities	President and Principal	Subject to the relevant articles of association	Charter, Article 18
A4	Key governing documents			
A4.1	To petition the Privy Council to amend the Charter	Reserved to Council under the Charter, Article 15	See the Charter, Articles 20 and 21	Charter, Article 20

Ref	Function	Authority	Process	Source
A4.2	To approve the Ordinances	Reserved to Council under the Charter, Article 15	Governance Committee makes a recommendation to Council subject to the provisions in the Charter, Article 22	Charter, Article 22
A4.3	To approve the Delegation Framework and the Scheme of Delegation of Financial Authority	Reserved to Council under Ordinance 2	Governance Committee makes a recommendation to Council after consulting relevant committees	Charter, Article 14
A4.4	To approve the Financial Regulations	Reserved to Council under Ordinance 2	Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council after consulting Audit and Risk Committee	Charter, Article 22
A4.5	To approve the Conflicts of Interest Policy and the Naming Policy	Reserved to Council under Ordinance 2	Governance Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 22
A4.6	To approve the Gift Acceptance Policy and the Investment Policy	Reserved to Council under Ordinance 2	Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 22
A4.7	To approve the Risk Management Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy	Reserved to Council under Ordinance 2	Audit and Risk Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 22
A4.8	To approve the Code of Practice on Free Speech	Reserved to Council under Ordinance 2	The President and Principal makes a recommendation to Council after consulting Senate	Charter, Article 22
A4.9	To approve the Regulations on Official Dress	Governance Committee	The Secretary to Council makes a recommendation to Governance Committee	Ordinances 3 and 5

Ref	Function	Authority	Process	Source
A4.10	To approve academic Regulations, Codes of Practice and Policies of the University that relate to admissions, students, programmes of study, collaborative provision, academic awards and research	Senate	The relevant Board approves or makes a recommendation to Senate	Charter, Article 17
A4.11	To approve other Regulations, Codes of Practice and Policies of the University including those relating to staff	Senior Executive Team	The Policy Scrutiny Group makes a recommendation to the Senior Executive Team	Charter, Article 18
A4.12	To approve minor updates to all Regulations, Codes of Practice and Policies of the University that do not affect the established rules, principles or intent	Secretary to Council	The relevant policy owner makes a recommendation to the Secretary to Council	Charter, Article 22
A5	The Executive			
A5.1	To appoint the President and Principal and approve their role description and terms and conditions of employment	Reserved to Council under the Charter, Article 15	Council defines the process and consults Remuneration Committee on the terms and conditions of employment	Charter, Articles 8 and 18
A5.2	To approve the President and Principal's salary and benefits, including retained external income	Remuneration Committee	The Chair of Council makes a recommendation to Remuneration Committee after consulting the Director of Human Resources	Charter, Articles 8 and 18
A5.3	To appoint other Senior Officers of the University defined in Ordinance 3 and approve their role descriptions	President and Principal	The President and Principal defines the process and invites the Chair of Council to nominate an external Council member to sit on the panel	Charter, Article 18

Ref	Function	Authority	Process	Source
A5.4	To approve the salary and benefits, including retained external income, and terms and conditions of employment of other Senior Officers of the University defined in Ordinance 3	Remuneration Committee	The President and Principal makes a recommendation to Remuneration Committee after consulting the Director of Human Resources	Charter, Article 18
A5.5	To appoint Deputy Vice-Principals, Deans, Heads of Schools, Directors of Institutes and Directors of Professional Services	President and Principal	The President and Principal defines the process	Charter, Article 18
A5.6	To appoint other academic leadership roles within the schools and institutes defined in Ordinance 9	The relevant Head of School or Director of Institute	The President and Principal defines the process	Charter, Article 18
A6	The academic organisation			
A6.1	To approve the academic organisation of faculties, schools and institutes defined in Ordinance 9	Council	The President and Principal makes a recommendation to Council after consulting Senate	Charter, Article 8
A6.2	To approve the substructure of institutes, centres or units for research or education purposes	The Vice-Principal for the relevant faculty	Senate defines the process	Charter, Articles 17 and 18
A6.3	To establish University Research Institutes outside the academic organisation	Senior Executive Team	Research and Innovation Board makes a recommendation to the Senior Executive Team	Charter, Article 17 and 18
A6.4	To establish or close a campus (meaning a site comprising University grounds and buildings)	Council	Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 8
A7	Strategy			
A7.1	To approve the University's mission, values, overarching strategy and key performance indicators	Council	With the President and Principal	Charter, Article 8

Ref	Function	Authority	Process	Source
A7.2	To approve enabling plans to deliver the University's overarching strategy	Senior Executive Team	The President and Principal defines the process	Charter, Article 18
A7.3	To approve the portfolio of strategic projects and programmes funded from revenue budgets ≤ £200k > £200k	The relevant enabling plan steering group Senior Executive Team	 The relevant enabling plan steering group makes a recommendation to the Senior Executive Team	Charter, Article 18
A7.4	To approve business cases and the composition of project boards for individual strategic projects and programmes funded from revenue budgets ≤ £200k > £200k > £10m	The relevant budget holder Senior Executive Team Council	 The relevant enabling plan steering group makes a recommendation to the budget holder Strategy Programme Board makes a recommendation to the Senior Executive Team Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 18
A7.5	To approve the capital plan	Council	Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 8

Ref	Function	Authority	Process	Source
A7.6	To approve the addition of individual projects to the capital plan in-year			Charter, Article 8
	≤ £2m	Senior Executive Team	Infrastructure Steering Group makes a recommendation to the Senior Executive Team	
	> £2m	Finance and Investment Committee	The Senior Executive Team makes a recommendation to Finance and Investment Committee	
	> £5m	Council	Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council	
A7.7	To approve business cases and the composition of project boards for individual projects within the capital plan			Charter, Article 8
	≤ £2m	Infrastructure Steering Group	Infrastructure Operations Board makes a recommendation to Infrastructure Steering Group	
	> £2m	Senior Executive Team	Infrastructure Steering Group makes a recommendation to the Senior Executive Team	
	> £10m	Council	Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council	

Ref	Function	Authority	Process	Source
A8	The Students' Union			
A8.1	To approve the Articles of Association of the Students' Union	Reserved to Council under the Charter, Article 19	The Board of Trustees of the Students' Union and Governance Committee make a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 19
A8.2	To approve the terms of reference and appoint members of the Review Panel to report on adherence to the Code of Practice and Memorandum of Agreement	Council	Governance Committee makes a recommendation to Council after consulting the Students' Union	Charter, Article 19
A8.3	To approve the Code of Practice detailing arrangements to secure compliance with Section 22 of the Education Act 1994	Council	Governance Committee makes a recommendation to Council after consulting the Review Panel	Charter, Article 19
A8.4	To approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the University, the Students' Union and QMSU Services Limited	Council	Governance Committee makes a recommendation to Council after consulting the Review Panel	Charter, Article 19
A8.5	To approve the block grant from the University to the Students' Union and associated conditions	President and Principal	The Chief Financial Officer makes a recommendation to the President and Principal after consulting the Director of Student Experience and the Chief Executive Officer of the Students' Union	Charter, Article 18
A9	Accountability to the Office for Students			
A9.1	To sign off data returns required under OfS Condition F4	President and Principal, or their nominee	The OfS defines the process	OfS Regulatory Framework
A9.2	To sign off the Access and Participation Plan	Council	The OfS defines the process	OfS Regulatory Framework
A9.3	To sign off the Annual Financial Return	President and Principal	The OfS defines the process	OfS Regulatory Framework

Ref	Function	Authority	Process	Source
A9.4	To approve the Remuneration Annual Report	Council	Remuneration Committee makes a recommendation to Council	OfS Regulatory Framework
A9.5	To approve the Prevent Accountability and Data Return	Council or the Chair of Council acting with delegated responsibility	Audit and Risk Committee makes a recommendation to Council	OfS Regulatory Framework
A9.6	To sign off the Student Protection Plan	Council	The President and Principal makes a recommendation to Council	OfS Regulatory Framework
A9.7	To approve the process to ensure that individuals exercising control or significant influence over the University are fit and proper persons	Governance Committee	Not prescribed	OfS Regulatory Framework
A9.8	To appoint the internal auditors	Reserved to Council under the Charter, Article 15	Audit and Risk Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 8
A10	Awards			
A10.1	To confer Honorary Degrees and Fellowships	Council	See Ordinance 11	Charter, Article 3
A10.2	To issue the Queen Mary Medal	Council	See Ordinance 11	Ordinance 11
A10.3	To confer academic awards to students on programmes of study and research	Senate	See the relevant academic regulations	Charter, Article 17
A10.4	To award prizes to students on programmes of study and research	Senate	See the relevant academic regulations	Charter, Article 17

B: Finance

Council is the principal financial and business authority of the University with overall accountability for the University's assets, property and estate. Council also acts as trustee for any property, legacy, endowment, bequest or gift in support of the work and welfare of the University. Under Article 15 of the Charter, Council cannot delegate authority to approve the annual budget (including the capital infrastructure plan) and accounts or to appoint the University's auditors. Through Ordinance 2, Council also reserves to itself authority to approve the Financial Regulations.

Council delegates much of its detailed assurance work on financial matters to two of its standing committees: Audit and Risk Committee; and Finance and Investment Committee. Audit and Risk Committee oversees and provides assurance to Council on the University's arrangements for internal and external audit, financial control, risk management, data assurance and compliance. Finance and Investment Committee oversees and makes recommendations to Council on the executive's planning and management of finance, investments and assets with a particular remit in relation to financial strategy and policy, budget setting and financial forecasting, financial performance, capital projects, assets, investment and treasury management. The Treasurer is an external Council member who chairs the Finance and Investment Committee and acts as the primary point of liaison between Council and the executive on financial matters.

Council appoints the President and Principal as the chief academic and accounting officer to carry out the academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource management of the University. The other Senior Officers of the University (the Vice-Principals and Chief Officers) are responsible to Council, through the President and Principal, for the financial management of their respective areas. The Chief Financial Officer is the business owner of the University's financial policies, processes and systems and advises the President and Principal and Finance and Investment Committee on all aspects of financial management.

All commitments to capital, contract or revenue expenditure and disposal of assets are subject to the financial authority levels defined by Council through this Delegation Framework and the Scheme of Delegation of Financial Authority, regardless of the source of funding. The financial limits that apply are to the whole project/contract, even though the procurement may be in phases and over a period. All financial limits are inclusive of VAT unless stated otherwise.

Ref	Function	Authority	Process	Source
B1	Financial policies			
B1.1	To approve the Anti Bribery and Corruption Policy	Finance and Investment Committee	The Chief Financial Officer makes a recommendation to Finance and Investment Committee	Charter, Article 22
B1.2	To approve the Anti Money Laundering and Criminal Finances Act Policy	Finance and Investment Committee	The Chief Financial Officer makes a recommendation to Finance and Investment Committee	Charter, Article 22
B1.3	To approve the Capital Expenditure Policy	Finance and Investment Committee	The Chief Financial Officer makes a recommendation to Finance and Investment Committee	Charter, Article 22
B1.4	To approve the Commercialisation and Benefit Sharing Policy	Senior Executive Team	The Chief Financial Officer makes the recommendation to the Senior Executive Team.	Charter, Article 18
B1.5	To approve the Expenses Policy	Finance and Investment Committee	The Chief Financial Officer makes a recommendation to Finance and Investment Committee	Charter, Article 22
B1.6	To approve the Standards of Business Conduct	Finance and Investment Committee	The Chief Financial Officer makes a recommendation to Finance and Investment Committee	Charter, Article 22
B1.7	To approve the Treasury Management Policy	Finance and Investment Committee	The Chief Financial Officer makes a recommendation to Finance and Investment Committee	Charter, Article 22
B1.8	To approve the University Fee Regulations	Finance and Investment Committee	The Chief Financial Officer makes a recommendation to Finance and Investment Committee	Charter, Article 22

Ref	Function	Authority	Process	Source
B2	The Budget and Financial Statements			
B2.1	To approve the University's annual budget	Reserved to Council under the Charter, Article 15	Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 8
B2.2	To approve the University's infrastructure plan for capital and other infrastructure project expenditure	Reserved to Council under the Charter, Article 15	Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 8
B2.3	To approve the University's financial forecasts	Council	Finance and Investment Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 8
B2.4	To appoint the external auditors	Reserved to Council under the Charter, Article 15	Audit and Risk Committee makes a recommendation to Council	Charter, Article 8
B2.5	To adopt the Financial Statements	Reserved to Council under the Charter, Article 15	Audit and Risk Committee makes a recommendation to Council after consulting Finance and Investment Committee	Charter, Article 8
B3	Treasury and investment management			
B3.1	To appoint bankers and approve the provisions of the bank mandate	Finance and Investment Committee	The Chief Financial Officer makes a recommendation to Finance and Investment Committee	Charter, Articles 8 and 14
B3.2	To appoint investment managers and advisers	Finance and Investment Committee	The Chief Financial Officer makes a recommendation to Finance and Investment Committee	Charter, Articles 8 and 14