

Title	Signing Authority		
Parent Policy	Signing Authority	Responsible Office	Financial Services
Classification	Administrative	Effective Date	2023-Sep-14
Category	Governance & Legal	Document No.	1093-PR
Approval	Executive		

This procedure is applied in a manner consistent with applicable statutory and legal obligations, including university collective agreements, terms of employment and the parent policy.

The most up-to-date versions of the university's procedures are posted on the policy and procedure website. If you've printed this procedure, check the website to ensure you have the current version.

NOTE: The first appearance of terms in **bold** in this document (except titles) are defined terms – refer to the Definitions section.

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Procedure is to establish the processes by which Royal Roads University (the University) employees can enter into commitments and authorize expenditures on behalf of the University, as well as initiate a **Temporary Delegation of Authority** to other employees.

2.0 SCOPE & COMPLIANCE

This Procedure extends to all employees of the University and all academic, administrative, and research activities and operations undertaken by the University including activities related to the Royal Roads University Foundation.

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 General Principals

- a. This Procedure outlines minimum requirements to comply with the Signing Authority Policy (the Policy), however some processes or documents may include requirements for additional signers or elevated authority for approval as part of their specific procedures.
- b. Any employee who is formally and temporarily acting in a role is granted the authority of the role they are acting in for the duration.

3.2 Sub-delegation of Authority

A **Signing Officer** may sub-delegate their **Commitment Authority** if the sub-delegation of that authority is permitted under Appendix A. This sub-delegation must be submitted to Finance Services in writing by way of an email to Accounts Payable (accountspayable@royalroads.ca) including information on the commitments being delegated and the delegate's name and role.

3.3 Temporary Delegation of Authority

A Signing Officer may temporarily grant their Commitment Authority (if sub-delegation is permitted under Appendix A) and **Approval Authority** to another employee subject to the Policy as follows:

- a. Reasons for Temporary Delegation

Temporary Delegation of Authority may only be used to provide coverage for a Signing Officer who is unavailable due to vacation, business travel, or other unexpected and temporary absences, or to provide coverage for a vacant position.

b. Authorized Recipients of Temporary Delegation

When a Signing Officer temporarily delegates their authority, the delegate must be an individual who reports directly to the Signing Officer.

In the event that the authority of a vacant position must be temporarily delegated, such delegation may be done by the Signing Officer which the vacant position reports to.

The delegate must have the appropriate knowledge, skills and expertise to fulfill the responsibilities of the temporary delegation.

c. Duration of Temporary Delegation

In most cases, the duration of the Temporary Delegation of Authority will be the duration for which the delegating Signing Officer is unavailable.

In the event of a position vacancy, Temporary Delegation of Authority may remain in effect until the vacancy is filled.

d. Temporary Delegation Process

To initiate a Temporary Delegation of Authority, the Signing Officer must send an email to Accounts Payable (accountspayable@royalroads.ca) at least 5 business days prior to the required start date advising of the intended temporary delegation. This email must contain the delegate's name, role, delegation start date, and delegation end date.

3.4 Legal and Risk Management Review Requirements and Responsibilities

a. Legal Review

Signing Officers must consult legal counsel prior to signing any third-party contracts. Provided that the standard University contract template (previously approved by Legal Counsel) is used and the contract is low risk, legal counsel does not need to be consulted. Any contract that has significant ramifications or is unusual in any way must be referred to legal counsel.

b. Guarantees and Indemnities

Under the *Financial Administration Act*, the University cannot give a guarantee or indemnity unless it has received approval to do so under the *Guarantees and Indemnities Regulation*. Any document containing a guarantee or indemnity must be reviewed by the Financial Services prior to such a document being signed.

c. Insurance

The University has insurance coverage under the University, College and Institute Protection Program (UCIPP), provided by the Ministry of Finance. Any document that contains a requirement that the University maintain any form of insurance coverage must be reviewed by the Financial Services prior to such a document being signed.

3.5 Method and Verification of Approval

For digital documents, approvals are provided by way of an email with the document attached and an indication of approval in the email body, or by certificate-based Adobe digital signature on the document itself. These methods rely on the existing computer account authentication processes

which means that the Signing Officer approving the document is authenticated by their network username and password before they can send an approval email or provide their digital signature.

Physical documents which include a written signature must be scanned and then follow the same procedure as for digital documents unless the Signing Officer has submitted a reference image to Financial Services of their written signature.

3.6 Maintaining Records of Approved Documents

Approved documents must be physically or digitally filed and retained for the appropriate time period prescribed in the [Time Limits for Official Records](#) resource.

3.7 Certification of Signing Officers

Before an employee is granted Commitment Authority or Approval Authority, the employee's supervisor as well as Financial Services must review and approve the business need of such authority. The employee must then understand and formally acknowledge their responsibilities as a Signing Officer and agree to abide by this Procedure and the Signing Authority Policy.

4.0 ACCOUNTABILITIES, ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Executive

- a. The President, as delegated by the Board of Governors, has accountability for the management and implementation of strategies to ensure all expenditures support the University's business objectives and mission.
- b. The President and Vice-Presidents are accountable for promoting a culture of high standards of ethical conduct and integrity in supporting the prudent and judicious use of university funds.

4.2 Vice-President, Finance and Operations

Administration of this Procedure and its parent policy is delegated to the Vice-President, Finance and Operations, whose responsibility is to:

- a. Coordinate commitment and approval activities and procedures; and
- b. To articulate these procedures and subsequent revisions.

4.3 Responsible Office

Responsible for maintaining and updating this Procedure, and for ensuring compliance with this Procedure under the direction of the Vice-President, Finance and Operations.

4.4 Signing Officers

Responsible for understanding the extent and limits of their authority, reviewing and approving documents, delegating their authority when required in accordance with this Procedure, and ensuring they comply with relevant policies and regulations.

4.5 Delegates

Responsible for:

- a. following the approval authority procedures and ensuring the documents they sign are accurate and comply with relevant policies and regulations; and
- b. to inform the Signing Officer, who delegated their authority, of any commitments and approvals made on their behalf upon their return.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

Approval Authority means the authority to expend uncommitted funds against a budget or other available funding, to which a person has a direct or delegated authority up to the limit of the available funding in compliance with relevant policies and directives.

Budget Holder means an employee with delegated authority to manage the finances (Income and Expenditure) for a specific area (Cost Centre) per the approved annual budget or restricted fund within the university's financial system.

Commitment Authority means the authority to bind the university to agreements, both oral and in writing or partly oral and partly in writing, and the authority to bind the university to contracts.

Signing Officer means, in relation to any contracts, documents or instruments in writing or any electronic document, any employee who has been delegated authority, in accordance with this Policy, to sign the same on behalf of the University.

Temporary Delegation of Authority means the process of a Signing Officer temporarily granting their commitment responsibility and authority thresholds to another employee of the University.

6.0 INTERPRETATION

Questions of interpretation or application of the Signing Authority Policy or this Procedure will be referred to the Vice-President, Finance and Operations whose decision is final.

7.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Royal Roads University Documents and Information

- [Signing Authority Policy](#)
- [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- [Business Travel and Related Expenses Policy](#)
- [Time Limits for Official Records](#)

Review, Revision and Approval History

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
2023-Sep-14	Approved by Vice-President, Finance and Operations
2023-Sep-14	Implementation and effective date
2024-Sep-01	Next review