

Policy History
Policy No. GV4
Approving Jurisdiction: Board of Governors
Administrative Responsibility: Chief Financial Officer
Effective Date: October 27, 2021

Signing Authority Policy

A. CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

The main purpose of this policy is to provide direction to the members of the university through a consistent framework that ensures that:

1. Authority to establish this policy is derived from the [Section 27 of the University Act \(British Columbia\)](#) which gives the Board of Governors the following powers with respect to signing authority:
 - a. “(2) (c) to appoint a secretary and committees it considers necessary to carry out the board’s functions, ..., and to confer on the committees power and authority to act for the board”
 - b. “(2) (s) to enter into agreements on behalf of the university”.
2. Authorities are clearly assigned, properly approved and that delegation instruments are regularly updated;
3. The responsibilities and duties of those with signing authority are clearly communicated and understood;
4. Transactions and commitments are only entered into with appropriate authority.
5. The university’s activities are conducted in a manner that provides sound financial accountability and control of public funds entrusted to the university in accordance with appropriate policies, laws and regulations.

This Policy and its related Procedures outlines the principles and procedures that the University has created in order to establish control over legal and financial commitments through the comprehensive assignment of signing authority to specific positions within the University.

B. SCOPE AND LIMITS

This Policy and its related Procedures and Schedules applies to all documents, contracts, commitments, expenses, and obligations that require an authorizing signature(s); examples include contracts, agreements, applications for funding, donations to the University, real property transactions, leases,

memorandums of understanding, letters of intent, cheques and other banking-related documentation, investments, patents and the use of the corporate seal.

C. STATEMENT OF POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Board of Governors of Kwantlen Polytechnic University is responsible for the management of the university and its resources. The Board may appoint committees it considers necessary to carry out its functions and to confer authority to act on behalf of the Board. The Board has conferred authority to the Finance Committee to review this policy, procedures and related schedules, and to provide advice and recommendations to the Board where this policy is concerned. The Board delegates signing authority and responsibility for matters necessary for the management of day-to-day operations in accordance with the *University Act* to the President, Vice-Presidents and other employees of the University.

No person may sign any document that creates an obligation or undertaking on behalf of the University unless that individual has signing authority in accordance with this policy, Schedule A: Commitment Authority Table, and Schedule B: Approval Authority Table.

The delegated signing authority must ensure that contracts and related documents are appropriately reviewed prior to contract execution.

1. The University has an obligation to establish a comprehensive system of controls over all legal and financial commitments thereby ensuring the ongoing operational health of the institution.
2. A key element in the control of legal and financial commitments is to assign signing authority to appropriate positions within the University for various types of documents and transactions, reflecting the value of the transactions (where applicable) as well as the expertise of the signing authorities.
3. All documents and transactions will be identified by type and the University will identify the signing authority(ies), by position, that will be required to sign each such document or transaction. Schedule A: Commitment Authority Table will document this information.
4. Contracts are approved based on the financial and contractual limits, however, an exception applies for outgoing research funding applications. All research funding applications require Finance signature and approval only in the case of *unbudgeted items and/or amounts*.
5. Schedule A: Commitment Authority Table will be presented to the Finance and Audit Committee of the Board for information.
6. The University will maintain and monitor the schedule to ensure that it is complete and current, reflecting changes in positions, changes in threshold amounts within each category, etc.
7. The University will document the responsibilities of the signing authorities with respect to such issues as legal and risk management review, insurance, and execution of documents, records management, delegation and spending authority and provide training to ensure that signing authorities understand their responsibilities.
8. The University will establish and document the circumstances under which signing officers may delegate their authority to other positions.

9. Prior to signing and agreement that is unusual or contrary to past practice, signing officers are expected to consider the possible precedent that such an agreement could set and seek advice from their supervisor.
10. In cases where physical signatures are not obtainable, electronic signatures or online approvals may be used. Electronic signatures must comply with the university's Digital Security and Information Technology Policies and adheres to the relevant requirements set out in the [Electronic Transactions Act of BC](#).
11. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) may require consultation and/or approval of the Board and/or Senate in keeping with their jurisdictional authority under the University Act. All MOUs pertaining to research should be addressed to the Office of Research Services (ORS).

D. DEFINITIONS

Refer to the related Procedures document for definitions which will enhance the reader's interpretation of this policy.

E. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

University Act, section 27
AD3 Procurement Policy
FM5 Expense and Travel Expense Policy
GV8 Memorandum of Understanding/Letter of Intent Policy
HR1 Conflict of Interest Policy
RS4 Administration and Control of Research and Special Funds Policy

F. RELATED PROCEDURES AND SCHEDULES

GV4 Signing Authority Procedure
Schedule A: Commitment Authority Table
Schedule B: Approval Authority Table
Schedule C: Signing Authority by Unit