

Introduction

Under the *Griffith University Act 1998*, Council is named as the University's governing body and is given the power to manage and control the University's affairs, property and finances. Council is permitted to delegate its powers to appropriately qualified members of the University's staff.

- Council has delegated its signing authorities to the Vice Chancellor.
- The Vice Chancellor has (in turn) sub-delegated many of those signing authorities to various members of University staff.

The [Delegations Register](#) is the official record of those delegations and sub-delegations.

1 Which documents are covered by the Signing Sub-delegations?

The Signing Sub-delegations apply to almost all documented contractual arrangements entered in the name of Griffith University, whether legally binding or not.

The title or name given to a document does not change the way it is treated. The Signing Sub-delegations cover any agreement, assignment, contract, deed, declaration, expression of interest, grant, gift, heads of agreement, lease, licence, memorandum of understanding (even if not legally binding), novation, offer, release, tender, settlement, statement of cooperation, undertaking or other document to which the University is a party.

However, the Signing Sub-delegations do not apply to contracts or offers to employ or terminate staff at the University, as they are covered by the HR Delegations.

2 What has changed?

A new version of the Signing Sub-delegations was released in 2023. Under the new model, authority has been devolved (as much as possible) to the end-user:

- Limited exceptions are made for contracts which relate to special subject matters or which are high risk, with authority to sign these "Special Contracts" being subject to special delegations.
- All other contracts (General Contracts) can be signed by the contract-owner area, provided that the signatory has sufficient budget and financial delegation to approve any contractual commitment to expend of University funds.

3 How do I use the Signing Sub-delegations?

The first step in identifying the proper University signatory for a contract is to correctly classify it and then refer to the relevant table in the Signing Sub-delegations. For the purpose of the Signing Sub-delegations, contracts are characterised as one of three types:

- Table 1 - Special Contracts;
- Table 2 - General Contracts involving Expenditure; or
- Table 3 - General Contracts which do not involve Expenditure.

4 Special Contracts

"Special Contracts" are listed in Table 1 of the Signing Sub-delegations. These contracts have been reserved for special treatment, because:

- they establish a University-wide relationship or require the commitment of resources across multiple groups or portfolios;
- they are best handled by a University administrative area which exists to provide expert advice and support; or
- it is important for the University to centrally capture data about the activity.

If the contract is a "Special Contract" then it must be referred to the listed Subject Matter Expert for negotiation and it can only be executed by the nominated special sub-delegate who is named in Table 1 in the Signing Sub-delegations.

5 General Contracts

If the contract is not listed as a "Special Contract", then it is a "General Contract" and is covered by Tables 2 and 3 in the Signing Sub-delegations. In most cases, General Contracts can be signed in the relevant organisational area by a staff member at Band 4A and above. However, some limitations still apply:

- First, consult the [Guidelines](#) to find out who you should consult for expert advice on a proposed contract before negotiations are finalised and the contract is signed. In many cases, you are still expected to consult with Subject Matter Experts, even though the contract is not subject to mandatory referral as a Special Contract.
- If the contract involves the expenditure of University funds, then it is covered by Table 2 in the Signing Sub-delegations and can only be signed by a staff member at Band 4A and above who has a Financial Approval Limit sufficient to cover the total GU expenditure over the life of the contract. If the contract has an automatic renewal clause, please contact Finance for advice. Financial Approval Limits are set out in the Financial Delegations.
- If the contract does not involve the expenditure of University funds, then it is covered by Table 3 in the Signing Sub-delegations.

6 Before the contract is signed

If the Contract is a Special Contract, the Subject Matter Expert Group will arrange for it to be signed.

If it's a General Contract, the contract-owner should complete a [Contract Approval & Signing Request](#) form and send it with the contract to the appropriate signatory. This will ensure that the authorised signatory is fully briefed on what they are being asked to sign.

7 If you are the signatory

Legal Services has produced a Fact Sheet on "[Exercising Signing Delegations](#)" which provides a list of things to look out for when exercising delegations to sign documents on behalf of the University. The signatory should review this Fact Sheet before signing a contract.

8 If you're unsure

If you have any questions or queries about the Signing Sub-delegations, please send an email to: delegations@griffith.edu.au.