PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to describe the main processes and procedures associated with the delivery of key services and activities from the Office of the President.

The President’s Office Unit (POU) is one of the three sub-units/offices comprising the Office of the President. Its core activities are primarily informed by, and in support of, all the various leadership functions performed by the University President and the Vice President. The unit is also responsible for the production and management of the University’s Strategic Plan and thus play a leading role in supporting UL’s strategic priorities and fulfilling its institutional obligations. Another key role supported by the Office is to put in place the structures required to support a wide range of internal and external engagement obligations, internal and external committees, fora etc. chaired and/or represented by the President and/or his/her designees, adhering to compliance (statutory and other) protocols, and general project management and co-ordination by or on behalf of the senior officers of the University. Core President’s Office activities are:

LEADERSHIP

The President is the Chief Officer of the University, reporting to the Governing Authority. The President is responsible for the management and direction of the University in its academic, administrative, financial, personnel and other activities. The President is Chair of the Executive Committee, Management Council and Academic Council; the three most senior internal management committees in the University. The senior officers - President, Vice President Academic and Registrar (VPA&R), Associate Vice President Academic and Associate Registrar represent the University on a number of external national bodies including the Irish Universities Association (IUA) which is the representative body for Ireland’s seven universities.

Internally, at a strategic level, the UL Executive Committee, chaired by the President, develops in consultation with internal and external stakeholders, including the Higher Education Authority (HEA) the policy agenda for the University. The agreed policy is presented and agreed by Governing Authority and adopted as the University’s Strategic Plan. The Vice President Academic and Registrar is the senior academic officer and Deputy President. He/she has overall responsibility for the development of academic strategy including programme development, student mix and teaching and learning strategies.

Staff members provide support for the senior officers in fulfilling their responsibilities through PA roles and by providing the administrative support to the senior university committees. These include Executive Committee, Academic Council, Management Council, Academic Programme Review Committee, VPA&R Management Committee, Marketing and External Relations Committee.

In addition, the Office manages and supports responsibilities including Student Discipline Process, External Examiners, Ceremonies, Garda Vetting, Community Relations and Space Management.
The office also prepares submissions and reports for a range of external agencies including the Higher Education Authority and the Department of Education and Skills.

This following Key Business Processes support the senior officers and deliver a range of services.

1. Strategic Planning
2. Tendering & Project Management
3. Committee Support
4. PA Support to the President & VPA&R
5. External Examiners
6. Student Discipline, Garda Vetting, Community Relations
7. Ceremonies
8. Institutional Research

RESPONSIBILITY
Resourcing, planning and management of staff are the responsibility of the Office Manager.

1. Strategic Planning

Responsibility
The President, supported by VPA&R and Programme Manager.

Procedure
The main work item arising under this heading is the preparation of a new Strategic Plan at five year intervals. The process involves an initial consultation phase by the President involving all faculties, divisions and student union council. Key goals/themes are agreed and Executive Committee determines key actions for inclusion under goals/themes. VPA&R/Programme Manager prepares an initial draft plan for review by Executive Committee and this is followed by further consultation with all staff and student representatives. Draft Plan is reviewed and approved by the Governing Authority Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Sub-Committee and subjected to further refinement (i.e. proof-reading/editing). UL Governing Authority approves the final draft. Published document is launched with high-level event and media exposure. Each Faculty/Division is subsequently required to prepare Implementation Plans to identify their specific input to the achievement of goals/targets and these plans are further defined and monitored throughout the lifetime of the plan.

2. Tendering & Project Management

Responsibility
VPA&R and Programme Manager.

Procedure
A number of competitive non-research opportunities issue each year from the Higher Education Authority and other funding agencies. Calls for Proposals/Requests for Tenders (RFTs) are received by the President/VPA&R. Working groups are established as required. Proposals are drafted by the Programme Manager in consultation with working groups and budgets are prepared. Final proposals are signed off and submitted by President/VPA&R and forwarded to the funding authority. If the tender is successful, notification of funding is received and the project is initiated. Internal and cross-
institutional project teams, cost centres and reporting lines are agreed. The Programme Manager is responsible for ongoing monitoring and review (both internal and external) through to completion.

3. Committee Support
The relevant administrator is responsible for the implementation of the procedure.

Procedure
The provision of a professional level of committee support is a key responsibility within the Office as the President and senior officers chair a number of the most significant decision making committees in the university including Executive Committee and Academic Council. Each committee has a designated main support person within the office and, in addition, other members of staff designated as first and second cover to ensure support in the event of absence or leave.

The Manager, in consultation with the appropriate Chairperson, allocates staff support and designated cover for each committee. The main support person has prepared an operating procedure for each committee within their responsibilities and is responsible for maintaining and updating the procedure and ensuring that appropriate records are maintained. Typically, the committee administrator will make the required arrangements to facilitate the meeting including room booking, preparation of agenda and notification to members.

Agenda and accompanying documentation will be forwarded by agreed format. The administrator will take minutes and prepare draft for Chairperson for approval and circulation.

4. PA Support to the President and VPA&R
The relevant PA is responsible for the implementation of the procedure.

Procedure
The purpose of this post is to provide high quality personal assistant administrative support to the President and Vice President Academic & Registrar and under their direction to act in this role as an interface with other University academic and administrative offices and a wide range of external agencies. The President’s Office encompasses the President, VPA&R, Associate Vice President Academic, Associate Registrar, Office Manager and Programme Manager.

The role of the PA includes:
Liaison and interaction with academic and administrative offices across the University as well as a wide range of Higher Education and external agencies; management of daily diary and schedules; organisation of travel; meetings administration; preparation of files and reports; logging and managing all correspondence/communication to/from office; organisation of special award ceremonies and VIP events as required.

5. External Examiners
External Examiner Administrator is responsible for the implementation of the procedure.

Procedure
Faculty Deans, Heads of Department and their respective administrative support submit External Examiner nominations for the forthcoming academic period. All nominees must be approved by Academic Council (AC).
6. Student Discipline, Garda Vetting, Community Relations

Discipline/Garda Vetting/Complaints Administrator is responsible for the implementation of the procedures.

**Procedure – Student Discipline**

All students that enter a programme of study at the University of Limerick are subject to the University Of Limerick Code Of Conduct as a condition of enrolment. The Code describes offences under which a student may be charged, how complaints are reported and processed, penalties and appeals. The Administrator is responsible for ensuring that the stipulations and provisions of the code are adhered to. The Code of Conduct from the UL Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures may be viewed [here](#).

The Code of Conduct is under continuous review and amendments are presented as required to Academic Council for discussion and approval. The Advocate presents an annual report to AC.

**Procedure – Garda Vetting**

The university offers a number of degree programmes that will necessitate students having unsupervised access to children and/or vulnerable adults. To ensure protection of the public and give public confidence in the suitability of students being placed in these positions, all students on these designated programmes are vetted. Students may only proceed/continue on a programme of study subject to a satisfactory outcome of the vetting process.

Potential students on designated programmes that require Garda Vetting are sent the Garda Vetting Application process documentation by Admissions Office and are instructed to return the forms to the UL Garda Vetting Administrator either during Orientation (Undergraduate students) or by post (Postgraduate students). The Administrator logs, checks and processes the forms which are then sent to the Garda Central Vetting Unit, who process and return forms to the Administrator. Returned forms are logged, put on the Student Information System (SI) and filed and a Garda Vetted confirmation letter, class list and template. Placement letter(s) are produced and sent to the programme Course Director. The administrator also requests, collects and logs Police Clearance Certificates from those students who have resided outside Ireland for periods greater than 6 months.

**Procedure – Community Relations & Complaints**

The Community Liaison Committee meeting procedure is similar to the Committee Support in Section 1 above. Complaints of alleged student misbehaviour are dealt with under this procedure. The administrator will receive complaints on the telephone, by email, in person or via Security Incident Reports. All complaints received are logged on Complaints Log. The administrator will contact relevant person(s) with details of complaint for action, e.g., Limerick County Council, UL Advocate or An Garda Síochána.

7. Ceremonies

Ceremonies Administrators are responsible for the implementation of the procedure.

**Procedure**

The Conferring Administrator will liaise with Student Academic Administration and all Academic Departments in preparation for each ceremonies session. This results in the production of the conferring schedule, PhD details and booklet information. The administrator consults with caterers, robing agents, photographers, florists, University Concert Hall (UCH), printers and others regarding
requirements for ceremonies and collates and edits information received. It is then forwarded to the Technical Writer for proofing and forwarded to booklet printers. The conferring schedule is published online on the ceremonies website. The administrator co-ordinates and produces plans and schedules for use throughout the Conferring ceremonies. All associated invoices and purchase orders are processed through the ceremonies office.

8. Institutional Research

Responsibility
VPA&R and Institutional Research Officer

Procedure
Main responsibilities involve ensuring compliance with statutory reporting requirements (HEA returns), contributing to Compact Agreement and data profiles nationally and contribution of data to the RGAM and RAM budget models. In addition the IR Officer provides student listings for the ISSE National survey, student data for external ranking agencies and Athena Swan related data.

The IR Officer also prepares internal reports relating to student and graduate statistics, responds to requests and possible modifications in specifications for HEA and other bodies, liaises internally to ensure technical requirements can be met and completes internal data gathering and verification. Responsible for annual uploads to HEA and other bodies and for publishing internally on SharePoint.

DOCUMENTATION
Additional operational procedures are available for all services provided by the President’s Office.

RECORDS
Paper copies of all documentation are filed and retained in accordance with Records Management & Retention Policy by the committee administrator.

All project documentation retained by Programme Manager. Account data on projects retained by UL Finance Office in compliance with Audit requirements.

All drafts of Strategic Plans (English and Irish translated) and final print version retained by VPA&R office and posted online.

PROCESS VERIFICATION
Evaluation of process effectiveness is carried out using Internal/QMS audits and by monitoring progress of decisions through meetings and associated minutes.

The Committee Support functions involve the production of minutes which contain decisions and action items which are allocated to members. The minutes provide a mechanism for follow up and verification of decisions taken.

Garda Vetting, External Examiners and Ceremonies have been subjected to extensive internal quality audit.

Overall responsibility for the implementation of the Strategic Plan rests with the President & Executive Committee. Progress on implementation is monitored on an on-going basis by the Executive Committee. The President presents an annual update to the Governing Authority Strategic
Planning and Quality Assurance Committee and an annual update to the University’s Governing Authority.

In relation to tendering processes, responsibility rests with the VPA&R. Projects are verified externally through the competitive funding process. Most funded projects require on-going reporting and budget control for verification (usually annually).

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<td>Initial Release</td>
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<td>Inclusion of paragraph on Leadership.</td>
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