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# QUALITY MANUAL

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## FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Created: January 2015  
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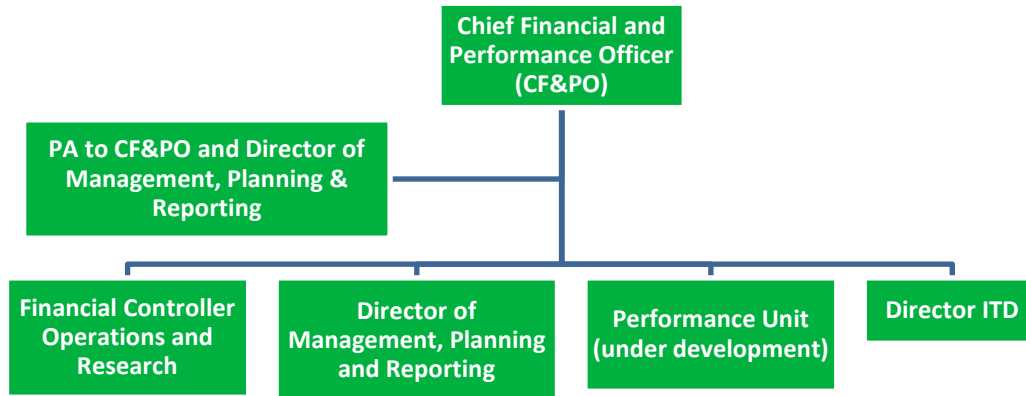
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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Brief Outline of the Department

The [Finance Department](#) at the University of Limerick (UL) is responsible for managing UL's financial, budgeting and reporting processes. The Department reports to the President through the Chief Financial and Performance Officer (CF&PO). The CF&PO post was created in late 2020, and the first appointee commenced in September 2021.

Chart 1 provides an overview of the Department's structure.



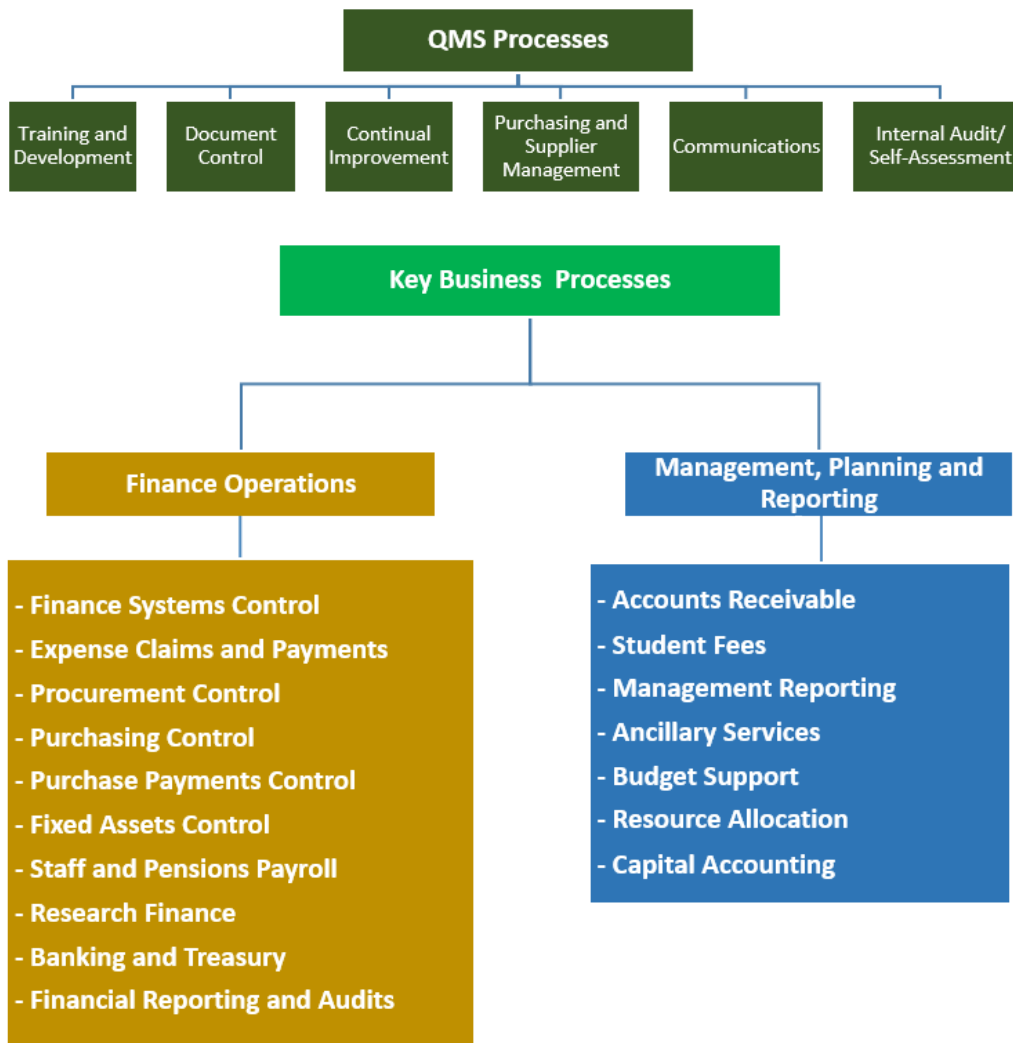
*Chart 1: Overview of Finance Department*

Some of the key performance indicators are as follows:

- Customer feedback and queries
- Supplier payments – % within 30 days – prompt payments
- Total number of suppliers by threshold values annually
- Number of expense claims per quarter/annum
- Expense claims – % processed within xx days
- Student fees outstanding as a percentage of fees billed quarterly
- Number of research cost centres and budget holders
- Value of research awards quarterly/annually
- Number of procurement tenders/mini competitions completed annually by sourcing channel
- Number of months to complete budget process
- Budget completion – number of days prior to start of budget year
- EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) as a percentage of income – annual
- Operating cash as a percentage of income – annual
- Ratio of capital investment and debt funding to operating cash
- Annualised debt service cost as percentage of total income
- Net indebtedness as percentage of total consolidated net assets
- Net assets to be a minimum of €200m

### 1.2 Our Commitment to Quality

The Finance Department is committed to embedding continual improvement into its activities and developed its QMS as part of the UL quality process, which conforms to the principles set out in the [Standard Quality Management Systems \(QMS\) Framework for Support Units](#) (January 2016). Chart 2 provides an overview of the Finance QMS.



*Chart 2: Overview of Finance QMS*

This Quality Manual demonstrates the Department’s commitment to maintaining a high level of quality and strong customer focus while striving to continually improve the level and quality of service we provide to our customers. Quality is an integral part of our entire business operation.

Changes to any processes outlined in this manual and to our key business processes are controlled using the Department’s [Documentation Control process](#).

### 1.3 Quality Policy

The Finance Department provides financial leadership that supports UL’s mission of building on the expertise of its scholars in creating, harnessing and imparting knowledge for the benefit of its students and the enrichment of its community. This is achieved by adhering to regulatory governance and legislation, providing a broad portfolio of financial services and maintaining financial stability.

To ensure that UL’s financial resources are used in an efficient, cost-effective manner, Finance encourages devolved decision making by providing quality, timely information to its customers.

We are committed to continually improving and aim to maximise customer satisfaction with our services. The QMS provides a framework for measuring and improving our performance.

## 2. Customer Focus

The Finance Department seeks to ensure that customer requirements are determined and met. As the Finance customer base is spread across a wide range of internal and external customers, the Department aims to provide effective and efficient services that meet customer needs. Members of Finance work as a team to continually improve and expand services to the Department's customers.

### 2.1 Customer Charter

The financial leadership provided by the Department is customer-driven, and we believe that all our stakeholders are entitled to a high standard of quality from us. The Department's Customer Charter can be viewed on the [Quality section](#) of the [Finance website](#).

Customers can make formal complaints by emailing the manager of the relevant area. If the complaint is not dealt with in a timely manner, the customer can escalate the complaint to the next management level.

### 2.2 Customer Groups and Service

The Finance Department has many customer groups, both internal and external to UL, to whom a diverse range of financial services are provided. The table to follow lists the Department's main customer groups and the service areas with which those customers have the highest volume of interactions.

Table 1: Finance customers and services

Customer	Service	Governance and compliance	Financial reporting	Budget planning, management and support	Management reporting	Fixed assets	Procurement	Purchase to pay	Payroll	Staff expense claims	Student fees	Other income, accounts receivable	Research finance	Other self-funded activities
Governing Authority and committees		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Executive management		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Higher Education Authority (HEA)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓
Government departments		✓	✓								✓		✓	✓
Internal committees		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Faculties				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support units				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Staff				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				
Campus visitors		✓							✓	✓				
Retired staff		✓							✓					
Students – UG											✓			
Students – PG									✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Research funding bodies		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	
Revenue		✓						✓	✓					
Customers other than students and funding bodies												✓	✓	✓
Suppliers of goods and services						✓	✓	✓						

As a measure of the value of its services, Finance monitors information relating to customer experiences and uses this information to measure customer satisfaction levels. The methods for measuring customer satisfaction include:

- Customer feedback monthly summary
- Customer satisfaction survey and *ad hoc* focus groups
- Interactive Procurement Office website and staff user purchasing groups
- Training evaluation forms
- Feedback from stakeholders who engage with Finance staff
- Finance operations monitoring: accounts payable, accounts receivable, aged debtor/creditor listings, prompt payments, purchase order aged analysis, complaints report, supplier ratings report, etc.
- Attendance at and feedback from faculty management group meetings and various committee groups within UL

- Audits of financial processes and controls
- Telephone calls made periodically or after the delivery of a service
- Establishing service level agreements for specific financial services and monitoring same

With a focus on continual improvement, customer feedback (requests, queries, complaints, commendations, suggestions and points of information) is monitored on an ongoing basis. Each operational unit within Finance has a generic email account to which customers can send queries or requests to be acted upon by that unit. 'Voice of the customer' feedback can also be submitted in person, by telephone or at committee meetings. Corrective action is taken to rectify notified problems, such as payment or order processing corrections. To help avoid a recurrence of issues that may cause customer dissatisfaction, feedback is given to the manager of the process in question and agreed actions are communicated to the customer to ensure the communication loop is closed.

### 3. Leadership/Management Responsibility

The CF&PO has overall responsibility for the Finance function. The CF&PO also has responsibility for the Performance Unit (under development) and the Information Technology Division (ITD) (on an acting basis). The Finance Department is managed by the Director of Management, Planning and Reporting and the Financial Controller Operations and Research, both of whom are responsible for all aspects of running the Department. They meet on a weekly basis with the CF&PO at a one-to-one meeting and fortnightly as a team. These meetings facilitate communication by the CF&PO to and from the UL Executive Committee.

The Department's management team meets to review the quarterly report at the Quarterly Meeting. The management team includes Finance staff whose grade is at or above Senior Executive Administrator. In addition to including members of the Quality Team, the management team includes representatives from the wider Finance Department. The Quality Team leader is a member of the management team.

In maintaining and changing the QMS, regulatory and statutory requirements such as the Universities Act 1997 and policies relating to purchasing, procurement, finance and human resources (HR) are communicated and accommodated within the system.

#### 3.1 Planning

Planning within Finance is guided by the UL strategic plan, which is updated every five years. Goals 1, 2 and 5 of the current strategic plan ([UL@50, 2019-2024](#)) include specific objectives that are relevant to the Finance Department.

One of the principal enablers for achieving the objectives of the UL strategic plan is the annual budget process, which is outlined in detail in the Department's Budget process.

In addition to the UL strategic plan and the annual budget, the Finance Department receives very regular feedback on its activities through statutory audit by the Comptroller & Auditor General, annual audit by external commercial auditors appointed by the Governing Authority, internal audit, research audits by many different funding agencies and feedback from staff, students, Governing Authority, suppliers and statutory authorities. This constant cycle of audit and review gives rise to an environment of continual change and improvement to processes and systems. This ongoing process is overseen by weekly meetings between the CF&PO, Director of Management, Planning and

Reporting and Financial Controller Operations and Research and weekly team meetings within these two functions.

On a quarterly basis, a formal update on activity within Finance is prepared and reviewed by the Department and submitted to the Executive Committee.

### 3.2 Management Review Process

The management team reviews the QMS annually to ensure it remains suitable, adequate and effective. This review includes assessing opportunities for improvement and the need for making changes to the QMS, including the quality policy, customer charter and quality objectives.

## 4. Involvement of Staff

Finance is governed by UL policies and procedures for the selection, recruitment, promotion and development of staff. A full list of procedures is available on the UL [Policy Hub](#).

Finance operates an inclusive approach with respect to the personnel working in the Department. Quality is embedded in day-to-day processes and services to our customers. All staff are given the opportunity to be involved in identifying and implementing quality improvements within their functions.

Trained members of Finance act as quality officers within the Department, and they are available to participate in the quality audits of other departments.

### 4.1 Responsibility and Authority

As previously shown in Chart 1, the Finance Department is led by the CP&FO and comprises three distinct functions:

1. **Operations and Research:** Has responsibility for payroll, purchase to pay, treasury, procurement, expenses, finance systems management, risk, audit compliance, research finance, financial reporting and the fixed asset register. The function's organisational structure is shown in Chart 3.
2. **Management, Planning and Reporting:** Is responsible for resource allocation, costing, budgeting, management reporting, capital budgets, state funding, pension control account, accounts receivable and student fee billings. The function's organisational structure is shown in Chart 4.
3. **Performance Unit:** Currently under development and not yet included in the scope of this manual.



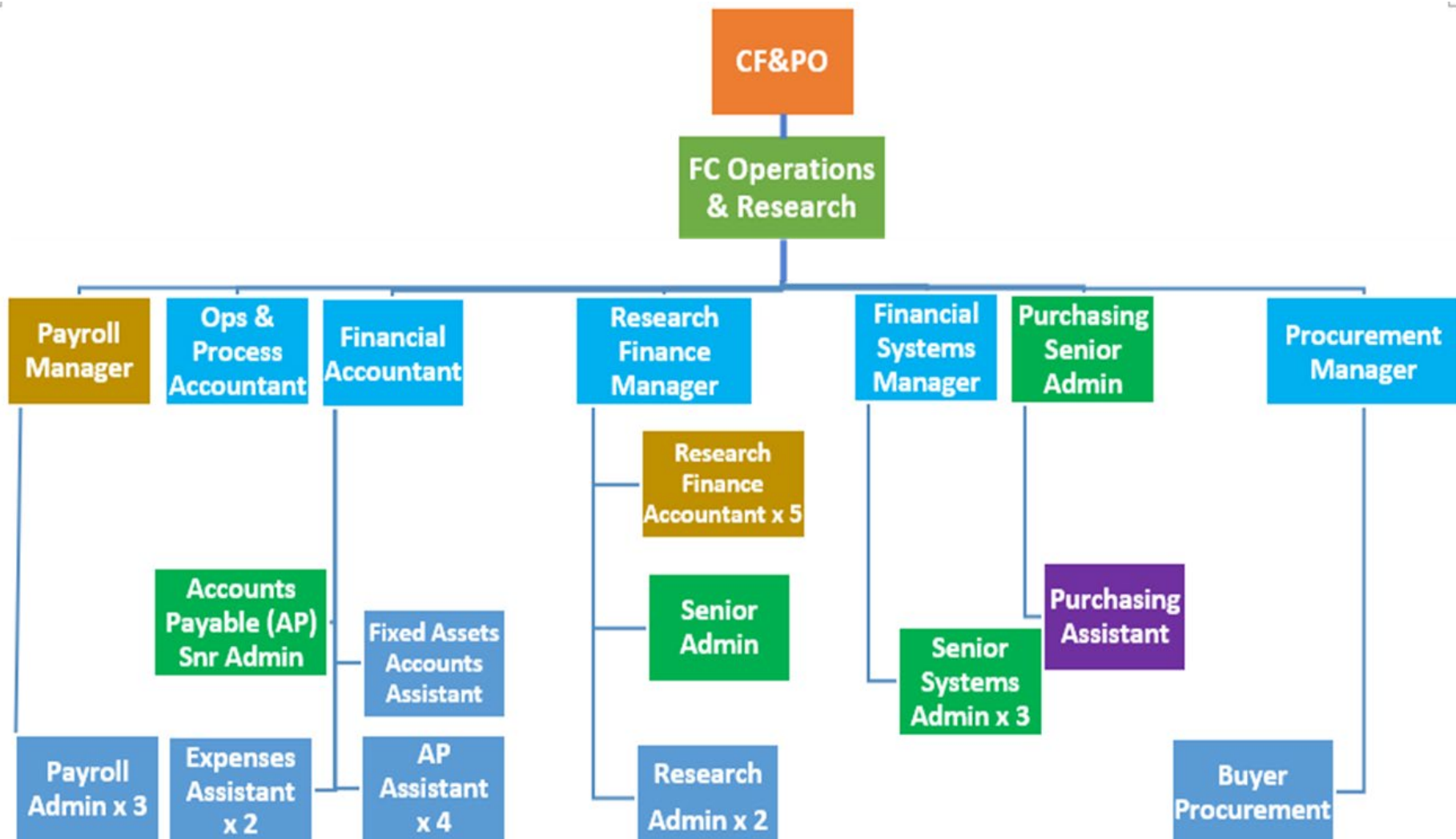
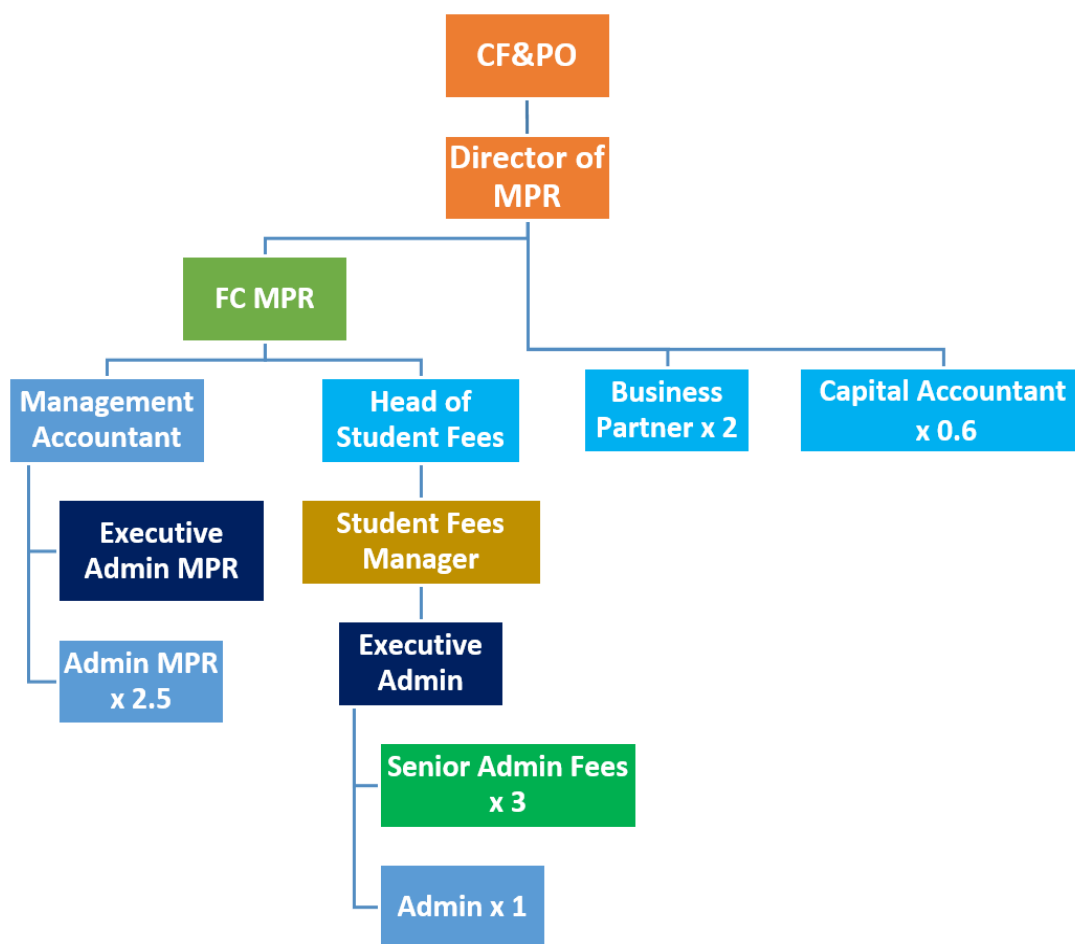


Chart 3: Operations and Research organisation char



*Chart 4: Management, Planning & Reporting organisation chart*

## 4.2 Departmental Communication

Finance is committed to ensuring that all staff are given the opportunity to understand and contribute to the activities of the Department. The [Communications process](#) forms an integral part of this commitment. The Department holds the following meetings at regular intervals:

- CF&PO meetings with the Director of Management, Planning and Reporting and the Financial Controller Operations and Research
- Quarterly Meeting with the Finance management team
- Weekly unit team meetings
- Weekly managers' meetings with their functional teams

### 4.2.1 CF&PO Meetings

The CF&PO holds a weekly one-to-one meeting with each of his two direct reports – the Director of Management, Planning and Reporting and the Financial Controller Operations and Research, and the three of them meet together as a team once a fortnight. The agenda is set by referring to the agenda, minutes and documentation for the weekly UL Executive Committee; monthly Governing Authority meetings; and Finance's agreed work programme, including budget planning, end-of-year financial reporting/statements, implementation of recommendations, staffing resources and development and current issues, if any. In addition, the agenda incorporates reviewing progress on the implementation of the Department's risk register future controls and the status of key continual improvement projects. Action items that impact each area of work are noted, and progress reviews

are carried out and recorded by either noting the minutes of Executive Committee and Governing Authority meetings, issuing a report, emailing an update or reporting verbally at follow-up meetings. Formal minutes of the meeting are generally not required.

#### **4.2.2 Quarterly Review Meeting with the Finance Management Team**

Every quarter, the Finance management team meets to review the Department's quarterly report to the Executive Committee. The management team comprises senior staff of the Department. The agenda for this meeting is determined by the topics covered within the quarterly report, and each member present updates the attendees on a topic relevant to their area of work. A typical agenda would include recurrent budget, ancillary income and expenditure, research income, expenditure and awards, payroll, student fees, debtors, audit status, purchasing, capital projects, expenses, financial systems, risk register and QMS updates. Amendments to the quarterly report are recommended and are documented prior to being circulated to the Executive Committee.

#### **4.2.3 Unit Team Meetings**

The financial controllers and the Finance managers hold unit team meetings regularly. For example, the Financial Controller Operations and Research holds two weekly team meetings: the first is dedicated to reviewing processes, continual improvement projects and risk register future control actions while the second focuses on current operational matters and priorities. Other team meetings are organised to discuss information system developments, monthly reports, quarterly reports, staff development and audits. Action items are recorded, and progress is monitored. These meetings also seek input and feedback from staff.

The Finance Department engages with academic and other support units within UL and with external stakeholders through meetings, working groups and committees. In addition to face-to-face interaction, the Department communicates with both internal and external stakeholders through its website and by email, telephone, SMS messaging, social media, printed publications and formal advertising. The Department is currently developing a Finance and Procurement space on UL Connect, the University's internal communications platform.

### **4.3 Training and Development**

The Department adheres to UL's [Performance and Development Review System](#) (PDRS). The purpose of the PDRS is to:

- a. Set objectives for each staff member
- b. Ensure that staff are fully trained and skilled to do the job they are required to do
- c. Identify areas for professional development

A training record is maintained for each individual staff member. Staff are encouraged to undertake courses outside of their day-to-day work, where appropriate and within available resources. For more details, refer to the Department's [Training and Development process](#).

### **4.4 Work Environment and Infrastructure**

The Department is located mainly in a single dedicated space in the A2 corridor of the Main Building. Staff worked remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic, and a UL policy on remote/hybrid working arrangements is currently under development. It is envisaged that staff will avail of the opportunity to work from home on a number of days each week. Using a Teams-enabled functionality, provision is being made to link up those working from home with those attending meetings in person in the Finance meeting room.

The Fees Office is located on the EO corridor so that it is physically accessible to students. Being located close to the Student Affairs Division and Admissions helps Fees Office staff have a better understanding of the work of these other student-related units.

UL's infrastructure is maintained by the Building & Estates Department.

## 5. Continual Improvement

The Finance Department recognises that the pursuit of quality is a continual one. As indicated in section 1.2, the Department is committed to continually improving its activities and services and maintains its QMS in accordance with UL's [QMS framework for support units](#).

### 5.1 Stakeholder Feedback

Through its formal and informal engagements with internal and external stakeholders, Finance seeks feedback from its customers on its services, processes and systems. This feedback is used by Finance to gauge its customers' levels of satisfaction and to identify areas where further improvements can be made to its services. Customer feedback is regularly communicated and discussed at the management and unit team meetings outlined in section 4.2. Process and system enhancements are communicated as appropriate and updated in the operations manuals of the functional areas. Process documentation is reviewed on a regular basis.

By its nature, the Finance Department is subject to regular internal and external audits from various bodies, and the outcomes from these audits often drive improvements in the level and quality of service provided by the Department. The focus of engagement with the external auditors is on emerging best practices so that the Department continues to improve its processes and services.

The Finance Department is committed to continual improvement and implementing improvements identified through audit findings and self-assessments as outlined in the Department's project register.

### 5.2 QMS

The Finance Department strives to improve the effectiveness of its processes, systems and procedures through the application of the UL [QMS framework for support units](#), audit results, analysis of data, corrective and preventative actions and management reviews. Feedback from customers and quality review panels is a key input to further developing the QMS. A document control sheet is in place to track updates and revisions to Finance forms, processes, policies, procedures and user guide documentation. Revision history is recorded on all quality documentation. Details are given in the Department's [Document Control process](#).

The Finance Department carries out the following tasks in relation to continually reviewing its processes:

- For processes considered to be at 'steady state', the process documentation is reviewed on a yearly basis at least.
- For processes that have associated improvement projects underway, the documentation is reviewed on an 'as needed' basis.

## 6. Process Approach

The mapping of all major Finance Department operational business processes and activities is an integral part of the Department's QMS and is of crucial importance to the Department in the delivery of quality services to its customers. These processes are [published](#) on the Finance website from the SharePoint Directory.

### 6.1 QMS Processes/Activities

The Department's QMS processes, as listed below, are mapped and [documented](#):

- Training and Development
- Documentation Control
- Continual Improvement
- Purchasing and Supplier Management
- Communications
- Internal Audit / Self-Assessment

The Department reviews the process maps on a regular basis to ensure they are kept up to date and relevant to each area. In addition, the Department looks for opportunities to improve business processes on an ongoing basis.

The effectiveness of the processes is evaluated in the following ways:

- Review by UL's internal audit function on behalf of the Governing Authority Audit and Risk Committee
- External audit by the current Governing Authority contracted auditors PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and the statutory auditor the Comptroller & Auditor General in respect of all activities of the Department. Both auditors produce an annual management letter highlighting control weaknesses (categorised by risk level) that require resolution. It is important to note that the management letter applies to all activities across UL and is not restricted solely to activities within Finance.
- Review by key stakeholders such as the Higher Education Authority (HEA) via their programme of sectoral rolling reviews, annual accountability meetings, quarterly reporting, etc.
- Customer input and feedback
- External audits by research funding providers in respect of research projects. Each funding provider has different reporting and audit requirements, and the audits are intensive from a time perspective.
- Co-ordinated by the Irish Universities Association (IUA), ongoing benchmarking against activities performed by other Irish universities
- Internal self-assessment by section teams in relation to the processes performed and the prioritisation of associated challenges for action at team, section manager and Department management levels
- Process improvement opportunities identified through the documentation of the processes, augmented by feedback from consultants contracted to facilitate the process documentation project
- Managing current and emerging risks

It is important to note that the Department liaises with all UL faculties, academic departments and support units and, as a result, can have a number of *ad hoc* requests. Such requests do not tend to

have associated documented processes on the grounds that they are generally one-off in nature.

In addition, Finance feeds into many processes performed by other departments. Consequently, Finance activities in these processes are incorporated within integrated process documentation rather than separately identified in a standalone Finance process.

## 6.2 Key Business Processes

The Department's key business processes are mapped and documented by each section within Finance. The processes are as follows:

- Accounts Receivable
- Banking and Treasury
- Budget Support
- Capital Projects Accounting
- Expense Claims and Payments
- Financial Reporting and Audits
- Financial Systems Control
- Fixed Assets Control
- Journals
- Procurement Control
- Purchasing Control
- Purchase Payments
- Research Finance
- Resource Allocation
- Staff and Pensions Payroll
- Student Fees

The following diagram outlines the interaction between the processes of the QMS. The diagram outlines the main processes and activities that are integral to the QMS (displayed in the outer section). These processes and activities support our key business processes (listed in the centre).

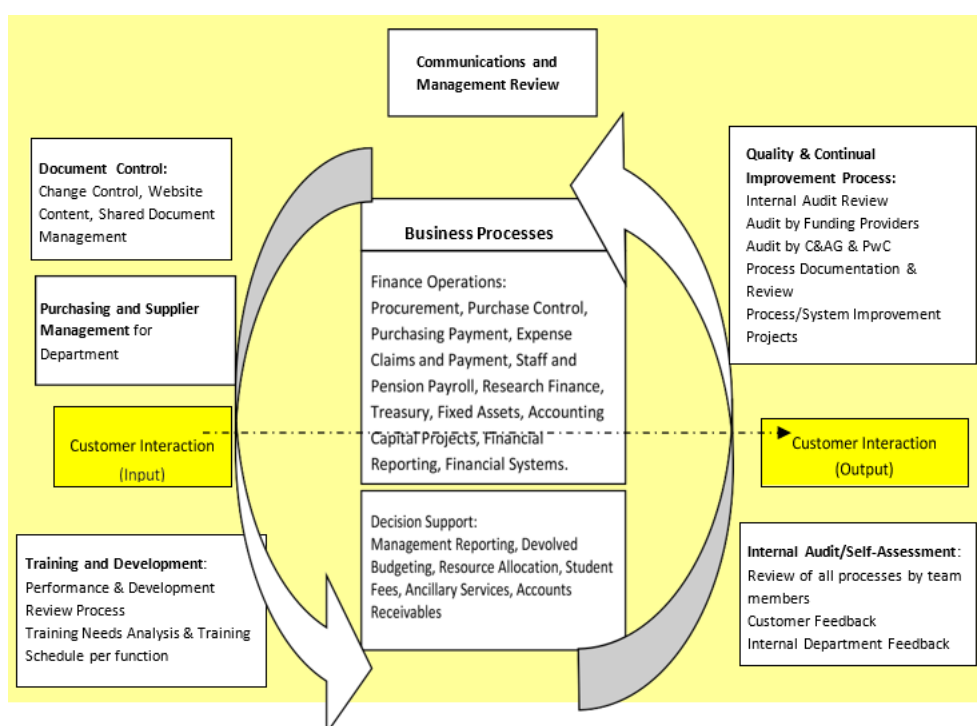


Chart 5: Process management structure

## 6.3 A Systematic Approach to Management

The relationship between the Department's processes is shown in chart 5 above. In accordance with the [Document Control process](#), all processes are documented in a standard process map and description format. They are continually reviewed and updated to reflect changes that arise as a result of business improvements or change requirements.

## 7. Using Data to Support Decision Making

Finance ensures that the decisions it makes are based on the analysis of data and information. We are conscious of the importance of fact gathering and record keeping in the decision-making process. The Department uses several methods to ensure it takes a factual approach to decision making.

### 7.1 Analysis of Data

Data input is required from a number of different stakeholders through the devolved budgetary process. Collating student intake numbers and preparing recruitment plans and non-pay expenditure profiles are integral parts of this process. The budgeted student intake numbers form the basis of the budgeted income, and the recruitment plans form the basis of the budgeted pay expenditure.

Input data is reviewed by the Management, Planning and Reporting team and assessed for accuracy, completeness, timeliness, reliability, validity and relevance before it is included in the budgetary process. The data received from the various stakeholders needs to be sufficiently accurate for the budget process. It is reviewed for completeness to ensure that incomplete or invalid data is not relied upon for decision-making purposes. Data is required to be timely, i.e. available quickly and frequently enough to support information needs. The reliability of the data is reviewed to assess the consistency of the data collection methods. The validity of the data is evaluated to ensure consistency from year to year. The data received is examined for relevance to the purpose for which it is intended.

The Finance risk register is used to identify and address risks to the Department.

### 7.2 Strategic Review of Data by Management

Finance reviews the draft budget to take account of government policy conveyed by the Department of Education and the HEA. Recruitment planning is required to be compliant with the Employment Control Framework. The budget is reviewed for compliance with UL's strategic plan.

Quarterly management meetings are held to review the budget and compare the actual performance of faculties, departments and support units to budgeted performance. Solutions are sought to address problem accounts.

Potential improvements to the process are identified at the quarterly management meetings and incorporated in forthcoming budgetary planning.

Taking into account the audit recommendations and feedback received from stakeholders throughout the year, management objectives for the coming year are agreed at the quarterly management meetings.

## 8. Supplier, Partner and Community Relations

### 8.1 Suppliers

The Department has operational responsibility for UL's procurement strategy for goods and services. The Procurement Office ensures that UL complies with national guidelines and European regulations while achieving maximum value for money.

UL is the founding member of the Education Procurement Service (EPS) (previously the Shannon Consortium Procurement Network), which has grown to represent the higher education sector at a



national level. Based in UL, the EPS is the education hub of the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) and represents education in a centralised procurement model. The central model is broken down into 16 categories of expenditure, and the EPS has responsibility for public sector sourcing across the categories of Laboratory/Research Diagnostics, Services and Equipment, Agriculture and Veterinary Goods and Services, and Library Goods and Services. The OGP leads on sourcing for Professional Services, Facilities Management, ICT and Office Equipment, Utilities, Marketing, Print and Stationery, Fleet and Plant, Travel, Transport HR Services and Managed Services.

By negotiating framework agreements and contracts with suppliers and participating in national and regional collaborative procurement through the OGP's central sourcing model and the EPS's sectoral category frameworks, Finance is able to achieve significant savings while complying with national and European legislative requirements, which is essential to maintaining UL's access to external funding.

The tendering process used by the OGP, the EPS and UL's own Procurement Office provides suppliers with detailed specifications regarding goods or services for supply, the standard of service expected and the preferred mode of delivery. The EPS and the UL Procurement Office utilises the national [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie) website in its supplier selection process. The Procurement Office applies a stringent and transparent evaluation process for the selection of contracted suppliers.

A list of all contracted suppliers by commodity is available on the Procurement section of the UL website. UL outsources a number of important service areas through procurement, such as data network management and electrical, plumbing and mechanical maintenance. The supplier relationship for these outsourced services is managed by the relevant key UL stakeholder, which is ITD and Buildings & Estates, respectively, in relation to the above examples.

In larger spend areas such as facilities management and IT, supplier relationship management is devolved to the key business user to better serve the business need, with professional buyer input available from the Procurement Office when required.

The Finance Department itself uses a small number of suppliers, including external auditors, both commercial and statutory; professional advisors in areas such as taxation, systems support and maintenance; banking service suppliers; and suppliers of printing, stationery and copying services. All suppliers are chosen in line with UL's procurement procedures. Some of the Department's suppliers (e.g. the finance system supplier) have a dedicated account manager who works with a specific contact within Finance.

Finance staff have regular contact with key suppliers. For example, formal pre-planning and closing audit meetings take place annually with external commercial auditors and, as necessitated by business needs, with other contacts during the audit and at other times of the year. Performance reviews are regularly conducted with the account managers of partner companies that supply system applications (Fees, Payroll and General Ledgers) and with the external auditors.

The Department's procurement and purchasing control processes are [documented](#) as part of its QMS.



## 8.2 Partners

### 8.2.1 Internal

The Finance Department interacts on a daily basis with the following UL units or areas.

#### Faculties and Academic Departments

The budget and management reporting team has regular contact with faculty managers and heads of departments during the budget process and provides monthly updates and ongoing online access to internal stakeholders on their budget position.

#### HR Division

The HR and payroll system CORE is at a high level of integration. The Payroll Office and HR liaise closely. Finance approval is required for all recruitment and contract renewals from HR, which means that Finance and HR personnel are in regular contact. Finance staff ensure that employment control framework categories are correct on recruitment packs and contract renewals, which, in turn, drives pension accounting.

#### Research Office

Finance approval is required on all funding proposals where budget exceeds €25,000. Monthly reports provided by the Research Finance team to the Research Office include key data and metrics. On larger research proposals, the Research Finance team works collaboratively with the Research Office team and Principal Investigators (PIs) on the detail of the finance element of the proposals.

#### Research Community

The Research Finance team provides proposal, budget management and financial advice, auditing services, monthly reporting, external funding agency financial reporting and training to the wider research community.

#### Student Engagement

The Fees Office works closely with Academic Registry, the Student Affairs Division and Graduate & Professional Studies (GPS). Student and course data provided by these departments are essential inputs into the fee billing process.

#### UL Global

The Fees Office assists UL Global with functions such as billing Study Abroad students, determining the fee status of internal students, and administering financial aid and international sponsorship programmes.

#### ITD

ITD provides Finance with suitable communication and network services to facilitate the Department's administrative function and its information databases. Finance provides a billing service to ITD for recharging postal, printing and phone costs/services.

#### Buildings & Estates

Finance provides financial support services to Buildings & Estates (B&E) for their operations and participates in regular review meetings with B&E personnel.

#### Internal Committees

Finance provides full management information and reporting to the Executive Committee and

Governing Authority. Members of the Finance team are involved in a number of internal committees and groups, including the Operations Committee, UL Research Committee, Research Commercialisation Committee, Recruitment Committee, Financial Aid Committee, SI User Group, Space Committee and Research Support Forum.

### **8.2.1 External**

The Director of Management, Planning and Reporting sits on the IUA University Chief Financial Officers Group (UCFOG). The Financial Controller Management, Planning and Reporting sits on the IUA Finance Managers Group and the Research Finance Manager sits on the IUA Research Accountants Group. Through the workings of these various committees, UL networks with its counterparts at the other universities. The groups collaborate on many issues of mutual interest, such as taxation and pensions.

The Director of Management, Planning and Reporting chairs the UL-based EPS Steering Group, which interacts with the wider higher education sector in relation to procurement.

The Finance Department works closely and shares ideas with UK universities that use the same or similar technology to manage their financial processes. For example, we are members of the UK Agresso User group and UK educational special interest groups (SIGs). These groups meet annually for their AGM and hold regular workshops or webinars throughout the year.

## **8.3 Community Relations**

The Finance Department supports UL's engagement with the local community. Fees Office staff participate in student open days while other members of Finance attend Chamber of Commerce and City Council networking events.

The Financial Controller Operations and Research represents UL on the board of HEAnet and chairs the Finance Committee. HEAnet is Ireland's national education and research network; it delivers high-speed internet connectivity and IT shared services to all levels of the Irish education sector.

The Director of Management, Planning and Reporting is on the board of the Hunt Museum.

## 9. Approvals and Revision History

Rev. no.	Date	Approved by:	Details of Change
1	Jan 2015	Prepared by Quality Team	– First release of Finance Quality Manual
1.01	April 2015	Quality Team (BOC)	– Added the formal customer complaint steps in section 2.1 – Updated Chart 2
1.2	July 2022	Quality Team (RF & VM)	– Amended to reflect updates to Department structure, QMS and incidental items throughout – Added reference to the COVID-19 pandemic – Minor editorial amendments made throughout