



**University of
Nottingham**

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University of Nottingham

Clarifying our Operating Model

Preamble

The University undertook a significant restructuring in 2015 with major changes to Faculties, to University Executive Board and in parts of professional services. However, the relative responsibilities of Schools, Faculties and the University Executive Board were not clearly articulated at the time and this has since led to confusion about delegation of responsibility, decisions not always being made at appropriate levels, no clear schemes of delegation, duplication and lack of joined-up thinking.

The effect of all of this has been for more and more decisions to be pushed up to UEB level, because no one is sure where else they can be taken. I have made it clear that I am committed to ensuring that more decision making is delegated, so that it sits in the right place, whether that is School, Faculty or UEB. In seeking to ensure greater subsidiarity, there is a need to articulate structural arrangements with greater clarity than at present. This document, an earlier version of which was circulated to senior leaders within the University for comment and discussion, is intended to set out these distinctions and is now published to aid reforms to our decision-making processes.

The other element of the document covers professional services and is concerned with ensuring more effective co-ordination and delivery of professional services across all parts of the University. 'Professional services', as they are termed in this document, means all staff in APM, TS and O&F job families, regardless of where they are organisationally based in the University.

Co-ordination does not mean greater 'centralisation', which was a concern expressed by some commenting on the earlier version. I recognise that local needs vary across the University, and our professional service provision must to be nuanced to take account of that. Support needs to sit in the right place and this will vary from function to function. However, our current structure is fragmented, disconnected and unwieldy, and this has to be addressed to ensure the University does not find itself in unsustainable place as the higher education sector experiences more fiscal constraint in the coming years.

Furthermore, a stronger link between the different parts of our professional service structure (wherever the individuals delivering the work sit) will ensure more purposeful collaboration, stronger knowledge exchange, better communication and will potentially provide greater career opportunities for our professional services staff.

Ultimately, we need to ensure that the University is in a better place in terms of collaboration, decision-making, problem-solving and appropriate subsidiarity. To get there we need to articulate and understand better our current arrangements, where responsibility lies and how we can make the most of our outstanding professional services. This document is a step towards that goal and I am grateful to everyone who has contributed to its development.

Note that the issues in here are primarily concerned with the University of Nottingham in the UK and do not apply to UNMC or UNNC unless explicitly stated.

Please note that this is a living document, and as we develop our governance and organisational structures, we will need to revisit it periodically to ensure it is fit for purpose and/or make any necessary alterations.

Professor Shearer West
Vice-Chancellor
October 2018

University Executive Board

Under the leadership of the Vice-Chancellor, UEB

- Proposes and establishes strategy, in consultation with the University community, for endorsement by Council.
- Sets all major policies for research, education, knowledge exchange, student recruitment, admissions, global developments, and internal operating and resourcing policies, ensuring that decisions are informed by specialist sub-committees and task groups as appropriate.
- Enables the delivery of strategy and policies through an annual planning and budgeting process.
- Prioritises major long term investments in people, capital, estate, cross-cutting educational and research activity and supporting infrastructure as well as disinvestments where required.
- Has overall control of branding and marketing.
- Establishes KPIs, owns and monitors corporate risks, ensures compliance with legislation and external regulation.
- Allocates financial resources, monitors performance and defines where adjustment is required.
- Seeks to set the standard for engagement, collaboration and communication with staff and students and to model expected levels of leadership, performance and professional behaviours.
- Fosters conditions which enable a supportive community for students and staff in which all staff and students feel engaged and supported as full members of the University.
- Promotes equality, diversity and inclusion in every aspect of University life. Addresses issues of health and wellbeing for all members of the University.
- Displays the values, attitudes and behaviours expected of senior leaders at the University of Nottingham.
- Engages with and supports the Council of the University and its committees; seeks to ensure the effective operation of University level governance structures below the level of Council.
- Engages with and provides support for governance, management and operations at UNMC and UNNC.
- Enables cross-University, cross-Faculty interdisciplinary and collaborative activity led by Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors supported by Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellors and other Senior Leaders.
- Has members who are accountable to the Vice-Chancellor and via her to the Council of the University for delivery within their areas of responsibility.

Faculties

Under the leadership of Faculty PVCs, Faculties

- Are responsible for operational planning and implementation of University, Faculty and School strategies, policies and major investment/disinvestment decisions in a broad disciplinary context—with attention, where necessary, to separate disciplinary cultures and requirements.
- Have responsibility for meeting University agreed targets for student recruitment at Faculty level, working in collaboration with central professional services.
- Have devolved budgetary responsibility and opportunity to make investment and disinvestment decisions across the Faculty in line with agreed University strategies.
- Are responsible for ensuring Faculty professional services decisions are made in conjunction with senior central professional services leads and/or are in line with agreed University-level strategies.
- Have overall accountability for the performance of constituent Schools and Departments and report on that performance.
- Manage staffing appointments, performance and promotion processes across the Faculty with the University's policy framework and the approved resourcing model for the Faculty.
- Have responsibility for ensuring that cross-University activities managed by the Faculty are implemented to the same quality and academic standards as internal Faculty initiatives and that they operate within a University policy framework.
- Have responsibility to ensure that Schools and Departments make a demonstrable contribution to the University's strategies and policies, including in branding and marketing, for example.
- Promote intra- and inter-Faculty initiatives in research, knowledge exchange and teaching and exploit new collaborative and interdisciplinary opportunities.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion across the Faculty and address issues of health and wellbeing for all staff and students.
- Seek to encourage a supportive community for students and staff in which all staff and students feel engaged and supported as full members of the University.
- Work with senior colleagues at UNMC and UNNC on relevant teaching and research developments and regulatory matters.
- Are key communicators between UEB and Schools/Departmental level and vice versa and are expected to engage appropriately with staff at all levels.
- Are responsible for ensuring progress against relevant KPIs, overseeing Faculty level risks, ensuring Faculty compliance with relevant legislation and regulation in line with University policies.

Schools/Departments¹

Under the leadership of Heads of School/Department, Schools/Departments

- Are the institutional focus for innovation and creativity in curriculum design, teaching and learning, assessment, continuing professional development, knowledge exchange and research.
- Enable, facilitate and undertake the core activities of education, research and knowledge exchange in specialist fields.
- Contribute to strategy development at University and Faculty level and ensure that any School/Department strategies are consistent with those agreed at Faculty and University level.
- Have responsibility for meeting Faculty agreed targets for student recruitment for their School/Department, working in collaboration with professional services and the Faculty.
- Are concerned with actively engaging staff in appropriate decision-making in order to ensure they are empowered to take the actions needed to ensure progress in their areas of responsibility.
- Are focused on developing, managing and supporting staff in their roles.
- Display the values, attitudes and behaviours expected of senior leaders at the University of Nottingham.
- Develop the best ways to ensure students are fully engaged and involved in their own education and supported to make the most of the learning opportunities and environment with which they are provided.
- Provide a supportive community for students and staff in which all staff and students feel engaged and supported as full members of the University.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion across the School/Department and address issues of health and wellbeing for all staff and students.
- Support and engage with intra- and inter-Faculty initiatives in research, knowledge exchange and teaching and exploiting new collaborative and interdisciplinary opportunities.
- Ensure the maintenance of academic standards and the assurance of quality of academic provision.
- Have responsibility for local performance in all areas of activity.
- Have responsibility to ensure that individual members of staff are working to the full expectations of their role and are supported and directed as appropriate to undertake work that benefits the University as a whole.
- Are actively involved in staffing appointments, performance and promotions processes in the School/Department.

¹ Note that Department here means the equivalent unit to a School in the Faculty of Engineering.

- Work with colleagues at UNMC and UNNC on collaborative teaching and research.
- Have responsibility to ensure and demonstrate compliance to University policies and relevant legislation and external regulation.
- Have responsibility to ensure that they are operating within a budget set at Faculty level.

Professional Services (Central, Faculty and Department)

Under the leadership of a Director or Head of a Professional Service Unit, whether central or locally based, professional services

- Operate as enablers to ensure that University strategies and policies are developed, supported, reviewed and delivered at the appropriate levels in the organisation, often through working effectively in multi-disciplinary teams.
- Provide centres of professional expertise to define, enable and facilitate University service, standards and quality in professional activity, supporting the University's ambitions and academic endeavour, whether this is delivered centrally or locally.
- Ensure clear communication about their work and collaboration and engagement with other staff and, where appropriate, students, to assist with effective and efficient delivery.
- Seek to ensure delivery of the greatest value at the right level, central or local, within a centrally managed framework working across Professional Service and Faculty organisational boundaries as required.
- Have responsibility to ensure the University complies with legislative and other external compliance requirements.
- Provide expert support in areas of activity that support the education, research and external engagement of members of staff throughout the University.
- Are concerned with actively engaging staff in appropriate decision-making in order to ensure they are empowered to take the actions needed to deliver in their areas of responsibility.
- Provide clear and timely communication in relation to administrative and/or technology challenges within their area of responsibility which might impact any unit's ability to meet agreed targets.
- Display the values, attitudes and behaviours expected of senior leaders at the University of Nottingham.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion across the unit and address issues of health and wellbeing for all.
- Provide a supportive community for students and staff in which all staff and students feel engaged and supported as full members of the University.
- Have responsibility for local performance in all areas of activity.

- Have responsibility to ensure that individual members of staff are working to the full expectations of their role and are supported and directed as appropriate to undertake work that benefits the University as a whole.
- Seek to engage with, support, advise and develop colleagues in relevant services at UNMC and UNNC.

An Holistic Operating Model for Professional Services: Enabling More Effective Joined-up Central and Local Professional Services Support

One of the key facilitators needed to ensure greater effectiveness and efficiency of delivery across all of these areas set out above is enabling more joined up, collaborative, consistent and co-ordinated central and local professional services support. There are several aspects to this holistic operating model including:

- Promoting, supporting and developing professional service staff mobility across central and locally based roles, both on a project and longer term basis.
- Enabling Professional Services to consider and discuss their activity plans and budgets, the professional services benchmarking data provided by Tribal and the outputs from the Professional Services Quality Survey (PSQS) to enhance the quality and efficiency of the services they provide to the University community as part of the revised business planning process overseen by the new Planning and Resources Committee.
- Clarifying governance and decision making, delegated authorities, committee structures and ensuring high and consistent standards of minute-writing and reporting, recording and archiving.
- Empowerment of all staff to act locally, within parameters determined by the model set out above.
- A clear focus on seeking intelligently to minimise any negative impact of external regulation on core activities and to manage internal regulation and consultation in a similar way.
- An ethical, people-centred approach which recognises, emphasises and promotes diversity across all activities.
- Enhancing internal communication, online engagement, social media use and information sharing across Professional Services and Faculties to support effective collaboration and service delivery.
- Bringing cross-functional teams together in new ways to tackle specific projects, problems and issues.
- More intelligent use of data to inform evidence-based decision making.
- Consistent approach to governance, committee operations and minuting across the University together with arrangements for sharing, publishing and archiving minutes and papers.
- Establishing a coherent operating model at Faculty level based around a Faculty Operations Director role.