

# Signing Authority Policy

This document is the parent policy for any College or Divisional procedures. Questions regarding this policy are to be directed to the identified Policy Administrator.

<b>Functional category</b>	Finance
<b>Approval date</b>	January 24, 2024
<b>Effective date</b>	January 24, 2024
<b>Policy owner</b>	Vice President, Administration and Chief Financial Officer
<b>Policy administrator</b>	Director, Financial Services and Controller

## Objective

NorQuest College (college) is committed to responsible stewardship of its funds by conducting all business affairs in a consistent and cost-effective manner. This policy specifies the signing authority limits given to roles within the college. It establishes the approval thresholds and transactions allowed at each level, aligns with the Board Bylaws Article 11, and establishes a mechanism for confirming that signing authorities understand their role and responsibilities.

Authority to establish this policy is derived from the [NorQuest College Board of Governor's Policy No. 7](#), which delegates responsibility for the college's financial planning and activities to the President and CEO and [Policy No.5](#), which delegates authority to the President and CEO to establish policies and procedures for the college's management and operation.

## Policy

The college will ensure appropriate approval for financial activities by conducting business affairs in a consistent manner based on the signing

authority limits, authorization requirements, additional approval requirements specified in this policy, and within the parameters defined in the related budgets.

- The following Signing Authority Limits and Authorization Requirements are to be used in conjunction with related college procedures.
- Limits are to be considered prior to the application of any taxes and in Canadian currency.
- Expenditures that may be personally attributed to an individual (e.g., professional membership), reimbursements, allowances, or authorizations may not be approved by the individual incurring the expense.
- Financial expenditures or commitments (contract, purchase order, invoice, expense claim, or authorization) and budget adjustment transfers or transfers of expenses or revenues require:
  - approval at the level appropriate to the total value and term of the transaction; and
  - approval by the appropriate program/department signing authority.
- Those appointed in an acting capacity have the full signing authority of the role they are acting in for the duration of the appointment, including the delegated responsibility under legislation, unless not permitted to be delegated by legislation or specifically excluded in the Acting Appointment documentation. A written notice authenticating the acting appointment is to accompany documentation when signed in an acting capacity. Should no one be appointed in an acting capacity, signing authority defaults to the next senior level.
- Contracts are approved based on the financial and contractual limits, however, a few exceptions exist for:
  - Intergovernmental agreements – require Vice President approval
  - Leases of real property – require Vice President, Administration and CFO approval.
- Decisions with regards to any disposition, acquisition or development of land are required to be approved by the Board of Governors as per the Post-secondary Learning Act.

### Signing Authority Limits

Role	Operating	Capital	Payroll / Student Refunds	Contract Term	Banking Authority
<b>Board Chair</b>	> \$500K	> \$1M			√
<b>President &amp; CEO</b>	> \$500K	> \$1M		> 5 yrs	√
<b>Voting Members of Executive Team</b>	≤ \$500K	≤ \$500K		≤ 5 yrs	
<b>VP Administration and CFO</b>	≤ \$500K	≤ \$1M	> \$1M	≤ 5 yrs	√
<b>Director, Financial Services &amp; Controller</b>	≤ \$250K	≤ \$250K	≤ \$1M	≤ 3 yrs	√
<b>Dean/Director*</b>	≤ \$100K	≤ \$100K		≤ 3 yrs	
<b>Assistant Controller</b>	≤ \$100K	≤ \$100K	≤ \$500K	≤ 1 yr	√
<b>Manager**</b>	≤ \$50K			≤ 1 yr	
<b>Manager – Accounting Services</b>	≤ \$50K			≤ 1 yr	√
<b>Supervisor / The Core Coordinator</b>	≤ \$25K			≤ 1 yr	
<b>All Others***</b>	≤ \$10K			≤ 1 yr	

## Authorization Requirements

Role	Travel & Related Expenses	Professional Development	Procurement Card
<b>Board Chair<sup>1</sup></b>	for Board Members & President	for Board Members & President	√
<b>Vice Chair/FAC Chair<sup>1</sup></b>	for Board Chair	for Board Chair	√
<b>President &amp; CEO</b>	Outside of & within Canada & USA	√	√
<b>Vice President</b>	Outside of & within Canada & USA	√	√
<b>Dean/Director*</b>	Within Canada & USA	√	
<b>Manager**/Assistant Controller</b>	Within province	√	
<b>All Others***</b>	Within province		

\* Includes the Chief of Staff.

\*\* Includes Managers, Program Managers, Program Chairs and Vice Deans.

\*\*\* Designated Authority to staff members in a portfolio.

## Additional Approval Requirements

Signing authority for roles must be approved at a minimum of the Dean/Director level or one level higher than the role in question.

In circumstances where the President and CEO and the Board Chair are the only college representatives present, the President and CEO is to claim any expenses incurred and have them approved by the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee. In all other circumstances, the Board Chair is to authorize the expenses of the President and CEO.

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<sup>1</sup> As per Board Procedures No. 1.5 – Board Member Expenses; and No. 1.2 – Professional Development

## Electronic Signatures

NorQuest College supports the use of electronic signatures to sign documents provided that each e-signature adheres to the relevant requirements set out in the *Electronic Transactions Act*, and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulation*. Electronic signatures must comply with the college's Digital Security and Information Technology Policies and Standards, and must meet our requirements as to the method of making the signature and as to the reliability of the signature. Electronically signed documents that collect personal information and an individual's consent must comply with the Protection of Privacy Procedure. Records containing e-signatures need to be filed and maintained according to the college's Retention and Disposition Schedule.

## Emergency Operations

Activation of the college's Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) enables the EOC to have the ability to approve transactions that may exceed the limits/authorizations within this policy on a college-wide basis to facilitate the college's response to, and recovery from, a Level 2 or 3 incident as identified in the College's Emergency Response Plan.

## Definitions

**Banking Authority:** A Board approved authority authorized to open or close bank accounts, sign, make, draw, accept, endorse and deliver cheques, promissory notes, bills of exchange, orders for payment of money and agreements and instruments as is necessary for the operation of the colleges' bank accounts.

**Electronic Signature:** A digital mark that has the function of a signature in, is attached to, or is logically associated with a record, and is used by a signatory to take responsibility for, or to give consent to, the content of the record.

**Signing Authority:** An employee of the college who has been granted authority by the President and CEO to approve commitments for the acquisition of goods and services for the purpose of conducting ordinary business on behalf of the college.

## Related information

### NorQuest College

- [Contract Management Procedure](#)
- [Delegation of Signing Authority Procedure](#)
- [Digital Security Policy](#)
- [Digital Security Standards and Procedures](#)
- [Donation Acceptance Procedure](#)
- [Forecast Management Procedure](#)
- [Goods and Services Procurement Procedure](#)
- [Hosting Procedure](#)
- [Learning and Development Procedure](#)
- [NorQuest College Records and Retention Disposition Schedule](#)
- [Procurement Card Procedure](#)
- [Protection of Privacy Procedure](#)
- [Records and Information Management Policy](#)
- [Tangible Capital Asset Management Policy](#)
- [Travel and Business Expense Policy](#)
- [Travel and Related Expenses Procedure](#)

### External

- [Electronic Transactions Act](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulation](#)
- [Post-Secondary Learning Act](#)

## Next review date

January 2028

## Revision history

Date	Version Number	Action
December 2011	V1	New (replaces Standard Practice 6.11)
August 2013	V2	Update for document links and branding
November 2014	V3	Update for document standards
June 2015	V4	Reviewed and approved as per Policy and Procedure Framework (replaces Signing Authority Procedure – Goods and Services)
July 2018	V5 (Published as V4)	Updated limits on payroll remittances, revisions to signing authority assignment requirements
June 2019	V6 (Published as V4)	Reviewed as per Policy and Procedure Framework; updated signing authority limits and authorization requirements
August 2019	V7 (Published as V4-C)	Compliance Office template & reorganization update
October 2019	V8 (Published as V5)	Update and review
November 2020	V9 (Published as V6)	Updates to payroll remittances, Finance Services reorganization and removal of signing authority confirmation form
November 2021	V10 (Published as V7)	Required update, including to signing authority tables and position titles in alignment with the Board approved resolution (November 8, 2021)
March 2022	V11 (Published as V8)	Updated to align with revised Organizational Structure effective March 1, 2022

January 2023	V12	Updated to adjust payroll approval limits and added student refunds
January 2024	V13	Removed reference to repealed Electronic Transaction Act General Regulation and updated job titles.