

Signing agreements and the University seal – Frequently Asked Questions

Who can sign agreements at UNSW?

A person can sign an agreement if they have the **appropriate authority**. There are two aspects to this, and a person must satisfy both aspects to have the **appropriate authority**:

1. They have authority to sign agreements of the relevant kind, or deal with the relevant subject-matter. This authority will either be stated in the [Register of Delegations](#) or exists because the person has authority in relation to the subject matter of the agreement.
2. They have the necessary financial delegation. This means that the person must have authority to incur the expenditure involved in the agreement using an approved source of funds for the budget unit to which the person belongs.

Refer to section 2 of the [Signing of Agreements and Seal Procedure](#) for more information.

I have an agreement which needs signing. Does it need to be signed using the University seal?

Most agreements can be signed without the University seal. The University seal is only applied if there is a legal requirement to do so.

Some agreements, such as deeds, have special requirements and can only be signed by the President and Vice-Chancellor or any member of staff authorised by the President and Vice-Chancellor. Refer to section 3.2 of the [Signing of Agreements and Seal Procedure](#) for an outline of the process and Appendix 1 for a list of staff authorised to sign deeds which historically were signed under the University seal.

Some external parties request the University seal on a document when in fact they only need a stamp of the University (e.g., an ink stamp containing the name of the University). Examples include visa papers for academics attending a conference overseas and papers for external international speakers coming to UNSW. Governance does not provide the University seal or any other stamp in these circumstances.

I think the University seal is required - what do I do?

Firstly, be aware that the University seal is only applied if there is a legal requirement to do so. If you think this is the case, you must contact the [UNSW Legal Office](#).

If the Legal Office agrees that the University seal is required, the Council must pass a resolution at its next scheduled meeting [refer to [Council website](#) for meeting dates] before the University seal is applied. You will need to prepare a paper to be provided to Council.

Following Council approval, two persons authorised under the [Register of Delegations](#) to witness the application of the seal must sign the agreement in the presence of each other at the same time that the University seal is applied.

Refer to section 3.4 of the [Signing of Agreements and Seal Procedure](#) for more information.

How long does it normally take to have a document sealed?

Council must pass a resolution authorising the application of the University seal prior to its application to the agreement, as required by the [University of New South Wales Act 1989 \(NSW\)](#).

Council meetings are scheduled to occur every two months [refer to [Council website](#) for meeting dates]. Following the Council meeting, where Council has approved the application of the University seal, it can be applied to agreements as follows:

- within 48 hours of the Council meeting for urgent documents
- within 72 hours of the Council meeting for non-urgent documents

This is subject to the availability of the two persons authorised under the [Register of Delegations](#) to witness the application of the seal.

Do you provide a certified copy of the Council resolution approving the University seal?

Governance can provide an extract of the Council minutes containing the resolution approving the application of the University seal. The extract is signed by the Director of Governance or Deputy Director of Governance.

I have arranged for my document to be sealed and have received the document back, but I cannot see the seal. Why is that?

The University seal is not printed on documents with ink but is embossed, that is, the image of the University seal is pressed into the paper to create a three-dimensional design.

Do you provide an electronic seal?

No. Given the requirement that two persons authorised under the [Register of Delegations](#) must witness the application of the seal and sign in the presence of each other at the time the University seal is applied, UNSW does not provide electronic sealing of agreements.

Unless there is a legal requirement for the University seal to be applied to an agreement (contact the [UNSW Legal Office](#) if you think this is the case), there are alternative methods for signing agreements that do not require the University seal. Refer to section 3.2 of the [Signing of Agreements and Seal Procedure](#) for more information.

Is there a standard execution block for the UNSW signatories?

Yes, execution blocks (also referred to as signature blocks) for different methods of signing agreements at UNSW are prescribed in section 4 of the [Signing of Agreements and Seal Procedure](#). The wording for execution blocks provided in the Procedure must be used unless alternative wording is approved by UNSW Legal.

Further questions or need assistance?

Contact Governance via email council@unsw.edu.au.



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