

As part of the Service Excellence Program, the Finance Department is pleased to announce another improvement to simplify purchasing and payments at York.

Easier and faster purchasing approvals through the Signing Authority Register (“SAR”)

Effective immediately, it will require less effort and time for employees to secure approvals for procurement of goods and services that require signing authority register approval and for capital project contracts. The [Signing Authority Register](#) is a University document that outlines the different types of approvals for contracts and related thresholds that dictate corresponding approvers.

York is making a series of changes to approval authorities and thresholds to improve efficiency during the purchasing process. This includes increased signing authority for select roles so approvals can be obtained simpler and faster. Changes have also been made to the SAR’s language and layout to provide further clarity for purchasers.

The following tables summarize the specific changes and benefits.

Changes in Article 10 (Procurement of Goods and Services)

Change	Benefits to the York community
Increased President signing authority from \$2 million to \$5 million to reduce approvals that require the Board of Governors’ review and approval.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less waiting time for Board of Governors approvals on large purchases 2. Increased signing authority for Executive Officers and Directors resulting in less purchases needing to be approved by AVPs/Deans 3. No need to go through a full set of reapprovals for allowable changes to budget 4. Reduced confusion during the purchasing process
Increased signing authority for Executive Officers/Directors from \$100,000 to \$200,000.	
Introduced approval tolerances (lesser of five per cent (5%) or \$250,000) to speed up changes to budgets for goods and services contracts.	
Removed Article 5 (Commercial Business Contracts) from the SAR so that all goods and services contracts are made under a single SAR article (10 – Procurement of Goods and Services).	
Clarified where ‘missing roles’ fit into the SAR – (i.e. non vice-president roles (“VP”) that report directly to the president, non assistant vice-president (“AVP”)/Dean roles that report directly to a Vice-President).	
Added an introduction page to the SAR describing the document’s purpose and key definitions.	

Changes in Article 3 (Capital Projects)

Change	Benefits to the York community
Increased President signing authority from \$2 million to \$5 million to reduce approvals that require the Board of Governors’ review and approval.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less waiting time for board approvals on large purchases 2. Reduced confusion during the approval process
Clarified the missing roles that fit into Article 3 (i.e. Assistant Vice-President, Facilities Services).	
Added a footnote that specifies the scope of the article.	

Why the change?

Finance determined that a simpler SAR was needed, given that:

- SAR thresholds had not increased in value over time and were more conservative than most peer universities
- Employees frequently reported that the SAR was confusing in its layout, causing delays to their purchases

This improvement aligns with the Service Excellence principles of being **user-focused, simple, and forward thinking**.

Contributors

This improvement is due to the hard work of employees in the Finance Department, including:

- Dexter King, Director - Strategic Procurement
- Jan S. Oliver, Assistant Director - Strategic Procurement
- Brad Parkes, Assistant Vice-President - Facilities Services

Additional information

1. To remain compliant with the University's Signing Authority Policy and Signing Authority Register, departments must forward all vendor contracts or engagement documents to Strategic Procurement for execution.
2. For any re-approvals, the cost centre designate at that dollar threshold can sign as the Approval Authority.

Examples of Re-approval for Purchase of Goods and Services

1. If the change in cost is greater than 5 per cent or \$250,000:

If the change in cost is greater than 5 per cent or \$250,000, re-approvals are required. For example, if the approved cost for the purchase of goods and services is \$100,000 and there is change in the cost greater than 5 per cent (i.e. greater \$5,000) then re-approvals are required. A change order will need to be created with re-approval from the original **Approval Authority**.

2. If the change in cost pushes the cost into a higher dollar threshold:

If the change in the cost pushes the total contract value into a higher threshold, then re-approvals from the appropriate Approval Authority and Execution Signatory are required. For instance, if the contract value for purchase of goods and services is \$199,000 and there is an increase in the cost by \$2,000, re-approvals are required as the contract value has been pushed into a higher dollar threshold. A change order will need to be created for the increased cost with re-approvals from the **Approval authority and Execution authority at the higher dollar threshold**.

For more information on this change, please contact Dexter King at dking@yorku.ca.