



UCD Digital Application Ownership Roles and Responsibilities

Owner: IT Services

Approval Body & Date: UMT 16th Dec 2025

1. Introduction

Clear ownership and associated responsibilities are key to good *governance* (setting direction and accountability) and the effective on-going *management* (executing and operating within that direction) of digital applications.

Every digital application must have both an **Application Business Owner** and an **Application Technical Owner** - typically a UCD unit or school that has the sufficient authority, skills, and resources to fulfil the role effectively.

These roles are supported by **Application Business Contact** and **Application Technical Contact** roles respectively - named UCD employees supporting the Owners as the primary contacts for the purposes of engaging with IT Services for maintaining UCD's Application Portfolio, a key element of enterprise architecture.

These are mandatory roles that help to ensure that digital applications are designed, deployed, operated and supported in a secure, sustainable, and compliant manner.

Agreement and assignment of these roles is required prior to acquiring, deploying, or developing a digital application.

The guidelines below are provided to assist in the assignment of these roles for new digital applications being introduced and to retrospectively identify and assign ownership and contacts for existing digital applications.

2. Terms and Definition

Digital Application - subsequently referred to as "**Application**" in the context of this document - is a digital solution that provides functionality to UCD's community, typically accessed through a web browser, mobile device, or desktop, or that provides functionality or capabilities to other applications.

Applications include on-premises hosted and cloud services; bespoke and package solutions; internally managed and externally managed by a third party; subscription and perpetual paid licences; as well as free or open-source solutions.

Examples of Applications include Banner (student system), Brightspace (student virtual learning environment), Tableau (analytics and business intelligence tools), and Terminal 4 (websites).



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Each application is categorised according to their scale;

- **University wide** - Applications implemented for use across multiple schools or units.
- **Local** - Applications implemented for use in one school or unit.

Additionally, applications fall into one of three classes based on their purpose;

- **Enabling Applications** - Solutions supporting specific functions and activities enabling UCD's business capabilities and processes.
- **Infrastructure Applications** - Solutions that support technical operations and processes within UCD.
- **Learning/Teaching Applications** - Course/discipline-specific software packages, supporting teaching and learning, or taught research in particular academic domains or modules.

Foundational Platforms - are a specific class of application that provides a pre-integrated ecosystem of applications, or provides the capability to build new applications.

The platform itself and each application deployed on it must have an Application Business Owner which may all be different.

The Application Technical Owner of the platform is the Application Technical Owner for every application deployed on the platform.

This allows for effective business and technical decisions regarding the platform itself.

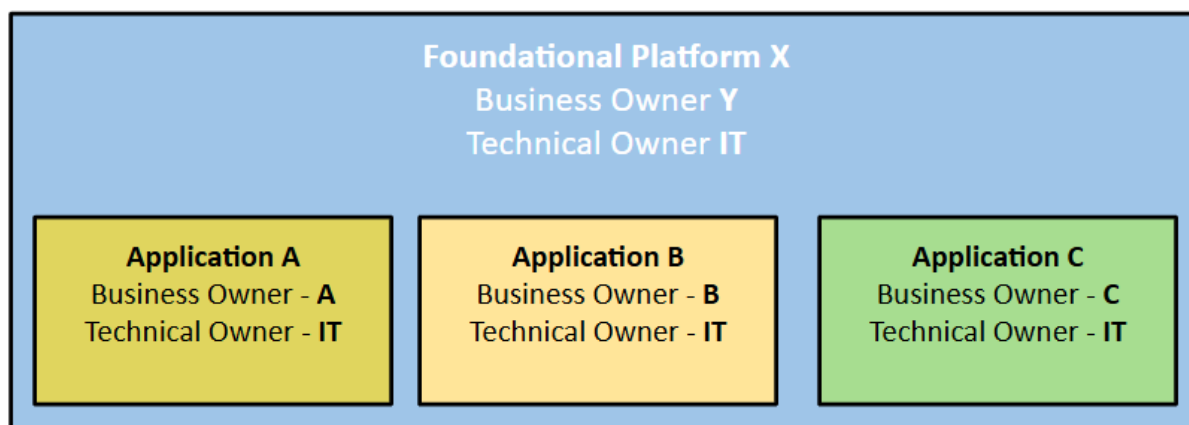


Figure 1: Illustration of Assigned Ownership for a Foundational Platform

We have five foundational platforms - Google Workspace, Microsoft 365, InfoHub, Salesforce, and Brightspace.



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3. Scope

In Scope

- Any Enabling Application, Infrastructure Application or Learning/Teaching application irrespective of scale or class, deployed by a UCD College, School, Institute/Centre, Unit, Wholly Owned Subsidiary Company, or other organisational entities as designated by the UMT Digital Campus Group, that;
 - enables or supports university business capabilities and processes.
 - where UCD is the data controller or processor.

Out of Scope

- Research Solution - software used by a researcher (or research team), for the delivery of a research project
- Personal Use Tools/Apps that individuals have personally enabled and use for their own activities, and do not contribute to the UCD's business capabilities or processes.
- Applications deployed within UCD Licensee, separate legal entities to UCD, or incubator companies, for their own use.

4. Principles

1. Application Business Ownership and Application Technical Ownership is assigned at a Unit/School level with the role of Head of Unit/School taking accountability for ensuring that the Unit/School undertakes their responsibilities. Even where a third party or cloud service provider is involved, ultimate accountability resides with UCD's Application Business Owner and Application Technical Owner. See Section 5 below on *Application Owner Responsibilities*.
2. Assignment of Application Owners and Application Contacts, and agreement on the responsibilities of each, must be in place before an application is acquired or deployed. While ownership assignments are expected to be persistent for the lifetime of the Application, where the purpose or scope of an Application significantly changes, then ownership may be transferred - see Section 6 below for *Guidelines for Assigning Application Owners*. Any changes should be agreed with the existing and proposed Business and Technical Owners.
3. Both the Application Business Owner and Application Technical Owner and their Contacts must have the sufficient authority, (financial and staff) resources, capabilities, and expertise to fulfil their respective roles effectively. Until all of these are in place or otherwise fully committed to be in place and relevant budget identified, no assignment

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of an Application Business Owner or Application Technical Owner can take place.

- Information related to Application Ownership (including Application Business Owner, Application Technical Owner, Application Business Contact, and Application Technical Contact names and contact details) will be centrally recorded by IT Services to support UCD's enterprise architecture and application governance structures.
- For a number of university-wide and foundational platforms, there may be valid justification for separating the governance and management responsibilities - with the governance responsibilities assigned to a UMT SubGroup or other application governance committee. Where this is done, a UCD Unit/School must still be identified as the primary business stakeholder and be assigned as the Application Business Owner to undertake the management responsibilities - see figure 2 in section 5.

5. Application Owner Responsibilities

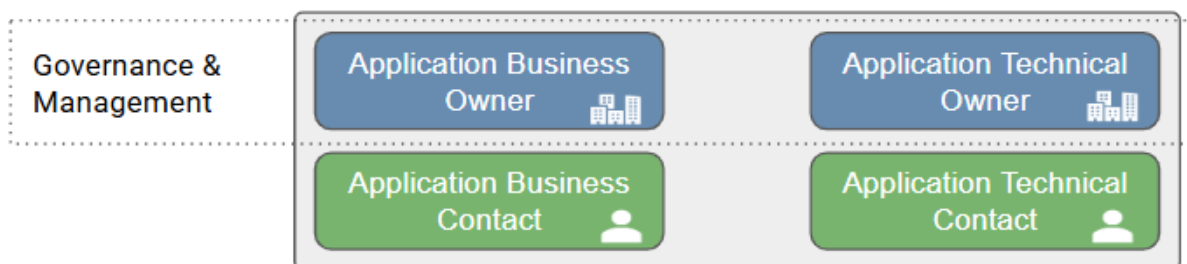


Figure 2: UCD's Application Ownership Standard Model

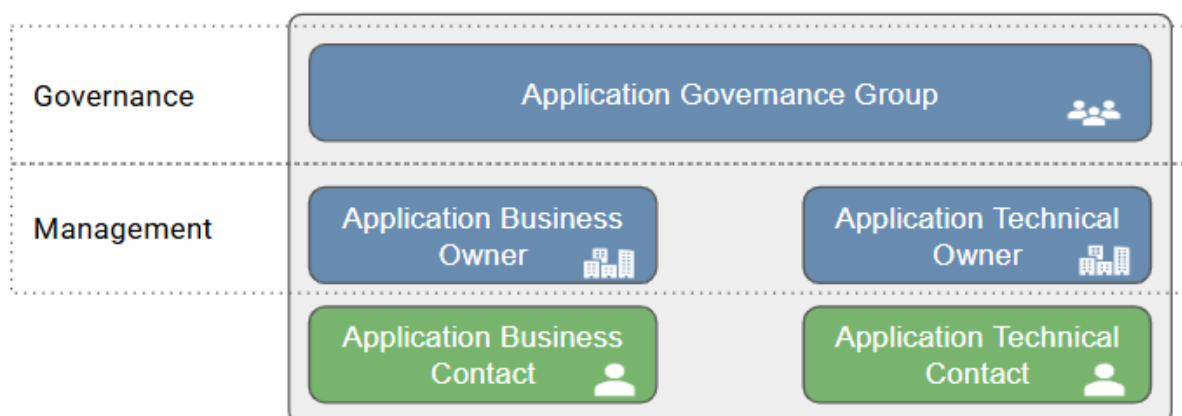


Figure 3: UCD's Application Ownership Split Model

5.1 Application Business Ownership



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5.1.1 Application Business Owner

- Governance Responsibilities

- primary UCD business decision maker relating to the application, accountable for the system's overall business value and risk management
- govern the application from a strategic business perspective, ensuring that IT investments and system capabilities align with business goals and compliance requirements. They have a strategic focus on defining vision and roadmap from a business perspective for the application
- ensure that a suitable Application Technical Owner is in place
- ensure that capital and operational expenditure budgets requests are submitted where necessary

- Management Responsibilities

- define business requirements, including assessment of functional requirements
- determine the business fit of the application (periodically, and as needed), consulting with end-users and other UCD business stakeholders using the application
- provide operational support for business users of the application including overseeing of policies, procedures, change management, communication, awareness, user support and training
- responsible for the data protection of data being stored and/or processed by the application, and compliance with GDPR and other relevant regulations
- ensure that a suitable Application Business Contact is in place
- jointly with the Application Technical Owner, endeavour to ensure adherence to UCD policies
- jointly with the Application Technical Owner, and with direction and input as required from UCD Legal, endeavour to ensure adherence to legal and regulatory requirements
- jointly with the Application Technical Owner mitigate risks related to the application
- Management of user accounts and access controls

5.1.2 Application Business Contact



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- named UCD employee representative per Application
 - Primary business contact for IT Services for the purposes for maintaining UCD's Application Portfolio, providing information about the application to include name, description, data classification, business value, mappings to business capabilities.

5.2 Application Technical Ownership

5.2.1 Application Technical Owner

- Governance Responsibilities

- primary UCD technical stakeholder and decision maker relating to the application, accountable for the system's overall technical value and technical risk management
- govern the application from a strategic technical perspective, ensuring that IT investments and system capabilities align with technical objectives and technical compliance requirements. They have a strategic focus on defining vision and roadmap from a technical perspective for the application
- ensure that a suitable Application Business Owner is in place

- Management Responsibilities

- define technical requirements, including assessment of technical/non-functional requirements
- ensure that a suitable Application Technical Contact is in place
- determine the technical fit of the application
- work in partnership with the Application Business Owner, to achieve business goals
- responsible for the technical components of the application
- endeavour to ensure the security, reliability, availability, integrity, serviceability, scalability and interoperability of the application
- endeavour to ensure sufficient breadth, depth, and consistency of technical support through standard operating procedures
- jointly with the Application Business Owner, endeavour to ensure adherence to UCD policies



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- jointly with the Application Business Owner, and with direction and input as required from UCD Legal, endeavour to ensure adherence to legal and regulatory requirements
 - jointly with the Application Business Owner mitigate risks related to the application
 - ensure that proposed applications are submitted for technical assessment and that all applications are registered with IT Services in accordance with the University Digital Applications Governance Policy (*when introduced*)

For Cloud Based applications, operational support may be provided directly by the cloud service provider (typical for Software-as-a-Service), may be devolved to one or more third parties or may be provided internally by a UCD team (typical for Infrastructure-as-a-Service and Platform-as-a-Service).

5.2.2 Application Technical Contact

- named UCD employee representative per Application
- Primary technical contact for IT Services for the purpose of providing information about the application such as underpinning technical components, authentication mechanism, technical fit

5.3 Exemplar RASCI

An [Exemplar RASCI for Application Ownership in UCD](#) has been developed. This should be adopted and adapted on a per application basis as agreed by the Application Business Owner and Application Technical Owner before the application is deployed.

6. Guidelines for Assigning Application Owners

6.1 Assigning an Application Business Owner

Application business ownership should be aligned, where possible, with the primary business stakeholder - i.e. the stakeholder with primary responsibility for the key business capability(s) supported by the application.

The following guidelines apply for identifying and assigning an Application Business Owner:



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- (i) Where there is a single primary business stakeholder that UCD Unit/School will be assigned as the Application Business Owner
- (ii) Where there is more than one primary business stakeholder then an agreement amongst the multiple business stakeholders should be made as to who will be the Application Business Owner.
- (iii) In certain instances, for a number of university-wide and foundational platforms, there may be valid justification for separating the governance and management responsibilities and the governance responsibilities assigned to an existing governance group, such as a UMT SubGroup or other, or a new application governance committee may be established to take on the governance responsibility. See figure 3 above. When this is done, UCD Unit/Schools identified as the primary business stakeholder will be assigned as the Application Business Owner to undertake management responsibilities. Due to their nature, it is likely that IT Services is assigned the Application Business Owner of Foundational Platforms (e.g. Microsoft), which may be supported by an application governance group.
- (iv) Where it is not possible to agree an Application Business Owner by means of the above, the issue will be brought to the UMT Digital Campus Group for consideration.

6.2 Assigning an Application Business Contact

The Application Business Contact is a named UCD employee appointed by the Application Business Owner and should be in the Application Business Owner's line of command.

6.3 Assigning an Application Technical Owner

Application Technical ownership should be aligned, where possible, with the primary technical stakeholder.

The following guidelines apply for identifying and assigning an Application Technical Owner:

- (i) Where there is a single primary technical stakeholder that UCD Unit/School will be assigned as the Application Technical Owner
- (ii) Where there is more than one technical stakeholder, then an agreement amongst the technical stakeholders must be reached to select the Application Technical Owner
- (iii) Normally for University-wide applications and Foundational Platforms, the primary technical stakeholder is UCD IT Services. An exception to this rule is UCD Library for Library applications. The Application Technical Owner of a foundation platform will be



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the Application Technical Owner for all applications enabled by the platform.

(iv) For Local applications, the Application Technical Owner may be a Unit/School, or UCD Subsidiary.

(v) Where it is not possible to agree an Application Technical Owner by means of the above, the issue will be brought to the UMT Digital Campus Group for consideration.

Where a Unit/School/Subsidiary does not have the necessary Technical Ownership skills to to deploy an application or manage an application on an ongoing basis, engagement with IT Services is recommended before acquiring or deploying a solution. Details of how to request an IT project are available on the [IT Services webpage](#).

6.4 Assigning an Application Technical Contact

The Application Technical Contact is a named UCD employee appointed by the Application Technical Owner as the primary technical contact for the purposes of Enterprise Architecture and Application Portfolio Management.

They should be in the Application Technical Owner's line of command.

6.5 Dual Business and Technical Ownership

It is possible for one unit/school to hold the dual role of Application Business Owner and Application Technical Owner, if they are the main stakeholder for the business capabilities supported by the application and the main technical stakeholder. For example: Library is both the Application Business Owner and Application Technical Owner for the Library Management System, IT Services is both the Application Business Owner and Application Technical Owner for the Google and Microsoft platforms.

7. Review of Ownership Roles & Responsibilities

Review of this Application Ownership document, and the approach for assignment of Application Business Owners and Application Technical Owners, will be overseen by the UMT Digital Campus Group.



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8. Version History

Version	Date	Responsible	Comment
2.00	05/01/2026	Tom Cannon	Version approved by the UMT on 16 th December 2025