



## WHAT ARE SHARED SERVICES?

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) is focused on taking a “One University” approach at delivering administrative services that support the operational needs of the university community. This shared services work is intended to:

- Provide consistent, high-quality, and efficient services to the campus community;
- Alleviate the amount of time faculty spend on administrative tasks, to enable focus on research and teaching; and
- Ensure employees have role clarity and opportunities for professional development and career growth.

Through the Service and Process Enhancement Project (2010) and over the past decade, USask has enhanced its service design and delivery approach and infrastructure in ways that support its teaching and research goals. Beginning with business functions including human resources, finance, information technology, and facilities, USask is now considering administrative support operations, and marketing and communications functions as the next phase of this work through the **Administrative Services Renewal Initiative**.

Using a defined infrastructure which includes Centres of Expertise,

Strategic Business Advisors or Business Partners, and Transactional/Service Supports, USask will clarify the roles of administrative services across campus, provide employees with greater opportunities for professional development and career growth, and achieve efficiencies in processes. Other benefits of a shared services model include:

- **Improved communication and collaboration** - The shared services model supports greater integration between centralized units and colleges and schools, thereby breaking down silos and encouraging collaboration and information sharing across units.
- **Greater flexibility** - Colleges, schools, and units have greater ability for additional coverage when needed.
- **Improved productivity** - Information sharing and collaboration is easier when administrative professionals are working from the same platforms or systems.
- **Better oversight and insight** - Improved data centralization and compliance, leading to better decision-making.

Shared services is not an attempt to reduce our workforce or unnecessarily grow our administration—its focus is on **service delivery improvement and efficiency**. In the long term, employees working



“ Working at the University of Saskatchewan for over 30 years, I can honestly say that our shared services model has had so many personal and professional benefits. It has been so rewarding to be able to work in the units that I support and bring their perspectives forward to collaborate with my colleagues in the central human resource offices, with other business partners, and our service supports. Everyone is an expert in their field so utilizing these communities of practices has allowed me to continue to build relationships with many different groups on campus. The teamwork and comradery I’ve experienced as part of shared services is the reason why I come to work each and every day.

- Shannon Toporowski,  
Strategic Business Advisor, HR  
USask Facilities

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in the new shared service model will have clear job descriptions and the tools and supports to enable them to be successful in their jobs and have career growth opportunities.

# Shared Services Delivery Methods

Originally launched with three delivery methods—Centre of Expertise, Strategic Business Advisors, and ConnectionPoint—USask is now expanding on its Shared Services infrastructure.

## Shared Services Model (2010-2023)



**Centre of Expertise:** Functional central offices are like a head office for each service area (finance, HR, research services, etc.). These offices provide university-wide policy, governance, strategy, and decision support.



**Strategic Business Advisors (SBAs):** SBAs are located/embedded in a college, school, or unit (or a cluster of) and are experts in a specific area of administrative service. These individuals will provide guidance, strategic support and advice to deans, department heads and others in the college, school or unit (or a cluster of colleges, schools or units). SBAs ensure consistency with the Centre of Expertise and ConnectionPoint.



**ConnectionPoint:** ConnectionPoint offers convenient in-person, one-stop locations for faculty, staff and students, as well as phone-in, email and online services, all with an emphasis on continually improving services.

## Expanded Shared Services Model (2023+)



**Centres of Expertise:** Centres of Expertise provide university-wide policy, governance, strategy, and decision support informed by institutional data. They also design and develop standardized tools and resources for the campus community.



**Business Partners (i.e., Strategic Business Advisors, Administrative Networks, etc.):** Business Partners provide guidance, strategic support, and expertise in a localized (embedded) manner. These individuals are experts in a specific area of administrative service, understand the organizational culture of the unit served, and manage day-to-day local and central relationships. Business Partners also ensure units are aligned operationally with institutional strategy and ensure university-supported resources are followed.



**Transactional/Service Supports (i.e., ConnectionPoint, IT Support Services, etc.):** Transactional/Service Supports are the main point of contact that deals with a majority of the questions and transactions working across functional silos using standardized systems, tools, and policy. These supports are scalable and focused.