

# The new Autonomy Law: an obligation or an opportunity to change the University of Lisbon?

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# The new Autonomy Law and the UL

**Law no. 62/2007** – new Legal Regime for governing Higher Education Institutions (**RJIES**) in Portugal.

**The legislator has set clear goals to enhance decision making and make university management more professional.**

The redesign of the governing model of higher education institutions is one of the main innovations of the RJIES, namely through the creation of a **General Council** and the opening of the University to the outside community.

The University of Lisbon has interpreted the RJIES by pointing three essential principles:

- **Cohesive management with ability to intervene effectively and to promote accountability and quality assessment**
- **Participation of the university community in the decision making**
- **Reinforcement of the strategic coordination**

Over 2007 and 2008, from the Convention of the University of Lisbon in June 2007 onwards, **UL has undertaken a profound reflection about its future and has created new Statutes.**

**Until June 2009 a new rector and new governing bodies in all faculties have been elected as well as their directors under new rules.**

The University of Lisbon accordingly with RJIES reviewed its Statutes **(before any other Portuguese University)** taking the leadership of this process in the country.

**General Council:** Made up of twenty-three members, including professors and researchers, students, staff and external personnel. Defines the structural policies of the University.

**Rector:** Elected by the General Council, s/he chooses her/his team (Vice-Rectors and Pro-Rectors). Represents the University and guarantees the coordination of the strategies.

**University Council:** Body that coordinates the academic function of the University. Functions in articulation with the Rector, in permanent consultation and coordination with the areas.

**Senate:** Advisory body lending support to university life, bringing together the university community in its diversity.

**Student Ombudsman:** Elected by the General Council, she/he is charged with assessing the claims of students and issuing the consequent recommendations to the relevant bodies.

**Strategic Area Coordination Council:** Body that guides and manages each Strategic Area. It is set up and functions in line with the different realities, taking on the articulation of the research and the post-graduate studies.

**Management Board:** Body that coordinates the operational management function of the University (Administration, Assets, Finances and Human Resources).

**Rectory Services:** Common University Operations.

**Social Welfare Services:** Support Structure for the students.

**Common Resources and Shared Services Centre:** Operational body that provides internal services under the supervision of the Management Board and the rector's team.

The Statutes are concise and generic. **This process was not limited to a formal adaptation to the demands of the Higher Education Institutions Legal Regime.**

Broadly discussed in the heart of the University, a Strategic Programme was defined, giving rise to the programmed guidelines in the Statutes with **a strategic reflection on the mission, the vision and the organisation of the UL** in a dynamics in which professors, researchers, students and non teaching staff and personalities of different areas had the opportunity to participate.

# Mission and vision

## **Mission**

**The University of Lisbon is a public, plural school that provides solid education inspired by competitive research and a commitment to serving the community.**

**The University invests in the cultural, artistic, scientific and technological heritage of the academy, consolidating talents and enhancing their integration into society.**

## Vision for 2011

- **reinforcing scientific research**
- attractive academic programmes
- **active strategy of knowledge transfer**
- improvement of academic, cultural, artistic and sporting facilities
- **an internationalised University, especially at post-graduate level**
- **seeking innovation in leading-edge domains**
- governance in a cohesive, plural and participatory manner
- **efficient and flexible management of resources**
- a benchmark in the city of Lisbon that projects an image of recognised value internationally

## Implementing the mission

- Achieve gains in the administrative and financial quality and efficiency, namely through the creation of a Common Resources and Shared Services Centre (CRSSC).
- **Use regular assessment to implement management by objectives.**
- Invest in the training and qualification of the human resources, stimulating the recruitment of differentiated competencies.
- **Develop a management information system and evolve in adapting to a full cost model.**
- Consolidate the management model defined by the new Statutes.
- **Reinforce the use of new technologies, implemented in the academic portal, in the administrative and financial services.**

# The new organisation of the UL

The University of Lisbon is now organised into strategic areas of coordination of the research and teaching:

- ARTS AND HUMANITIES
- HEALTH SCIENCES
- SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
- LEGAL AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES
- SOCIAL SCIENCES

and has launched new teaching and research units:

- Institute of Geography and Land Planning
- Institute of Education
- Institute of Interdisciplinary Research

This has conducted to a total new global organization of the UL in the scientific/academic area and in the management area:

# University of Lisbon – new organization

	ACADEMY					MANAGEMENT
POLICIES	Senate		Rector		General Council	
	Student Ombudsman		Vice-Rectors			
STRATEGY	University Council					
	<b>Coordination Council</b> Arts and Humanities	<b>Coordination Council</b> Social Sciences	<b>Coordination Council</b> Science and Technology	<b>Coordination Council</b> Legal and Economic Sciences	<b>Coordination Council</b> Health Sciences	<b>Management Board</b>
ENTITIES	Faculty of Literature  Faculty of Fine Arts  Research Entities	Social Sciences Institute  Faculty of Psychology*  Institute of Geography and Land Planning*  Education Institute*  Career Guidance Institute  Research Entities	Faculty of Sciences  D. Luis Geophysics Institute  Lisbon Astronomy Observatory  Research Entities	Faculty of Law  Research Entities          Institute for interdisciplinary research*	Faculty of Medicine  Faculty of Pharmacy  Faculty of Dentistry  Molecular Medicine Institute  Research Entities	Rectory Services  Common Resources and Shared Services Centre*  Social Welfare Services
	Polytechnic Museums*					

\*Structure to be created or reorganised

The biggest challenge  
to modernize  
management: Common  
Resources and Shared  
Services Centre

# The organization of a **Common Resources and Shared Services Centre (CRSSC)** must solve at least some limitations that result from a decentralized structure **(2010-2015)**

- **The University is organized in a decentralized way**

- **... and this is a limitation for its efficiency and evolution**

- **... that must be overstepped through the creation of the CRSSC**

- **Reduced dimension and specialization in most faculties services**
- **No standard procedures in most services**
- **Divorce between some faculties and university central processes (academic management, HR resources)**

- **Administrative overweight upon directive staff and teachers**
- **Few standardized information limits decision making capacity**
- **The wide variety of working**

- **A CRSSC must guarantee: the modernization of the management**
  - **The growth of quality due to specialization**
  - **Cost reduction through standardization of processes and scale economies**
  - **Increase of answering capacity**

# Common Resources and Shared Services Centre of the University of Lisbon

## Areas to be implemented – stage I

- **Acquisitions**
  - General public tenders
  - Relevant construction works and building maintenance
  - Services (cleaning, general maintenance, communication, electricity, water,...)
- **Financing area**
  - Accountancy
  - Wages
  - Data gathering
  - Bank management
- **Human Resources**
  - Competitions
  - Training
  - Labour contracts
  - Data Gathering
  - Health and security services

# Common Resources and Shared Services Centre of the University of Lisbon

## Areas to be implemented – stage II

- Information Technologies
  - Software
  - Big infrastructures works and acquisitions
  - Data Bases
  - Teleconference, sound, video
  - E-learning
- Academic area
  - “The student shop”
  - Virtual academic services
- Quality assessment
  - University
  - Faculties (HR, students)

# Common Resources and Shared Services Centre of the University of Lisbon

## Areas to be implemented – stage III

- Financing and research support
  - Sponsor seeking and projects support
- Communication and branding
  - Faculties and University
  - Internal and External
- Juridical area
  - Juridical support – Academic and HR areas

# Conclusion

**The process of change was/is not limited to a formal adaptation to the demands of the Higher Education Institutions Legal Regime but has been and is being an interesting opportunity to enhance and commit everybody in new involvements for change and to incite dynamism in the staff and recognition of the value of the University of Lisbon.**

**During the debates over recent months it was often said that “it is not the Statutes that will change the University, it is people”.**

**It is essential to realise that at University of Lisbon a demanding evolutionary process has taken place, a change that will take several years to fully materialise.**



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