



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

2 February 2015

Minute

Present: Mr H Edmiston, Director of Corporate Services (Convener)
Mr P McNaull, Director of Finance
Assistant Principal Dr T Harrison
Professor J Ansell
Mr T Weir, IT Infrastructure
Dr B Nelson, College Registrar, CSE
Mr G Douglas, Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

In attendance: Mr D Kyles, Chief Internal Auditor
Ms S McIntosh on behalf of Mr Gribben
Mr J Nisbet on behalf of Dr Elliott
Mrs K Graham, Deputy Head of Court Services

Apologies: Dr R Black
Mr F Gribben, College Registrar, HSS
Dr C Elliott, College Registrar, MVM

1 Minute

Paper A

The Minute of the meeting held on 16 October 2014 was approved as a correct record.

2 Convener's Business

Verbal

Mr Edmiston confirmed his intention to consider how to enhance the current risk management process to see if it was possible to streamline it without compromising the quality of the process. This work would take place over the summer, for implementation of any changes in time for the next academic session.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

3 Overview of Risk Management Policy

Paper B

Members noted a flowchart which illustrated the current risk management process and associated timescales. It was agreed this was a useful document to assist in identifying areas where the process could be enhanced and that this should be forward to the Audit and Risk Committee as part of the report from this meeting.

4 Review of University's Strategic Risk Register

Paper C

The Committee considered the University's Risk Register and noted the following emerging risks in 2014-15, which were not included on the Risk Register:

Procurement

Significant legislative changes, increased oversight and the University's devolved structure meant a potential risk of non compliance with new thresholds, failure to secure best value for money and increased resource requirements.

Business Continuity

Incident management had been reviewed and the process updated. It was planned to roll this out to senior management and it would therefore be timely to review the risk of business interruption.

Excellence in Innovation

There were a number of issues around the review of ERI and industry engagement where there remained a risk of failing to achieve this current strategic goal.

It was agreed that the risks associated with these areas should be agreed by the Committee by circulation and forwarded to the next meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee, with a recommendation that they be included on the Strategic Risk Register.

The Committee noted the following risk reviews:

Risk 1: Changes in Government Policy

It was noted that this risk had changed following the outcome of the Scottish Referendum, but the risk itself was reframed rather than reduced. The impact of government policy on the institution would always be a potential risk, however there were specific events, such as elections, which would trigger a need to review the risk. In terms of actions to mitigate the risks, the ongoing activity currently undertaken was appropriate for the nature of this risk.

Risk 6: Student Protest Actions leading to Disruption to Business Continuity

The Committee noted that an agreed set of processes for managing student protests would be developed by the end of the current academic session, which would help mitigate the risk.

Risk 8: Inadequate Performance in REF2014

The Committee noted the successful performance in REF2014 and that this risk should therefore be closed and removed from the register. It further noted that the risk owner recommended that the current risk be replaced with a new risk: 'Inadequate Performance in REF2020'.

Risk 10: Inability to retain, attract and develop key staff

It was noted that academic excellence should be included as mitigation for the inability to retain, attract and develop key staff. There was also a need to consider resource levels and competitive salaries as part of this risk. It was discussed that the risk may need to be reframed to include emerging HR risks, including gender pay issues.

Risk 11: Staff or Union Industrial Action

It was noted that the immediate risk of industrial action over USS pensions had receded, however as with the previous risk, there may be emerging risks around gender pay.

Risk 12: Rate of Investment & Enhancement of Estate

It was noted that investment in estates and buildings and in capital projects had continued to increase, however the challenge in meeting aspirations had emerged through the current planning round, with a need for transparent prioritisation of how projects are funded.

Risk 15: Inability to successfully implement strategic developments

It was noted that the current management processes and mitigating actions were sufficient to manage the risk but that they were currently at capacity, meaning a risk of being unable to respond to any additional opportunities.

Risk 16a: Inadequate Implementation of Enhancing Student Support Project

The Committee agreed that the project was running well and that the risk should be recorded as having reduced. There was discussion of the necessity of this continuing to be recorded as a separate strategic risk, alongside a number of other projects. The view was that for many of the projects, the risk was no longer strategic and the focus was now on operational implementation.

Risk 16b: Inadequate Implementation Resource Allocation Model Project

It was noted that this was another project that should have its own operational risk register but that did not necessarily require to be included on University Strategic Risk Register as a strategic risk. The likelihood and residual risk should be reduced.

Risk 22: Failure to recruit and retain widening access students

The Committee noted that many risks associated with this were linked to the definition of 'widening access' and the political dimension to this issue. The risk mitigation measures were appropriate but many aspects of the risk were beyond the University's control. It was linked to Risk 1, in relation to the ongoing risk associated with changes in Government policy.

The Committee considered the risk review documents received for the meeting and agreed that the risk owners would benefit from guidance on completion of the risk review template, in terms of the type and volume of information required by the Committee. The Convenor and Secretary would review the template and guidance for circulation before the next committee meeting.

5 Report on Health and Safety: Training and Staff Development

Paper D

At the last meeting, there had been discussion on the roles and responsibilities of staff across the University in respect of H&S and in particular PIs heading up research teams. The Director of Health and Safety had provided an update for the committee on this issue.

It was noted that the University had received two Improvement Notices from the HSE, which had both been appealed. Nonetheless the aspects of the Notices were being taken forward, including those associated with staff training and there was close liaison between the Health and Safety department and HR in progressing this. A number of concurrent developments, including the purchase of a bespoke training database, should support a consistent standard of health and safety training and record keeping across the University, with a concerted focus on the performance of PIs and RGLs.

6 Update on Major IT Service Disruption 2013/14

Paper E

At the last meeting, the Committee had received the Report on Major IT Services 2013/14. Members had requested further information on disruptions of computing services data, in particular the length the service was down would be helpful; which parts of the University had been affected; and when the downtime had occurred.

The Committee noted the report providing this additional information and requested that next year's report include this information in a dashboard format, based on the down time and criticality of systems.

It was noted that IS Services did not provide support for all the IT in use in the University, and there were an unknown number of unsupported machines at use, with risks associated with this.

7 Report on IT Security

Paper F

The Committee received an update on current security issues and the steps being taken to address them. The report addressed how best to achieve IT security in a devolved structure and identified the need to deploy an Incident Detection System to monitor network traffic.

The report also considered how to use technology to enforce best practice, including encouraging file sharing over emailing files, which would be enhanced by the Office 365 agreement.

The Committee noted that an important issue to ensure IT security was user behaviour and there needed to be a culture of awareness raising. It was agreed that the key information from this paper should be forward to the Audit and Risk Committee for information.

8 Business Interruption Insurance

Paper G

The Committee noted the paper summarising the result of a review by Zurich Municipal quantifying the financial impact of a significant business interruption and the University's resilience to any interruptions. As a result of this report the indemnity levels and periods were increased.

A Major Incidents Planning Team had been established and there would be a major incident review implemented, the outcome of which would be reported to the Committee early in the next academic session.

ROUTINE ITEMS

9 Update of Risk Registers – Subsidiary companies

Paper H

The Committee noted the Risk Register submitted by EU Press Ltd.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL/NOTING

10 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 23 March 2015 at 2.00pm in the Elder Room, Old College.