

Risk Management Procedure

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Procedure Author – Head of Risk & Resilience

Procedure Owner – Vice Principal (Governance) & University Secretary

Parent Policy Statement - Corporate Governance

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Changes and Reason for Changes – Changes to job titles; responsibilities and Risk Group membership



Risk Management Procedure

1. Introduction

UWS has an ambitious Strategy 2025, understanding that informed risk taking must occur in order to succeed.

Risks are uncertainties that could have an effect on objectives. They can be threats, opportunities, or contain elements of both. Some degree of risk is present in all organisational activities, with internal and external risk environments frequently changing. The identification and management of risk should be embedded within all operations and decision making processes across the University. Risk Management:

- Improves the planning, operational delivery and governance of the organisation;
- Provides the University with a formal process to identify, analyse, evaluate, manage and monitor the key risks facing the University;
- Embeds a culture of improvement that encourages continuous risk assessment and review throughout the University;
- Provides assurance to the University Court and the Vice-Chancellor as part of the system of internal controls;
- Contributes to developing organisational resilience.

The University considers proportionate risk management to be fundamental to good management. Risk management must be an integral part of the University's decision making and routine management, providing a vital contribution towards the achievement of the University's strategic and operational objectives. Risk management must be incorporated within the strategic and operational planning processes at all levels across the University.

UWS follows and adopts good practice to ensure that, as far as is reasonably practical, risks are proportionately managed to an acceptable level, using an approach aligned to ISO31000. The University will seek to proactively identify risks, their causes and consequences at the earliest opportunity. The aim is not to eliminate all risk from the University, however it is important that all staff are aware of the nature of risk and the types of risks associated with their area of work.

2. Procedure

Risks are documented at School/Departmental, Project and Strategic levels and reported as per Appendix 1. Risks must be reviewed at least quarterly and form part of the planning, budgeting and management processes across the University. Risks are recorded using an online system hosted on the intranet alongside user guidance and directions towards further support should it be required.

There is a commitment to continuous management of risk by the University Court and the Executive. The Vice Principal (Governance) and University Secretary will ensure regular review and monitoring of the implementation and effectiveness of the risk management procedure, including providing appropriate training and development.

3. Risk Appetite & Tolerance

The University will actively seek to take certain risks, subject to appropriate management measures being in place and monitored. These risks would be described as being within the risk appetite. UWS has a responsible approach to risk management and is committed to taking managed risks to benefit organisational growth, performance, and student experience. The University risk appetite will evolve over time in response to changing circumstances and opportunities. The Court will keep the risk appetite under review and revisit this for distinct projects and activities.

Risk tolerance levels are the maximum levels of risk that UWS is willing to bare and determine the escalation of School, Department and Project risks. This escalation allows a view of the overall risk profile to be maintained by the Risk Group.

Whilst pursuing innovation and growth, UWS will remain financially sound and legally responsible and will not compromise its teaching, learning, research or wider reputation. Risk tolerance levels will be periodically agreed by the Court and reflected in the risk system.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Court

- Establish and monitor systems of control and accountability, including financial and operational controls and risk assessment.
- Adopt a risk based approach to strategic planning and decision making.
- Determine institutional risk appetite, and ensure there is periodic review of key strategic risks to the University.

4.2 Audit and Risk Committee

- Maintain oversight of the Strategic Risk Register, Consolidated School, Department and Project Risk Register and Annual Statement of Risk.
- Receive a risk management update as a standing item at each meeting through which it can review the identification and management of key risks
- Alert Court to risks which could threaten the sustainability of the Institution.

4.3 Executive Group

- Receive regular updates relating to pertinent risks.
- Endorse the Strategic Risk Register and Consolidated School, Department and Project Risk Register before they are submitted to Audit and Risk Committee.
- The Executive owner of each Strategic Risk will ensure the risk is being appropriately managed and that this is reflected on the Strategic Risk Register.
- The **Principal and Vice Chancellor** is accountable for the management of all Strategic risks and responsible for allocating management of the day-to-day responsibility for each Strategic risk to a member of the Executive Group.
- The **Vice Principal (Governance) and University Secretary** is accountable to the Principal and Vice Chancellor for the implementation of the University's Risk Management Procedures.

4.4 Risk Group

- Advise and support the Vice Principal (Governance) and University Secretary in the implementation of this procedure;
- Support the embedding of a culture of risk management across the University;
- Support the review of operational and project risk registers;
- Advise on the Strategic Risk Register and provide reports to the Executive;
- Support the reporting on risk to the Audit and Risk Committee

The Risk Group meets quarterly and includes the Vice Principal (Governance) and University Secretary, Head of Risk & Resilience, Senior Risk and Insurance Officer, Director of Information Services, Director of Strategic Planning & Development, Director of Finance, Director of Estates & Campus Services, Head of Research, Representative of Learning, Teaching and Students, School Business Manager (rotates annually across the Schools)

The Head of Internal Audit is invited to attend.

4.5 Head of Risk & Resilience

Responsible for ownership of the risk management framework and providing leadership to ensure the embedding of a strong culture of risk management across the organisation.

4.6 Senior Risk & Insurance Officer

Provide risk management training, guidance and support to all staff. Through effective communication, influences non-specialists on risk identification and evaluation to enable all schools and departments to integrate risk management in their Operational Plans.

4.7 Deans/Directors/Heads

Accountable for implementation of the risk management procedure within their areas of control. This includes accountability for managing risks, ensuring they are documented on the University risk management system, escalating risks with urgent or strategic implications as appropriate and ensuring staff in their area are aware of relevant risks.

4.8 Head of Internal Audit Service

Provides independent assurance about the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management. Internal audit is responsible for independently and regularly reviewing the operation of the overall risk management process in the University. In doing this it has regard to best practice as recommended by professional institutes and other relevant organisations. Internal Audit will advise and make recommendations to the University's Audit and Risk Committee and senior managers as appropriate.

It is also a requirement that the Head of Internal Audit produce an annual report which includes an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the institution's risk management internal control and governance as part of its assurance role. This forms part of the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report which is submitted to the SFC following Court approval each December.

4.9 All Members of Staff

All staff should be aware of and understand the nature of risks associated with their area of activity, and have a responsibility to manage and/or escalate risks as appropriate.

Appendix 1: Reporting Flowchart

