



Policy name	Risk Management Policy
Subject	Risk Management
Approving authority	Assurance Committee
Accountable person	Registrar
Responsible Team	Risk and Assurance (Governance and Assurance)
First approved	April 2022
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Version number	2

1 Introductory Purpose and Background

This policy articulates the University’s approach to the management of risk in support of delivery against University of Nottingham strategic objectives, pursuit of opportunities, to ensure financial sustainability and to protect staff, students, and business assets.

Appetite: To be determined by UEB by March 2024. Notionally, in striving to achieve the ambitions and objectives of the University’s Strategic Plan, while ensuring compliance with laws and regulations, the University will consider, manage and mitigate risks while also maximising opportunities that arise.

2 Scope

Applies to all institutional risk management activities across UK and international campuses at local (faculty / department) and strategic levels, and within all change project and programme environments.

3 Definitions

Risk: ISO3100 defines risk as ‘the effect of uncertainty on objects’, resulting from ‘the effect of incomplete knowledge of events or circumstances on an organisation’s decision-making’. For the purposes of application at University of Nottingham, risk is simply defined as ‘the barriers to the achievement of planned strategic or operational objectives’.

Risk Management: The framework and processes that support governance activities, including reporting, information flow and escalation of risks to inform decision-making and enable effective management control across all levels of the organisation.

Strategic Risk: Risks threatening the achievement of strategic ambitions, objectives or KPIs.

Operational or ‘Local’ Risk: Risks threatening the achievement of faculty or departmental objectives and of performance targets, outlined within business plans. These may also result from disruptions to day-to-day business operations.



Change Environment: Risks identified within project, programme or change environments that may have an impact on the delivery of University strategy or key operations.

4 Policy

4.1 Key principles

Risk Themes: Institutional risks are grouped into high-level themes to support thematic reporting and linkage between strategic, operational and project risks and enable Deep Dive reviews. The categories are aligned to the Strategic Plan themes, as follows:



- **External Environment** includes global and civic.
- **Infrastructure** includes digital technologies and estates related risks.
- **Institutional Other** includes cyber security, project and programme change initiatives, business interruption, regulatory and legislative compliance and risks relating to university reputation.

4.2 Key roles, responsibilities and/or requirements

Council (Governors). Overall accountable body for:

- Ensuring that the University is aware of its key risks and that these are well-managed.
- Oversight of the tone and culture of risk management in the University.
- Satisfying itself that risks are actively managed through a robust approach.

Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). Receives assurance via:

- Regular reports on the adequacy and effectiveness of the University's control environment, including its risk management process.
- Conducts 'deep dive' reviews into thematic risks or specific areas of the University.
- Provides an opinion to Council regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of the risk management arrangements, in line with the OfS annual accountability process.

University Executive Board (UEB). Accountable for:

- Advising Council and ARC of the University's risk profile and mitigating actions.



- Defining and setting risk appetite for the University as a whole and across each strategic theme.
- The identification, management, oversight, and escalation of strategic risks, including those at UEB and Senate sub-committee levels (UEB chairs) and from the Strategic Investment Portfolio.

Planning and Resources Committee (PRC). Responsible for:

- Agreeing the Strategic Risk Register to ensure it is reflective of key concerns and that mitigations are in place to evidence that risks are well-managed and under control.
- The identification, review, and active management of institutional level risks, assigning clear actions and responsible leads to plan for and respond to risks accordingly.
- Consideration of the Strategic Risk Register as a tool to inform decision-making.

Assurance Committee seeks assurance that the Risk Management Framework is fit for purpose and that risk management practices are well embedded across the Institution.

Vice-Chancellor is accountable to Council and is the accountable officer to OfS. Also sets the tone for ensuring that the University fulfils its risk management responsibilities.

Registrar is accountable for ensuring the Risk Management Policy is implemented and maintained, with appropriate guidance and support to facilitate delivery.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, with Pro-Vice Chancellors, and Professional Service Directors, responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented, resourced, and adhered to within faculties, departments, portfolio areas and strategic delivery themes within their remit.

Internal Audit is accountable for providing independent assurance that the risk controls and mitigations identified are in place and sufficient to manage institutional risks.

Local Risk Leads within each faculty or department support responsible individuals (above) to ensure that risk management practice is embedded across operational areas and that local risk registers are maintained and regularly reviewed in line with this policy and associated governance requirements.

Every staff member is responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy, undertaking appropriate training and being aware of the risks that are relevant to their role.

4.3 Component elements/specifics.

The implementation of a robust and effective Risk Management Framework and associated governance processes is a requirement of:

- Regulators including the Office for Students
- Funding bodies including UK Research and Innovation



- Collaborators, partners, and employers.

4.4 The consequences of non-compliance.

The University may be unable to assure itself and stakeholders that key risks have been identified, considered, and mitigated. This could lead to the materialisation of catastrophic risks, in addition to noncompliance with regulatory or statutory obligations, inability to capitalise on strategic opportunities, failure to fully deliver change projects and programmes, financial penalty, and reputational damage.

4.5 How compliance with the policy will be measured.

Compliance will be measured via the status and sufficiency of risk registers and deep dive reports, in line with the Framework, which provides a clear record and indication of risk-based discussions, management and decision-making. This includes:

- Faculty and department risk registers, via the business planning cycle.
- Strategic Investment Portfolio Board governance oversight, with targeted deep dive reviews.
- Committee level risk registers, via Assurance Committee Deep Dive reports.
- Strategic Risk Register, which is overseen by UEB and reviewed by ARC and Council.

4.6 Provisions for monitoring and reporting related to the policy.

The following mechanisms provide an indication of compliance with the Risk Framework:

- PRC and UEB oversight of risk reporting.
- Assurance Committee deep dive reviews provide assurance of management of risks.
- Risk reporting embedded within business planning and performance review processes.
- Internal Audit alignment to assess awareness of risk and effectiveness of mitigations.
- ARC assurance via quarterly risk management reporting.

5 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Associate Director of Risk and Assurance in response to changes in external environment, university governance processes and internal structures.

6 Related policies, procedures, standards, and guidance

Process, guidance, tools and templates are available on the [Risk Management and Assurance](#) SharePoint site (internal access only).