Dublin City University
Risk Advisory Committee
Terms of Reference

Background

The effective management of risk has become an area of increased scrutiny in recent years. Within the higher education environment the type, scope and frequency of risks, both internal and external, has increased significantly. In order to meet its obligations under legislation and best practice in relation to risk management a formal dedicated DCU Risk and Compliance function was set up in 2011. It is currently staffed by a full time Risk and Compliance Officer (RCO) who reports to the Chief Operations Officer (COO) who has overall responsibility for risk management within the University and Campus Companies.

Risk management should not be understood solely in a negative sense i.e. the reduction of risks which may affect the achievement of strategic objectives. Effective risk management also involves the active pursuit, with an acceptable level of risk, of those actions which seek to achieve the stated objectives of an organization. Within the University as a whole it is now apparent that many of the risks it faces are interconnected across the organization and accordingly it is proposed that a Risk Advisory Committee is set up to oversee and advise on the process of Risk Management as well as the framework within which it operates in both DCU and campus companies.

Terms of Reference of the Risk Advisory Committee

1. The Risk Advisory Committee (RAC) will advise the Executive Committee on changes to the DCU Risk Management Policy as well as the framework within which the DCU risk management function operates.

2. The RAC’s remit covers both Dublin City University and all of the Campus Companies controlled by the University.

3. The RAC is a standing sub-committee of the DCU Executive Committee set up to oversee the risk management process and it reports to the Executive Committee. It is directly responsible and accountable to the DCU Executive Committee for the exercise of its responsibilities.

4. The committee’s role is one of oversight and advice and accordingly it has no executive powers (unless delegated to it by the DCU Executive Committee). It is DCU’s Management which is responsible for designing, implementing and maintaining an effective program of risk management across DCU and campus companies.
5. The RAC will meet at least 4 times in any calendar year.

6. The RAC will recommend either:

   a. An overall appropriate single risk appetite statement for both DCU and campus companies and/or

   b. Segmented risk appetite statements as necessary for both DCU and campus companies and/or

   c. Segmented risk tolerances for each category of risk for both DCU and campus companies

   for consideration by the DCU Executive Committee and ultimately approval by the DCU Governing Authority.

7. The RAC will assist in the identification, quantification and prioritization of risks on the Institutional Level Risk Register.

8. The RAC may recommend amendments to a unit level risk register as it deems appropriate.

9. The RAC will review the highest priority risks and their related controls in the Institutional Risk Register and report on these separately to the DCU Executive Committee on a regular basis.

10. The RAC will review periodic risk management reports and make recommendations to the DCU Executive Committee on any remedial actions required.

11. The RAC has the authority to conduct or authorize reviews into any risk related matters within its scope of responsibility.

12. The RAC will consider major decisions affecting the University’s risk profile or the exposure pertaining to identified risks.

13. The RAC will bring reports on risk management and the risk register as necessary to the DCU Executive Committee and the DCU Audit Committee.

14. The RAC will also provide reports, if requested, to the Governing Authority Risk Committee on any risk related issues.

15. The RAC will state which key performance indicators and metrics are to be reported on by the Risk & Compliance Officer in the periodic reports to the RAC.
16. The RAC will include details of any significant emerging risks in its periodical reports to the DCU Executive Committee and Audit Committee.

17. The RAC may, at any time, report to the DCU Executive Committee any matter that it considers of sufficient importance.

18. The RAC will share information with the Audit Committee as necessary and appropriate to allow the Audit Committee to carry out its duties.

19. The RAC will evaluate the adequacy of the risk management structure and process as well as the outputs of that process.

20. The RAC will review and assess the adequacy of its terms of reference and responsibilities annually and recommend proposed changes to the DCU Executive Committee.

21. The RAC will review the adequacy and frequency of risk reporting to the DCU Executive Committee at least annually.