



HARTPURY

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES HARTPURY UNIVERSITY AND HARTPURY COLLEGE

Minutes 10am Tuesday 12th March 2024 Gordon Canning Room

Members	University Audit Committee	College Audit Committee
Lucie Hammond	Present (Chair)	Co-opted Member - Present
Ian Robinson (Professor)	Present (from 10.05am)	Present - Co-opted Member)
Patrick Brooke	Co-opted Member - Apologies	Apologies (Chair)
Barbara Buck	Co-opted Member - Present	Present
Mary Heslop	Co-opted Member - Present	Present
Matthew Williams	Co-opted Member - Present	Co-opted Member - Present
In Attendance		
Mick Axtell	Present (Chief Operating Officer)	Present (Chief Operating Officer)
Gillian Steels	Present (Clerk to the Board)	Present (Clerk to the Board)
Iain Williams	Present	Present
Mike Collier (Dr)	Present (TIAA)	Present (TIAA)
Helen Cargill	Present (TIAA)	Present (TIAA)
Andy Collop (Professor)	Apologies (Vice-Chancellor)	Apologies (Principal)

		ACTION & DATE
AR01/03/24	Apologies & Confirmation of Quoracy Apologies noted as above. It was noted that Patrick Brooke had provided comments which would be fed into the discussions. It was confirmed that the University Audit and Risk Management Committee and the College Audit and Risk Management Committee meetings were quorate.	
AR02/03/24	Declaration of Interest. The Clerk advised that members' interests would be taken as those disclosed in the Register of Members Interests.	
AR03/03/24	Minutes of the Meetings – 14th November 2023 The minutes of the University Audit and Risk Management Committee and the College Audit and Risk Management Committee 14 th November 2023 meetings, with the correction of a minor typo, were APPROVED as true records.	

AR04/03/24	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>The updated Action Log was noted.</p> <p>Whistleblowing Policy (Public Interest Disclosure Policy) – it was confirmed that the policy was regularly reviewed and updated and had been through the February Strategy Finance & Resources Committee and would come to the March Board. It was confirmed that staff were regularly reminded about the policy and that it would be part of the staff induction in future. It was agreed that this action should be treated as complete and removed from the action log.</p> <p>Stock Control – The Chief Operating Officer advised he was going to discuss the processes in place at the farm with the Chair of the FE Audit and Risk Management Committee. In catering a strategic review was ongoing, with a tendering process being undertaken to explore the potential for outsourcing the catering provision. Once these two actions had been taken there would be a further update to the Committees. It was confirmed that for the farm there was a stock count each year with the use of an external valuer. Movements were reconciled and there were regular reports to the Farm Committee. It was noted the Committees had raised this matter after the issue within Equine. It was confirmed there were now new stock control processes in equine and that standard measures were now being used. There was no cash handling anywhere other than catering now. The Chief Operating Officer advised there were other measures such as CCTV which could be used if necessary.</p> <p>It was agreed this would remain on the action log.</p> <p>Digital Strategy - it was confirmed an external report had been commissioned on this and that a plan was now being developed.</p> <p>SU – confirmed this would be on the Internal Audit plan for the future.</p>	
AR05/03/24	<p>Audit Recommendations Follow Up Update</p> <p>The Committee considered the update which detailed progress on the recommendations.</p> <p>Digital Strategy – progress was ongoing.</p> <p>SU – actions were confirmed as ongoing.</p> <p>External Audit recommendations – being actioned.</p> <p>There were no concerns. Recommendations were confirmed as on track at this point.</p> <p>The College and University A&RM Committees NOTED the Audit Recommendations Update Report.</p>	
AR06/03/24	<p>Procurement Compliance</p> <p>The Head of Finance presented the Procurement Compliance Report and provided assurance where there had been any variation on the standard compliance requirements, for example where work was bespoke, time critical or</p>	

	<p>there was a need to align to current services, or there was only a single supplier.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Direct Award had been an appointment made with the approval of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, in line with the Financial Regulations.</p> <p>The College and University A&RM Committees NOTED the Procurement Compliance Report.</p>	
AR07/03/24	Internal Audit	
7.1	Summary Internal Controls Assurance Report	
	<p>The summary controls assurance report provided the Audit and Risk Management Committees with an update on the emerging Governance, Risk and Internal Control related issues and the progress of Internal Audit work at Hartpury University HEC as of 1st March 2024.</p> <p>The report confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no issues arising from these findings which would require the annual Head of Audit Opinion to be qualified. • There were no changes to the plan for 2023/24. • There had been no Priority 1 recommendations (i.e., fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately) since the previous SICA. • The Auditors had not been advised of any frauds or irregularities in the period since the last SICA report was issued. • The 2023/24 Audit Plan was on track. <p>It was noted that the format had been updated to improve usability.</p> <p>It was confirmed TIAA would continue to provide sector and national briefings.</p> <p>It was noted that the Payroll Audit date would need to be amended due to staff holiday.</p> <p>The College and University A&RM Committees NOTED the Report.</p>	
7.2	HE and FE Student Placements Internal Audit – Substantial Assurance – 1 routine recommendation	
	<p>It was noted that the review considered the arrangements in place by which the University and its subsidiaries supports students to find appropriate placements and the due diligence arrangements undertaken to ensure that the expectations of the student and host are communicated and formalised, that appropriate health and safety and safeguarding arrangements are in place and that there is ongoing oversight of the learners whilst on placements.</p> <p>Key findings were:</p> <p>Effective arrangements were in place for the administering and monitoring of student placements.</p> <p>The Innovation, Careers & Enterprise Placements team has in a process map flowchart in place and the process was generally documented It was established that there was no formal termination of placement in place.</p>	

	<p>Sample testing on 10 student placements and an internal control questionnaire undertaken with three Tutors/Module Leaders did not identify any issues.</p> <p>Appropriate monitoring, reporting, and tracking of all placements was confirmed. This included reference to safeguarding elements particularly in relation to Further Education placements.</p> <p>A governor queried how assessment of level of risk was identified. The Internal Auditors advised this was done from the role description and related to the type of work the student would be completing. It was confirmed the review of the role was based on health and safety considerations.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Report was NOTED.</p>	
AR8/03/24	<p>Risk Management Update</p> <p>The Chief Operating Officer advised that currently he was following the processes of the previous Chief Operating Officer in relation to Risk, but that in the longer term he would review the Risk Management Policy, which might lead to revisions in practice. He apologised for the delay in the issuing of the Risk Register and report due to the Ofsted inspection.</p>	
8.1	<p>Review Risk Register</p> <p>The full Risk Register and a covering Report of Key changes had been issued to the Committees. It was noted this had been reviewed by SMT that morning and there were no changes.</p> <p>A new Risk had been added:</p> <p>Sustainability. A climate change strategy in place, which sets out environmentally sustainable practices to maximise the effective use of the corporation's estates and to reduce the organisation's environmental impact to net zero.</p> <p>Additionally, there was also now a detailed sustainability risk register.</p> <p>Deleted risks due to duplication – capital programme, student numbers.</p> <p>Strategic Risks with Increased Score:</p> <p>Failure to achieve recruitment and retention targets and planned student numbers both academic and in residencies leading to income targets not being achieved, impacting on Hartpury cash flows and ability to invest in facilities – this related to the challenges in HE recruitment & retention impacting this year, in line with the latest information from UCAS on overall sector numbers.</p> <p>Health and Safety</p> <p>Relating to construction recognising the number of projects ongoing and planned. Governors queried whether this was a Hartpury risk or whether it sat with the construction companies. It was confirmed that responsibility for the construction sites rested with the construction companies, but recognised there was potential “spill over” into Hartpury areas which this risk was trying to address.</p> <p>Digital Services – these reflected the findings from the recent external report which had identified some weaknesses relating to the level of staff numbers, single points of failure and critical system issues.</p> <p>Cyber Security – actions in place.</p>	

	A member queried whether there were risks relating to fire safety and multiple occupancies, noting that regulations had changed recently. It was confirmed there was an action plan in place to progress these actions.	
	The College and University A&RM Committees NOTED the Report and endorsed the revisions to the Risk Register.	
8.2	Minutes from Risk Management Group (RMG) These would follow.	COO/Clerk
A&RM09/03/24	Value For Money Annual Report	
	The Annual Value for Money report reviewed the progress to date on the delivery of the Value for Money Strategy set in September 2020 and considered the Value for Money (VFM) reporting in the annual report and financial statements of the University for 2022/23.	
	<p>The Committees considered the report, noting actions taken and in progress. The Chief Operating Officer advised that he would further review the Report in the future to consider additionally driving cultural change to reinforce value for money. Governors queried Hartpury's vulnerabilities in respect of this work. It was noted it was a complex area with some organisations having a greater focus on the student value for money perspective. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal flagged the findings of the Economic Impact Report which had been undertaken in summer 2023 which identified a premium for students attending Hartpury College and University. The Chief Operating Officer also referred to the Board KPIs which reflected student engagement, progress to employment/further study and retention.</p> <p>It was noted in some sectors annual reports provided case studies of customers/tenants/students to demonstrate value for money in a way that was accessible. Additionally, equity, was increasingly being added to considerations of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>It was agreed these aspects would be reviewed for including in future value for money reports</p>	COO Ongoing
	The Annual Value for Money Report was APPROVED.	COO Mar 25
A&RM11/03/24	Internal Audit Guidance Notes and Hartpury Response, including Fraud	
	The Committees had been provided with a report which had been developed in response to the regular briefings provided by TIAA on key sector issues which were shared with the committees and in response to a request by the committee to demonstrate the briefings have been considered. The report updated against ongoing actions from earlier briefings and provided the most recent briefings and planned actions.	
	The College and University A&RM Committees NOTED the Report and the planned actions.	

	The Auditors left the meeting.	
A&RM 12/03/24	Confidential Item – Commercially sensitive – 3 years	

APPROVED