

Risk Management Policy

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Linked policies and documents	1.13 Whistleblowing Policy 1.14 Fraud Prevention Policy 2.3 Prevention Policy 5.2 Safeguarding Policy 9.2 Health and Safety Policy 6.2 Student Handbook 7.11 Staff Handbook 7.20 Lone Working Policy
External reference points	Primary Element 2: <i>Sustainability</i> in the Council of College Chairs (CUC) Higher Education Code of Governance states: 'there are effective systems of control and risk management in place'.
Audience:	OBC Staff, Students, Governors, and other Stakeholders

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1 Introduction

Oxford Business College (the College) is committed to ensuring there is a robust system of risk management for the protection and benefit of all students, staff, and other stakeholders. This policy outlines the College's risk management policy and processes and sets out the responsibilities of all stakeholders when managing risk within the College to ensure that well-informed decisions are made and that the College's activities are sustainable and compliant.

2 Purpose

The Senior Management Team (SMT) recognises that all activities undertaken by the College carry an element of risk. Risk management is required to identify the key risks that the College is exposed to, so they can be measured for likelihood and impact; and mitigations can be planned and implemented effectively as well as the preparation of contingency plans. In managing risk, the College can prevent or minimise the adverse effects of risks and take advantage of potential opportunities.

3 Aims and Objectives

The policy aims to ensure a rigorous and effective risk assessment system is in place. The policy makes clear that participation in the management of risk is considered the responsibility of everyone at the College including all staff and stakeholders. The policy instructs staff on the identification of risks and how they are recorded in the risk register along with the appropriate steps taken to minimise or control those risks.

3.1 The objectives of this policy are to ensure:

- all significant risks are assessed and recorded in the risk register and copies (electronic or hardcopy) are available and accessible for periodic internal reviews and inspection .
- all risks have a risk owner, who is identified and takes responsibility for the accuracy, relevance, and assessment of the risk(s) they are responsible for.
- all risks require clear rationale in addition to an agreed estimate of the degree of risk, based upon the score of each risk's likelihood multiplied by its estimated impact.
- all risks have a specific action plan on how they will be managed or mitigated.
- timely updates of the risk register submitted to the SMT and BoG for termly review.
- adequate resources are made available to ensure this policy is properly implemented

4 Scope

This policy applies to all OBC stakeholders; staff, students, and external members such as marketing agents, consultants, contractors, suppliers, members of boards & committees, and any other person working in any context within the College or its campuses.

5 Understanding Risk

The College uses the following definitions relating to risk and risk management:

Risk is the threat or opportunity that an action or event will adversely or beneficially affect the College's ability to meet its objectives.

Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, assessed, prioritised, and managed to support well-informed decision-making and maximise the realisation of opportunities across the College

Risk Appetite is the level of risk that the College is willing to pursue or retain.

Risks are classified by the likelihood and potential consequences of an event occurring.

5.1 Risk Appetite

The College will generally accept a level of risk proportionate to the benefits expected to be gained, and the scale or likelihood of damage. The College has a high appetite for risk in the context of encouraging and promoting critical enquiry, academic freedom, freedom of expression, and open debate. The College has a very low appetite for risk where there is a likelihood of significant and lasting reputational damage; significant and lasting damage to its provision of teaching; significant financial loss or significant negative variations to financial plans; or harm to students, staff, collaborators, partners or visitors; or illegal or unethical activity; and regulatory compliance.

6 Risk Register

The College risk register is a key component of the risk management policy. The College uses the tool to identify, assess, and document potential risks to an organisation's operations, finances, reputation, and risks to OfS regulatory compliance. The risk register is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of all risks that the College may face, and to facilitate the development of effective risk mitigation strategies.

The College's risk register identifies those risks that are considered to have a fundamental

impact on the College's ability to deliver its mission or to operate effectively.

6.1 Assessing Risk

Each risk identified is given a score 1-5 for likelihood and 1-5 for impact, with 1 being very low and 5 being very high. These two factors of likelihood and impact are multiplied together to provide the overall degree of risk. Risks are gauged according to the following Likert Scale:

		Financial Impact	Reputational Risk	Operational Impact
1-5	Very Low Risk	Loss/breach equivalent to £1K or less	Minor problems in one area of service delivery affecting fewer than 10 students	Internal Matter
6-10	Low Risk	Loss/breach equivalent to between £1K and £5K	Disruption to specific areas of service delivery affecting between 10 and 20 students	Adverse attention from fewer than 5 students
11-15	Medium Risk	Loss/breach equivalent to between £5K and £100K	Widespread disruption to business operations affecting over 50% of students	Adverse attention in local press
16 – 20	High Risk	Loss/breach equivalent to between £100K and £500K	Major disruption to business operations affecting the	Major adverse industry media attention

			majority of students	
21 – 25	Very High Risk	Loss/breach equivalent to more than £500K	Unable to provide service to students	Significant national/international adverse media attention

Risks in the Risk Register are described and their status in terms of the extent to which they are under control is explained. There are also updates on mitigations that have or will be introduced with deadlines for their completion and review.

7 Responsibilities

All staff and stakeholders at the College have some responsibility for the general reporting and management of risk. Some staff and other stakeholders have specific responsibilities with regard to managing risk.

7.1 Board of Governors (BoG)

As stated in Primary Element 2: *Sustainability* in the Council of College Chairs (CUC) Higher Education Code of Governance states, the Board of Governors are responsible for ensuring that ‘there are effective systems of control and risk management in place’. This includes making sure there is a proactive system of risk management in place so that risks are rigorously understood, assessed, and managed. The BoG receives termly updates of the Risk Register from the SMT and the Head of Academics on the identification, assessment and management of risks on the Risk Register, including those that are also listed in the Student Protection Plan.

7.2 Senior Management Team (SMT)

The Senior Management Team (SMT) is the owner of the Risk Register and responsible for reporting termly to the Board of Governors (BoG) on the assessment and management of risk. The SMT is also responsible for:

- reviewing the College’s risk management framework to ensure coverage of all key risk areas
- proposing new areas of risk as and when they are deemed necessary
- monitoring the adequacy of and compliance with prescribed policies
- reviewing and updating policies and procedures to manage identified risks

- ensuring appropriate action is taken to address risk and minimise or mitigate adverse effects

7.3 Head of Academics

The Head of Academics takes the lead role in the maintenance of the Risk Register. The Head of Academic consults all risk owners for updates on each risk on a termly basis. When new risks are identified together with their risk owners by the BoG or SMT, the Head Academics adds those details to the Risk Register. The Head of Academics Reports on the Risk Register to the SMT and the BoG on a termly basis and updates the Risk Register in accordance with their recommendations.

7.4 Risk Owners

Risk owners are responsible for monitoring their risks and ensuring that the risk is managed appropriately, including liaising with colleagues to ensure that risks are mitigated across departmental boundaries. Risk owners should pass on any updates to the risks they are responsible for to the Head of Academics. If a risk is not being effectively treated, the risk owner should report this to the Head of Academics and/or the SMT, with recommendations for improvements or alternatives to current risk treatment.

7.5 General Staff Responsibilities

Every OBC staff member is responsible for effective identification, reporting and management of risks. Any staff member may be assigned ownership of specific risk(s) by the SMT. Staff should report to the Head of Academics on any risk mitigation plans they are responsible for including the implementation of risk reduction strategies, which should be integrated with other planning procedures and activities.

7.6 Managing Director

The Managing Director must ensure that competent risk management processes and managers are in place at all times and that suitable and sufficient risk assessment and management is carried out to identify and minimise risks to all College services, whether delivered online or in situ at any of the College campuses. Risk assessments must be included in the planning, development and expansion of College provision, facilities and resources.

8 Risk Management Process

The following steps describe the process of Risk Management at the College throughout the annual review cycle:

- All risks on the Risk Register are assessed every academic term
- Each risk on the Risk Register has a risk owner who is responsible for checking and updating the risk(s) they are responsible for

- BoG or SMT members inform the Head of Academics if they have identified a new risk and risk owner that needs to be added to the Risk Register
- The Head of Academics passes each risk to the risk owner for assessment
- The Head of Academics provides a draft assessment of every risk identified based on comments from risk owners and passes this to SMT members before the next SMT meeting
- The SMT monitor and assess each risk and the implementation of plans to mitigate threats and maximise opportunities
- The Risk Register is presented to the BoG by the Head of Academics for monitoring and review
- Mitigation plans are monitored and reviewed at the subsequent SMT meeting

9 Risk Assessment Controls

The following controls are in place in order to ensure effective maintenance of Risk Management at the College:

- Approval from the Board of Governors on the risk management framework
- Documented and reviewed Risk Management Policy and Procedures
- Maintenance of the Risk Register
- Ongoing monitoring of regulatory obligations
- Checklists to guide activities and project plans to record mitigations
- Internal and external reporting in risk management