



Date: Tuesday 18 May 2021

Time: 17:00

Venue: Online

Risk & Audit Committee Minutes

Chair: Deepan Banati, External Trustee (UCL Staff)

Members:	P	AP	AB
Aarushi Menon, Women's Officer	✓		
Ayman Benmati, Education Officer	✓		
Deepan Banati, External Trustee (UCL Staff), Chair	✓		
Hannah Al-Khawaled, Student Member (HA)			✓
Ilyas Benmoura, Activities Officer	✓		
Shail Bhatt, Student Trustee (SB)	✓		
Valentyna Sydorenko, Student Member (VS)	✓		

In Attendance:
Catherine Barrow, Head of Finance
Deb Nichols, Head of Operations
Rebecca McLoughlin, Minutes
Simon To, Policy, Governance & Insight Manager

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

NOTED

2. Minutes and Matters Arising from the meeting on 2 February 2021

The Committee approved the minutes from the meeting on 2 February 2021 as a true and accurate record.

APPROVED

3. Data Protection Report

The Head of Operations gave an overview of the Data Protection Report and noted that proactive work has been undertaken to mitigate against risks relating to data protection. They confirmed that collaborative work has been undertaken with the UCL Data Protection Officer. They also noted that a Data Protection Handbook has been produced. The Head of Operations confirmed that the Students' Union were data compliant, and they went on to highlight some of the Data Protection Risk and Mitigations from the report.

The Chair asked about the guidance for working from personal devices and why this was a new situation as the Union must have had staff and students using personal devices before the pandemic. The Head of Operations replied that data protection guidance for using personal devices was highlighting issues for staff who had perhaps never worked remotely before or used their own devices for work purposes.

The Chair asked how the Union has dealt with students downloading data on personal devices from abroad. The Head of Operations responded that they would get the Project Manager (IT) to get back to them regarding this.

ACTION: The Head of Operations to ask the Project Manager (IT) to respond to the Chair regarding how the Union has dealt with students downloading data on personal devices whilst abroad.

RESOLVED

4. Review of Audit Findings for Financial Year 2019/20

The Head of Finance confirmed that the audit was completed in January and a number of issues and recommendations were highlighted by the auditor. These have been addressed and improved processes are in place to prevent reoccurrence. They reported that a full review of HR contract and payroll records was pending. The Head of Finance noted that there were some issues identified in the audit of 2019/20 accounts and most of these had been addressed. They confirmed that those that were viewed as outstanding have all now been completed with the exception of the Financial Procedures Manual. The update of the finance procedures and policies manual is ongoing and will be complete before the end of the financial year.

The Head of Finance stated that the audit and Financial Statements are still awaiting final sign-off pending the VAT review and the confirmation of provision for underpaid VAT included in the statements. They added that this will shortly be ready to be presented to the auditors and confirmed that they are working with a VAT Consultant on this. The Chair asked when we would expect to pay the VAT liability. The Head of Finance responded that they have been advised to do a full report for Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and this report will be presented separately to the VAT return.

The Head of Finance gave a brief outline of the outstanding issues from the 2018/19 audit report recommendations. They confirmed that with the exception of the update of the Financial Procedures Manual and the review of the HR records which are still ongoing, all other recommendations from the 2019/20 and 2018/19 audit reports have been implemented. The Chair asked when the auditors will close off the 2018/19 audit report. The Head of Finance confirmed that this will be done once the actions have been in place for the whole year.

The Head of Finance gave a brief overview of the Audit update for 2020/21. They confirmed that Buzzacott will continue as our auditors. They noted that the audit has been scheduled for the two weeks commencing 13 September 2021. The Chair asked when did we intend to re-tender the auditors. The Head of Finance responded that this is usually done every five years. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager advised that generally good practice is to tender or reappoint every five years. The Committee noted that this will need to be looked at this time next year, as this is Buzzacott's 3rd year as auditors for the Union.

The Chair asked what action had been taken regarding inquorate meetings of Finance Committee. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager confirmed that we had reached out to members to check their availability for the meetings this term to ensure that they reach the required quorum. They noted that the recent meeting of Finance Committee had been

quorate and potentially the situation has been helped with the meetings being online and more accessible. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager confirmed that this would be kept under observation by Governance Committee.

RECEIVED

5. Risk Management Policy

The Head of Operations gave a brief overview of the development of the Risk Management Policy. They asked the Risk & Audit Committee for their comment's.

The Committee noted that the policy should include how we report different levels of risk. The Chair added that they would like to see risk appetite, who's responsible and internal audit controls included. They suggested that risks for the Union should include legal, financial, health & safety, people risk, risks from activities and commercial operations. They added that with every risk we need to look at the student angle and suggested that the Strategic Risk Register should be considered by the Board. The Chair suggested that any other comments be emailed to the Head of Operations.

ACTION: The Committee to email the Head of Operations with any other comments regarding the Risk Management Policy.

RECEIVED

6. Risk Register Monitoring Report

The Head of Operations gave a summary of the Risk Register Monitoring Report. They highlighted the following potential risks:

- Continuing disruption to services and income arising from the Coronavirus pandemic and associated restrictions.
- Continuing increases in levels of demand for service provision from students without a comparable increase in grant funding from UCL.
- GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) compliance.
- A serious incident on Union premises or by members of the Union's clubs and societies that results in harm to staff or students and / or reputational damage.

The Head of Operations went on to outline the mitigation strategies against these which included:

- Continuing to enhance and strengthen the Union's relationships with UCL and seeking increased contributions from commercial income.
- Careful monitoring of the changing national and regional spread of the virus and associated government guidance. A planned return to campus and re-opening of outlets with weekly reviews of the impact on the Union's operations and finances and maintaining a close relationship and dialogue with UCL regarding the financial and operational impact.
- The Project Manager (IT) is the Union's data protection and GDPR lead. Proactive data protection risk mitigation is in place.
- An external expert review of Health and Safety across the Union has been undertaken by a Health & Safety professional and an action plan implemented to ensure the highest possible standards. A Health & Safety Co-ordinator has been recruited and commences in role 11th May 2021.

The Chair asked if there is anything in the Risk Register Monitoring Report that has changed since before the pandemic to now. The Head of Operations responded that the main thing has been our approach to GDPR compliance. The Chair added that it would be useful to include the financial risks such as the inability to deliver a financial surplus which can lead to being unable to deliver services.

RECIEVED

7. Audit Update for Financial Year 2020/21

RECEIVED

8. Health & Safety Report (Quarter 3) & Annual Review

The Head of Operations summarised the Health & Safety Report & Annual Review. They stated that the Union has been praised for their response to the pandemic by UCL. They noted that the Union passed Covid-19 compliance criteria, risk assessments were approved by UCL Safety Services. They added that all necessary PPE equipment, screens, signage and equipment is in place and UCL regularly audits the Unions' compliance.

The Head of Operations went on to outline the Covid-19 safety procedures that have been implemented by the Union and confirmed that the Union continues to monitor the situation regarding the pandemic on a weekly basis and follows Government guidance.

9. Any Other Business

There was none.

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record	
Chair:	Deepan Banati, External Trustee (UCL Staff)
Signature:	<i>Deepan Banati</i>
Date:	21/11/21

Action List

Actions	
The Committee to email the Head of Operations with any other comments regarding the Risk Management Policy.	Risk & Audit Committee
The Head of Operations to ask the Project Manager IT to respond to the Chair regarding how the Students' Union has dealt with students downloading data on personal devices whilst abroad.	Head of Operations/Project Manager IT