

Audit and Assurance Committee Meeting

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 26 March 2024
Paper Title	Updates from Assigned College Audit Committees
Agenda Item	11
Paper Number	AAC3-G
Responsible Officer	Martin Boyle, Executive Director
Status	Disclosable
Action	For noting

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1** Consider updates on key items of business undertaken by the audit committees of the assigned colleges.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Committee is invited to **note** this report and the audit updates provided by the assigned Glasgow colleges.

3. Background

- 3.1** The Committee receives updates from the audit committees of the assigned colleges on key matters considered at each of their meetings, in order to support identification of opportunities for cross-region collaboration in areas of shared interest.

4. Risk and compliance implications, financial and resources implications, equalities implications and learner implications

- 4.1** Other than as reported, there are no specific aspects to be considered under these headings.

Update from Assigned College Audit Committees

College: City of Glasgow College

Date of Meeting: 14 March 2024

Topic of Discussion	Summary and Outcome of Discussion	Impact on GCRB (if any)
Document and Records Retention Policy	Members discussed and approved the updated Document and Records Retention Policy prepared by the Data Protection Officer.	Governance assurance
Risk Management Policy	The Committee reviewed the updated Risk Management Policy, particularly the new risk appetite section following a session with the Board and Executive in November. Subject to minor amendments, members agreed to recommend the policy to the Board for final approval.	Governance assurance
Annual Complaints Report 2022-23	The Director of Excellence presented the College's Annual Complaints Report for the 2022-23 academic year, which expanded on the College's submission to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.	Governance assurance
Freedom of Information Annual Report 2022-23	The Associate Director of Governance & Risk tabled the annual report and provided an overview of the College's Freedom of Information request handling for the 2022-23 academic year.	Governance assurance
Internal Audit Reports: Libraries and Learning Technologies Quality Assurance and Enhancement Business Engagement Severance Schemes Payroll	<p>The Committee considered five reports from the internal auditors concerning learning technologies, quality assurance, business engagement, payroll, and voluntary severance and compulsory redundancy schemes. Following a discussion about the findings and recommendations, members noted that all of the internal audits received a 'good' rating, the highest level of assurance attainable, and welcomed this outcome.</p> <p>Members agreed to table the internal audit report on severance schemes at the Board of Management for the awareness of all Board members. The Committee noted that the Chair would be sharing the report with the GCRB Chair now that the Committee had considered it.</p>	Internal audit assurance
Internal Audit Progress Report	The College's internal auditors provided an update on progress to date and confirmed the current timescales for planned audit fieldwork and reporting.	Internal audit assurance

Quarterly Internal Audit Overview	The College's in-house Compliance Auditor provided a quarterly update to the Committee on the College's progress in implementing the recommendations from previous internal audit reports.	Internal audit assurance
Strategic Risk Review	The Committee considered the Strategic Risk Register and Management Action Plans for risks within its remit.	Governance assurance
Papers for Noting	The Committee noted the following reports: Data Protection Officer Quarterly Report	Governance assurance
Any Other Notified Business	Ahead of the schedule of business being prepared next year, the Convener suggested to members that the Committee may wish to consider adding an item to the agenda that would allow for a "deep dive", of approximately 30 minutes, on an agreed topic. Members welcomed the suggestion and it was agreed to take it forward.	Governance assurance

**Update from Assigned College Audit Committees
Glasgow Kelvin College Audit & Risk Committee 20 February 2024**

Please note agenda and all papers are published on the College web site 1 week after the meeting date except where they need to be withheld from the public domain.

Topic of Discussion	Summary and Outcome of Discussion	Impact on GCRB (if any)
Henderson Loggie – Internal Audit Report – Curriculum Planning	Henderson Loggie discussed the Curriculum Planning Audit Report noting that there were no recommendations for action made and the overall assurance grading was “good.” It was further noted that this was a positive report with 15 strengths highlighted in the report and no weaknesses identified.	Provides GCRB with assurance that the Audit and Risk Committee are receiving reports from Internal Audit which are discussed in full and which are positive in nature.
Henderson Loggie – Internal Audit Report – Risk Management	Henderson Loggie discussed the Risk Management Audit Report noting the overall assurance grading of “good.” The significant work undertaken by the College to revamp risk management was noted. The report noted 4 low grade recommendations, 13 strengths and 4 opportunities for enhancement. No weaknesses had been identified.	Provides GCRB with assurance that the Audit and Risk Committee are receiving reports from Internal Audit which are discussed in full, positive in nature and which aim to build upon the existing good work of the College to enable further growth in this area.
Henderson Loggie – Internal Audit Report – Corporate Planning	Henderson Loggie discussed the Corporate Planning Audit Report noting the overall assurance grading of “good.” The report noted 1 low grade recommendations, 9 strengths and 4 opportunities for enhancement. No weaknesses had been identified.	Provides GCRB with assurance that the Audit and Risk Committee are receiving reports from Internal Audit which are discussed in full and which are positive in nature.

Topic of Discussion	Summary and Outcome of Discussion	Impact on GCRB (if any)
Henderson Loggie – Internal Audit Report – Staff Development	Henderson Loggie discussed the Staff Development Audit Report noting the overall assurance grading of “good.” The report noted 2 low grade recommendations, 11 strengths and 2 opportunities for enhancement. No weaknesses had been identified.	Provides GCRB with assurance that the Audit and Risk Committee are receiving reports from Internal Audit which are discussed in full and which are positive in nature.
Henderson Loggie – Internal Audit Progress Report	<p>Henderson Loggie informed members that all planned audits were on schedule to be completed on time. 5 of the 8 audits have been undertaken to date.</p> <p>Members were advised that Henderson Loggie’s tenure would end following completion of the audit plan and the College will endeavour to carry out the necessary procurement exercise before the end of the Academic Year</p>	<p>Provides GCRB with confidence that Internal Audit are reporting favourably on the schedule of work within Glasgow Kelvin College which is working to according to plan.</p> <p>GCRB will also note that Glasgow Kelvin College will conduct a tender exercise for internal audit.</p>
Audit Action Plan	<p>The Audit Action Plan was discussed in detail. It denoted that there are 20 low level audit actions at present including the actions from the Internal Audit Reports presented at the Audit & Risk meeting of 20 February 2024. It was noted that the College considers 7 of these low-level actions fully complete with another 4 partially implemented. It was further noted that the SMT members review this document fortnightly in order that audit recommendations can be actioned and deadlines adhered to.</p> <p>Members noted this plan and the detailed text contained therein.</p>	Provides GCRB with assurance that audit recommendations are being tracked rigorously by members of SMT to ensure adherence to audit deadlines with full and transparent reporting being made to Audit and Risk Committee members.

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Policies	<p>Conflict of Interest Policy and Code of Conduct – these governing documents had been reviewed by the Secretary to the Board of Management and the Director of Estates and Corporate Services and no changes were considered necessary. It was noted that the Standards Commission had, in the days prior to the meeting, sent proposed revisions to the Model Code of Conduct. A full review of this revision would take place and any changes required would be brought back to the Audit and Risk Committee for member consideration.</p>	<p>Provides GCRB with assurance that governing documents are receiving routine reviews and that due cognisance is being taken from key stakeholders such as the Standards Commission.</p>
Risk Management Update	<p>Audit and Risk Committee members received a very full and comprehensive update on all matters affecting risk across the College including Risk Management Activities, Risk Management Committee papers reviewed, previous Risk Management Committee approved minutes and an overall report on the context the College was operating in, i.e. cost of living, energy costs, strike action/Action Short of Strike Action, lengthy NHS waiting lists for medical care, the ongoing threat of cyber-attacks and funding concerns.</p> <p>Members were advised that, in relation to the £2.6 energy efficiency grant, the College had various concerns with matters pertaining to the contractor appointed to deliver this contract including their new, and very late, suggested location for the Air Source Heat Pump Project (which was the most major aspect of this project.) College senior staff and the Project Manager had liaised with the Scottish Government to express their concerns about how the Air Source Heat Pump could work in the new suggested location and also with the tight timescales to conduct the necessary checks from authorities and other required permissions. The College had no option but to cancel the contract with the appointed contractor and Scottish Government subsequently decided to withdraw all of the grant funding offered with the exception of funds paid in good faith to date.</p>	<p>Provides GCRB with notification of the various risks that the College are considering both internally and externally. Also provides assurance that Audit and Risk Committee members are being informed of all relevant matters affecting the College and are receiving sight of all relevant documentation.</p> <p>GCRB also have assurance that prudence with public funds are being exercised in an honest and upfront manner in relation to the £2.6m energy efficiency grant.</p> <p>Furthermore, it provides assurance that the Risk Management Committee members have been fully involved in all risk</p>

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	<p>The College Risk Register was discussed in full; it was noted that scores and text had been fully reviewed by the Risk Management Committee and Senior Management Team. This was reviewed in full.</p> <p>Members agreed to the changes as follows:</p> <p>College identity risk could be removed due to the volume of work undertaken in this area.</p> <p>Student recruitment and retention residual impact had reduced from 4 to 3, due to the controls and mitigating actions put in place.</p> <p>The inherent risk in relation to industrial action/ASOS had risen from 3 to 4. A full report on this specific matter would be brought to the March 2024 Board of Management meeting.</p> <p>Audit and Risk members noted that a closing date for the lease/sale of West End Campus had been set for 23 February 2024. A full report would be brought to the Board of Management meeting in March 2024.</p> <p>Audit and Risk members were updated in terms of the reduction in manned guarding to make further ongoing financial savings.</p>	<p>considerations. All papers available to the Audit and Risk Committee members.</p>
Corporate Governance Update	<p>Members received a corporate governance update on various items that were being progressed at present i.e. UMAL Inspection Reports – Property and Health and Safety – members were provided with links to these reports which stated that 14 low grade recommendations had been received following these inspections and that 4 had already been actioned, leaving 10 to be added to an Action Plan. It was noted that organisations of a similar size as the College would normally receive 30-50 recommendations. These positive reports welcomed by Audit and Risk members. The Trade Union Nominees on Boards is being progressed with a nomination received from EIS/FELA – UNISON still to advise of their nominee. Public Sector Climate Change Duties Report had been completed and submitted by the deadline</p>	<p>Provides GCRB with assurance of College governance operations and other considerations being made in this arena. Adherence and overview of all relevant documents are being attended to prudently with associated actions being carried out accordingly.</p>

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	<p>date of 30 November 2023. Audit Scotland Fees anomalies is still ongoing and remained unresolved. Insurance Checks – a value for money exercise is currently being undertaken by APUC/senior management, Business Continuity Plan – Martyn’s Law – the Scottish Government have announced a consultation exercise on how organisations take forward the implementation of Martyn’s Law. Land at Springburn – this issue is still ongoing; no communication has been received from Hydepark Residents Association.</p>	

Update from Assigned College Audit Committees

College: Glasgow Clyde College

Date of Meeting: 6 March 2024

Topic of Discussion	Summary and Outcome of Discussion	Impact on GCRB (if any)
College Strategic Risk Register	<p>The Principal presented this report and advised that, of the thirteen risks identified, there are two areas with a high residual risk score after mitigating actions, seven have a medium residual risk score and four have a low residual risk score.</p> <p>The four highest risks after mitigating action in the College Strategic Risk Register are as follows: (i) failure to manage financial sustainability through the period of the financial plan; (ii) implications of national bargaining and possible negative impact on employee relations; (iii) Risk of not having culture of effective, capable leaders who are motivated and have ability to take staff with them; and (iv) failure to maintain and develop appropriate accessible, dynamic, flexible learning and social spaces which is fit for purpose for teaching and learning and staff working environment.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the four highest risks in detail and noted the latest position with regard to funding and national bargaining. J Vincent also provided an update on the SLT reorganisation and likely approach of carrying out remedial work on the RAAC identified at the Cardonald Campus. The Committee questioned whether the assessment of the risk relating to financial sustainability and curriculum delivery accounted for the challenges facing the College and the sector over the medium and</p>	None

	<p>long term. The Committee was assured that the SLT considered the risk status in detail and based on current information, considered that the rating remained the same. It was noted that the SLT would reassess the risk in relation to the College's financial sustainability once further detail is provided by the Scottish Government and the SFC.</p>	
Climate Change Action Plan	<p>The Interim Vice Principal for Resources & Corporate Development presented this item and updated the Committee on developments since the last Committee meeting. The submission of a Scottish Government Energy Efficiency Grant scheme pre-capital funding application for £60k was successful and the feasibility study is currently taking place. The Committee will be updated further on this at the next meeting.</p>	None
Data Protection Update	<p>The College Data Protection Officer joined the meeting to present this item. Details were provided of developments in key areas such as the Online Safety Act, Data Protection and Digital Information Act and the Rights of Children in Scots Law. It was agreed that it would be helpful for the next report to have more detail of how these developments directly impact the College to allow the Committee to assess the position.</p> <p>It was confirmed that guidance was issued to staff union representatives in January 2024 clearly setting out the approach to making use of staff email for union business to ensure there is compliance.</p>	None
Review of Remit	<p>The Committee discussed the remit and agreed that it adequately covers the matters that this Committee oversees. It was noted that the risk appetite was set by the Board with this Committee regularly reviewing the risk register. Further, the Agenda was structured in such a way to ensure that the key areas of the remit</p>	None

	were fulfilled. The Committee agreed with the one proposed change to the remit.	
Internal Audit Report – Procurement & Creditor/Purchasing	The internal audit report concludes that there is a good level of assurance in this area meaning that the system meets control objectives. There were no recommendations in the report and various strengths were recognised as set out in page 3 of the report. It was noted that there were good practices in place for purchases in excess of £2000 and the three-way check carried out by the Finance team reduced the risk of fraud. The Committee noted that there was tight control on the use of credit cards and there was strong practice and culture in place to challenge any changes in supplier details.	None
Internal Audit Report – Software Licensing	This internal audit report concludes that there is a good level of assurance in this area meaning that the system meets control objectives. There are two low priority recommendations in the report relating to improving the central registrar of software and there being a business case for an automated software licensing audit tool. It was noted that neither of the areas for improvement identified were criticisms rather areas where improvements could be made.	None
Business Process Review – Student Support (ELS)	<p>The report provided a business process review (BPR) which indicates points of suggested areas of improvement for the College to consider rather than actual recommendations.</p> <p>The report recognised that steps have been taken by the College to streamline processes and an improvement plan has been developed and monitored. The BPR identified four improvement points with one being high priority (develop a process to capture academic feedback on the implementation of learning support strategies identified). The Committee noted the management’s</p>	None

	<p>response to the four improvement points and the scheduled timeframes to progress these areas.</p> <p>The Committee thanked the Internal Auditor for this report and recognised that improving efficiencies in the student support processes which are a key part in students' learning journey assists the College with improving both retention and attainment levels. It was agreed that this report should be shared with the Learning and Teaching Committee.</p>	
Business Process Review Update – Teaching Staff & Room Utilisation	<p>The Deputy Principal John Rafferty joined the meeting and presented his second progress report. The May 2022 report identified 5 potential areas of improvement within the Teaching Staff Utilisation report and 7 potential areas of improvement in the Space Management/Room Utilisation report. Most have now been completed, however there do remain a few recommendations sitting at 'partially complete'.</p> <p>J Rafferty outlined the steps taken by the College to deliver these improvements including a smaller, more focused business improvement team and staff training on project management and business improvement techniques.</p> <p>The Committee was pleased to note the progress in this area and the management focus on deliver.</p>	None
Audit Scotland Fees	<p>The Committee noted the increase in fees and expressed concern about this further 6% increase when Audit Scotland's own report recognised the financial challenges facing the College's sector.</p>	None