

Board Meeting

Date of Meeting	Monday 19 June 2023
Paper Title	GCRB Risk Register
Agenda Item	10
Paper Number	BM6-E
Responsible Officer	Martin Boyle, Executive Director
Status	Disclosable subject to board approval, under FOI(S)A S:30, Prejudice to the Effective Conduct of Public Affairs
Action	For Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update board on the current status of the risk register and review of ownership and activity.
- 1.2 While there has been significant effort undertaken to mitigate core risks, including the delivery of review activity, maintenance of 'business as usual' functions, and supporting the on-going delivery of education across the Glasgow college system, there remain significant risks in the region and wider system. This review of the risk register recognises that progress while highlighting the potential heightened risks associated with review and Covid and post-Covid impacts.
- 1.3 Target Risk Scores have been maintained at the current level for the purposes of this board meeting and will be reviewed as an aspect of wider strategic development in 2023.
- 1.4 Board comments around the transition from 'risk' to 'issue' are noted and it is recommended that a reduced and refreshed risk register is developed as part of the planned session and once clarity on the progress of the Glasgow region review has been delivered. To this end, a risk workshop has been scheduled with Henderson Loggie, GCRB's internal auditor, with the support of the Audit and Assurance Committee.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Board is invited to **note** the position of the current Risk Register and **approve** the recommended changes to the GCRB Risk Register.

3. Background

- 3.1 The risk register is reviewed by the Executive Team on a regular basis, by the full board, and its management and process is overseen by the Audit and Assurance Committee. As per previous agreement, the board reviews a small number of risks in detail at each meeting, with the aim that each risk is reviewed within each academic year.
- 3.2 This process will continue in order to ensure that risk remains a key item on the board and committee agenda, and that detailed consideration of specific risks continue to be a pertinent role of board, allowing risk to inform and support board decisions.
- 3.3 GCRB development plans include provision for a review of the current Risk Register, and this activity has been approved by board and agreed with Henderson Loggie as internal auditor as part of the audit delivery plan.

4. Report

- 4.1 During the normal board cycle we would seek to review all risks within a 12-month period. While all risks were reviewed at the previous board meeting, the risks reviewed for this board are:
- 4.2 **Risk 4: Opportunities to deliver regional strategy are missed/not resourced appropriately:** GCRB Executive has continued to engage with in-region partners and colleges, the wider city region, and nationally to support key strategies for the sector and wider development work. This has broadly been positive engagement, with some opportunities for wider partnership work achieved. In addition, work on Colleges Scotland's working groups, and with SFC and Scottish Government continue to advance sector issues. It is, however, an increasing challenge to deliver future-focused activity while there remains lack of clarity around regional review. GCRB continues to focus on core deliverable responsibilities and positive partnership engagement to mitigate. It is recommended that the risk is maintained at current score (3/2).
- 4.3 **Risk 13: A breach of legislation/guidance/code of practice results in a failure of governance:** Regular monitoring, professional development, updates to board, and national engagement via College Development Network and Scottish Government ensure that GCRB maintains clear sight of legislation, guidance, and codes of practice. This is monitored on a regular basis and effectively mitigates against the risks of failure of governance. It is recommended that the likelihood of this risk is therefore maintained at low level (1/2)
- 4.4 **Risk 18: GCRB and the Glasgow college system is unable to take the coordinated action to deliver and progress regional environment and sustainability strategy in line with Glasgow's commitment to the Scottish Colleges' Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency and associated climate action road map:** GCRB continues to operate in partnership with the colleges via the regional cross-colleges working group. There is a requirement to review membership and welcome new members in the new academic year to ensure all colleges are effectively represented. Significant in-college partnership work is continuing. There remains an imperative to act in a coordinated and effective manner in this

space, and while there is activity there remains a requirement to coordinate and progress. It is therefore recommended that risk is maintained (2/2).

5. Risk and Compliance Analysis

- 5.1** This paper is intended to ensure consideration of GCRB's understanding of risk, and to ensure that the correct focus is provided through 2023.

6. Financial and Resource Analysis

- 6.1** The risk of failure to meet nationally-set targets for delivery of core and other targets means that there is an increased risk of impact to regional finances.

7. Equalities Implications

- 7.1** No new or additional equalities impacts highlighted at this time.

8. Learner Implications

- 8.1** Understanding of the importance of the key implications of risk in management of Outcome Agreement and the outcomes of the region is a vital output of risk management process. The risk register is intended to highlight the continued risk around impact on learning and to provide direction which places student support at the heart of mitigating actions.

Strategic	Ambition Glasgow Region Strategic Plan	Risk ID	Risk Owner	RISKS		EVALUATION OF RISK				Recent Trend	Mitigating Actions	MANAGEMENT OF RISK	
				Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Net Risk Score	Risk Appetite	Lead for Risk Management Action Plan			Target Risk Score	May to June Update
Strategic	Ambitious for Glasgow	001	Executive Director	GCRB is unable to respond proactively to internal and external change including regional and national reviews and systemic change (reviewed May 2023).	3	3	6	Low (12)	➡	Ensure GCRB: 1. participates in effective environment scanning and scenario planning; 2. are informed of environmental developments, economic trends, policy developments etc.; 3. proactively manage board/committees agendas; provide policy briefing notes; 4. develop board member communications and online access to information; 5. focus activity to those external factors GCRB can influence; 6. monitor board engagement. GCRB has supported SFC's regional review moving towards a conclusion to regional review though there remains a significant vacuum as clarity of outcome is yet to be communicated. This leaves significant ambiguity around the future of the organization and the governance approach across the Glasgow college region. Chair and Executive Director continue to engage with relevant bodies at a national level to provide oversight and planning as much as possible.	Executive Director	2	Attend Colleges Scotland Board and Principals Group, Glasgow Partners for Economic Growth, and various Colleges Scotland, SFC and ScotGov events in support of activity. Chair's Briefings have been issued to Board members and to lead members informed. Glasgow review progress and engaging proactively as a priority with SFC and government. "Risk Appetite score of Low" is now out of step with reality of process and requires review. ENG work and stakeholder engagement projects both progressing. Final board communication to SFC completed to seek urgent conclusion to review.
		002	Chair/ Exec Director	GCRB does not develop/maintain effective working relationships with key external stakeholders (reviewed Jan 2023).	3	2	6	Medium (34)	➡	Strengthening engagement strategy was key partner and mainstreaming participation in regional structures. Promote opportunities for GCRB engagement with stakeholders and fully utilise range of board members skills. Effective GCRB communications strategy to engage stakeholders. Regional review activity and membership of key decision-making/working groups core focus of activity. The revised comms strategy was brought to GCRB board in Nov 21 and Jan 22, as well as holding a stakeholder development session with board. Stakeholder management work at national and local level. However, this prioritised activities.	Executive Director	4	On-going engagement has led to OA 23-24 work. Regional review also engaged key stakeholder, and this is being progressed by SFC. Current strategy has been developed and presented. GCRB Exec and Chair continue to work to deliver effective comms engagement with stakeholders, SFC and ScotGov.
		003	Executive Director	The reputation of the Glasgow college region is damaged as a result of adverse publicity (reviewed May 2023).	3	2	4	Low (12)	➡	Strengthen partnership approaches to information sharing and coherence of management actions and responses (no surpluses). Continue to develop collaborative communications strategy to promote benefits of regional approach. Effectively manage information flow and board and committee governance. Additional audit activity planned to clarify process and provide effective, clear ways of working for board and assigned colleges. Close work with SFC has been vital in providing a measured approach to current climate. Communication channels with board members maintained to ensure clear communication.	Marketing and Comms Lead	2	Colleges continue to share information with GCRB and this was reviewed by the Performance and Resources Committee. OA work on-going in close adherence to SFC guidelines and working with colleges. Communications meeting with all three colleges and GCRB Commr. Lead on projects. GCRB issued auditors highlighting the region's continued work, on-going across all projects. GCRB maintaining close communication with SFC and ScotGov on key areas such as review, regional finances, financial mitigations, and campus issues such as impact of work requirement at GCC's Arnesland campus. Meeting with SFC, unions, colleges and sharing of media files is vital.
		004	Chair	Opportunities to deliver regional strategy are missed/not resourced appropriately (reviewed June 2023).	3	2	6	Medium (34)	➡	Identify development opportunities within collaborative planning activity, specifying resources and strategically informed decision making processes. GCRB is continuing the process of developing a new long term strategy for the Glasgow region. However, it is clear that the uncertainty created by regional and national review work is having an adverse impact on clarity of direction.	Executive Director	4	Programme of Action 23-23 delivered, and 23-24 planned and presented to committee board for approval. Engaging closely with SFC, SDS, colleges and other partners in the development of strategic planning activity. Work on-going to ensure emerging threats are effectively captured. Follow up activity planned and being undertaken in partnership.
		005	Executive Director	Brexit has an adverse impact on the Glasgow college region (reviewed January 2023).	1	1	1	Low (12)	➡	As agreed by board, this risk will be reviewed and altered during 2023 to provide clearer focus in line with introduction of new strategic plan.	Marketing and Comms Lead	2	
		006	Executive Director	Ineffective regional curriculum planning impacts regional, economic and social needs (reviewed January 2023).	2	3	6	Medium (34)	➡	Continuously improve the quality of our provision base and undertake systematic reviews of curriculum demand and supply and ensure effective monitoring arrangements. Cross-college information sharing and planning to provide better agreed approach. GCRB colleges VLP and GCRB staff includes work with SDS, SFC and council to align opportunities.	Executive Director	4	Cross-colleges regional planning continues via GCRB L&T group, coordination of OA, and discussion on specific items such as F&S. Progress on-going in developing OA, FA plan etc. Cross-region working in areas such as just transition include meetings with unions, colleges and other partners.
Operational	Ambitious for Learners	007	Executive Director	Fewer learners achieve positive outcomes (reviewed May 2023).	3	2	6	Low (12)	➡	Work with colleges, Colleges Scotland, Scottish Government and Education Scotland to directly address the significant risk to the student experience over a significant period. Work closely with SFC and colleges on Outcome Agreements, monitoring and risk activities. Work with colleges to ensure funding settlement for 23-24 safeguards the wide range of provision across the region.	Executive Director	2	Latest monitoring information considered by P&R Committee. The likelihood and impact of this risk occurring continues as a result of the recovery phase of pandemic, with focus on college viability and sustainability against complex financial challenges. The recent Audit Scotlin review of Scotland's colleges and the significant challenge in student success. Recommended area of strategic focus. The recent funding settlement includes a 10% credit cut to each college, meaning fewer places on offer.
		008	Executive Director	Financial sustainability is jeopardised by a reduction in income and/or an increase in costs (reviewed May 2023).	3	3	9	Medium (34)	➡	Develop and enhance long term financial planning. Collate information and identify funding priorities for lobbying. Strengthen key external relationships (SFC, SDS, local authorities, education partners). Monitor, and assess, the risks related to the reducing funds held by ALPs, significant financial impact on colleges, and long term impact. Individual colleges currently developing plans - which will require to be considered by GCRB to identify region wide opportunities. Voluntary and compulsory redundancy now underway in Glasgow.	Finance & Resources Director	4	The financial sustainability of colleges has been materially impacted by the Coronavirus outbreak. 21/02, provided some clarity and stability but some risks remain, and the 22-23 settlement is a significant challenge with material reduction in funding which requires careful management, which in turn will require forward planning to evolve sector. The funding settlement is a significant challenge in the next few months, but indicative allocation has been made as quickly as possible to provide colleges with clarity. Engagement with colleges has continued to address individual challenges and responses.
		009	Chair	Failure to achieve core targets lessens our ability to meet regional needs (reviewed Jan 2023).	3	3	4	Low (12)	➡	Enhance quality and value of performance data and regularly evaluate outcome performance. Address areas for improvement through Enhancement Plans within new national quality arrangements. Close working engagement with SFC opportunity for contribution and collaboration through the regional review process. Impact of Arnesland closure still to be fully understood, but raises risk of impact on overall targets.	Finance & Resources Director	2	Latest monitoring information considered by P&R Committee. Engagement with SFC, CS, SG, SQA etc to focus on key emerging issues. On-going challenge sector in meeting targets, with closure of Arnesland presenting a new risk which increases likelihood of impact on target.
		010	Chair	Ineffective collaboration between all partners in the Glasgow college region reduces our collective impact (reviewed Oct 2022).	3	2	6	Medium (34)	➡	Continue to develop opportunities for regional collaboration and sharing of information, networking opportunities and relationship building. Provide clear opportunity for contribution and collaboration through the regional review process, and increase opportunities for board members to participate in development of strategic, priority activity.	Executive Director	4	Positive collaboration between all partners, especially during crisis to aim to adjust a common response. Recognition of the challenges associated with different roles and responsibilities. Embedding of the regional review process. Discussion forums supported to ensure opportunity for all contributors. New phase of activity to be supported in collaboration with SFC and comms from June 2023.
		011	Chair/ Executive Director	GCRB Executive does not have the necessary capacity and capability to deliver our objectives (reviewed May 2023).	2	2	4	Low (12)	➡	Ensure GCRB staffing is commensurate with Board responsibilities, and that collaborative management structure has capacity to achieve regional ambitions. Ensure Full Work Framework values fully embedded within GCRB's employee duties, and that capacity and core activity are supported through the review process. Monitor capacity to deliver. Monitor employee wellbeing, support etc.	Executive Director	2	The small GCRB Executive team plus Board Secretary role perform significant range of governance, finance, negative and other activities in line with GCRB role and responsibilities. Ensure in place of additional support, CFO and capacity are monitored to deliver high-functioning team. Proposals which bring together CFO, research role and review activity will be brought to relevant committee.
		012	Chair	GCRB Board membership does not have the necessary capacity and capability to deliver our objectives (reviewed Jan 2023).	1	1	2	Low (12)	➡	Maintain and improve arrangements to mitigate Covid-19 impacts on governance, specifically monitor announcements by Scottish Government/key regulators to support planning; monitor effectiveness of remote meetings; progress digital transformation of board business; plan for swift resumption of any deferred activity. Take forward looking approach to board development and succession planning across the region. Consider board capacity and specialisms through review process and beyond.	Board Secretary	2	Board Effects being used for circulation of papers; VC meetings software adopted; increased Board and Committee effectiveness in place of evaluation recommendations acted upon. Board recruitment successfully completed and processes now used effectively for two rounds of successful recruitment.
Strategic	Cross-Cutting Risk	013	Chair	A breach of legislation/guidance/code of practice results in a failure of governance (reviewed June 2023).	1	2	2	Low (12)	➡	Remain up to date with changes and new developments, ensure knowledge and training are relevant, adopt conservative approach, and take external advice as appropriate. Continue to take steps to ensure effective information management. Ensure effective reporting and monitoring arrangements.	Board Secretary	2	Chair and Board Secretary engagement in Good Governance Steering Group; annual review of governance framework undertaken, to be reported to AAC; Progressing to implement agreed plan of actions in respect of Data Protection reported to Audit and Assurance Committee. Board review activity to be delivered to board and action plan developed for delivery. Board development plan and associated activity developed and being enacted.
		014	Audit & Assurance Chair	Inadequate controls and preventative measures result in a breach of security/safety (e.g. cyber attack) (reviewed Jan 2023).	1	2	4	Low (12)	➡	Seek regular assurance to ongoing risks and responsive college plans to emerging issues. Seek assurance re IT systems, used by GCRB and provided by City of Glasgow College. Colleges all providing Cyber Essentials cover and assurance to GCRB, reported via committee. Collaboration between colleges provides opportunity for sharing of good practice. Recognise continued, on-going threat and requirement to maintain currency.	Finance & Resources Director	2	The move to remote working placed an increased reliance upon the IT systems and the stability/security of these. Experience to date has been positive and the systems have proved to be reliable. Continue to monitor and seek proactive improvements. Following discussion with Audit Committee, GCRB has provided to committee updates from colleges and provided other attack insurance. Additional assurances will be sought from colleges in early 23-23 phase to provide additional insight and assurance.
		015	Chair	Coronavirus has a long-lasting impact upon strategy, operations and finance for the region (reviewed Oct 2022).	3	2	9	Low (12)	➡	Maintain regular contact with Glasgow colleges, SFC, Colleges Scotland and all other relevant bodies, and maintain planning activity to manage and mitigate impact. Risk linked to longer-term financial sustainability issues as we move into later stages of the pandemic and post-pandemic landscapes. It was acknowledged at the Oct 22 board meeting that while many of the pressing challenges of the height of the pandemic have lessened, there remains a live and on-going challenge in dealing with the aftermath as well as issues exacerbated by heightening risks around finance and cost of living.	Executive Director	2	Chair and Executive Director participating in wide-range of information sharing and planning meetings, including conference calls with SFC, college principals, SDS, SFC, Colleges Scotland etc. Finance & Resources Director in regular communication with SFC and providing quick response to information. New policy and funding changes continue to mean that we are operating at pace and continue to seek improvements to ensure effective governance, sound financial management and agile processing and decision making, while recognising the significantly increased financial challenges.
		016	Audit & Assurance Chair	Fraudulent activity has an impact on reputation and finance (reviewed June 2022).	2	2	4	Low (12)	➡	Maintain clear lines of communication and reporting to Audit Committee for oversight. Continue to monitor evolving steps in investigative process, and provide updates where appropriate. Provide clear communication to stakeholders, and maintain clear partnership working approach with SFC.	Finance & Resources Director	2	Specific fraud matter considered by the Audit and Assurance Committee and Board on-going. Actions agreed by Committee previously have been implemented. Close working with SFC continues. Legal element of case completed. College currently working on developed Lessons Learned for subsequent sharing to GCRB and SFC. This is awaited and will be shared as soon as possible.
Operational	Cross-Cutting Risk	017	Executive Director	Scenario planning and stress testing is inadequate to mitigate against major incidents (reviewed June 2022).	2	2	4	Low (12)	➡	Initiate scenario planning activity and stress test key points of contact to ensure that core functions can be managed.	Executive Director	2	Planning and responsive actions were put in place to establish Executive Team, Committee and Board ways of working through the impact of Covid-19. These plans continue to be developed and tested to include Disaster Recovery and Scenario Planning activity. Ways of working are regularly considered and discussed by the Executive Team.
Strategic	Cross-Cutting Risk	018	Executive Director	GCRB and the Glasgow college system is unable to take the coordinated action to deliver and progress regional environment and sustainability strategy in line with Glasgow's commitment to the Scottish Colleges' Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency and associated climate action road map (reviewed June 2023).	2	2	4	Low (12)	➡	GCRB and the college region has identified environmental and sustainability action as a priority, and has invested in staff resource and associated activity. This has already seen the convening of a cross-colleges group, the first annual funding opportunities committee, GCRB and three colleges with a view to progressing a coordinated manner.	Executive Director	4	Two meetings of the cross-colleges working group have been convened, actions generated and coordinated work ongoing. EAUC membership and participation ongoing. Shared funding opportunities commenced. Strategy developed in draft form.