Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that risks to the University’s strategic plan are identified, analyzed and managed so that they are maintained at acceptable levels. The goal is to identify risks and determine how they may be treated, tolerated, transferred or terminated. The University is committed to establishing and maintaining a systematic approach to the identification and management of risk.

Scope

This Policy applies to all units of the University, both academic & support, including the campus companies and research centres. These units are collectively referred to hereinafter in this policy as the ‘University’.

Definition of risk

Risk is the chance or possibility of a loss, damage or injury or the failure to achieve objectives caused by an unwanted or uncertain action or event.

Overview

Risk management is the on-going process to identify, assess, manage and control potential events or situations in order to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of an organization’s objectives. The University endeavors to manage all risks which could prevent the attainment of its stated objectives, as recently set out in the DCU Strategic Plan 2012 – 2017, while at the same time not limiting the University’s ability to attain those same objectives by taking on an acceptable level of risks which may lead to positive outcomes. The University pays particular attention to the management and oversight of academic quality and any risks related thereto. Risk management also involves the identification and mapping of controls against known risks as well as identifying risks which are close to becoming an issue and may therefore require greater management intervention to mitigate their adverse effects.

The intention is that risk management will become embedded into the culture of management within the University rather than operate as a standalone function. As potential risks often outweigh the resources available to manage them, it is therefore important to apply available resources to mitigate risks in a cost effective and efficient manner.

The objectives of the University’s risk management process are:

1. To protect the assets and reputation of the University and to ensure its continued financial well-being.
2. To support better decision making through a good understanding of risks and their likely impact.

This policy lays out the framework for a formal risk management process by establishing responsibility for risk identification, analysis, management and oversight.
Policy statement

1. Risk management and oversight is a University wide responsibility that calls for the active involvement and cooperation of management and staff.

2. The University’s Governing Authority, through its Risk Committee, is ultimately responsible for exercising oversight over the University’s system of risk management. The Executive is responsible for coordinating the development and maintenance of the risk management function. The Executive will be assisted in this role by the Chief Operations Officer, the Risk & Compliance Officer (who are collectively referred to as the “Risk Management Function”) and the Risk Advisory Committee.

3. The Chief Operations Officer is responsible for the ongoing development and day-to-day management of the University’s risk management function and will be assisted in this role by the Risk & Compliance Officer. The function will report regularly on risks and their management to the Governing Authority Risk Committee, the Executive and the Audit Committee.

4. Detailed risk registers will be maintained at unit level and Heads of units shall ensure that risk assessments are performed at least annually for their area of responsibility.

5. Heads of unit are responsible for the day-to-day management of risks under their control. They will be assisted in this role by more senior management as necessary and will cooperate with the Risk Management Function.

6. An Institutional Risk Register will be maintained by the Risk Management Function and will be prepared and reviewed at least annually. This register will contain risks which will either have the potential to affect the University as a whole or be of significantly serious level at both a unit and University level to merit their inclusion. Potential risks for inclusion in this high level register will be reviewed by the Risk Advisory Committee, the Executive and the Governing Authority Risk Committee prior to final approval by the Governing Authority.

7. The risk management function will develop and implement operating procedures to ensure that risk management is embedded across all decision making functions of the University.

8. The Executive will advise the Governing Authority on risk management strategies and provide periodic reports and analysis of risk findings.

9. The Risk & Compliance Officer will be responsible for University wide communications on risk matters.

10. The Executive, with the assistance of the Risk Management Function, is responsible for coordinating the implementation of this policy and for providing guidance on the interpretation of specific policy requirements.

11. The Executive will support the Risk Management Function where important key decisions are required.

Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility for risk runs throughout the University. The primary roles of the various groups and units involved in risk management, which have been referred to earlier in this policy, are summarized in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group / Unit</th>
<th>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governing Authority</td>
<td>1. Overall responsibility for risk management within the University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Final approval of the University Risk Management Policy and any amendments thereto.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Final approval of the Institutional Risk Register.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group / Unit</td>
<td>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</td>
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| Governing Authority Risk Committee | 1. The Committee exercises oversight of the University’s risk management process in line with its terms of reference which have been approved by the Governing Authority.  
2. The objective of the Committee is to oversee & evaluate the risk management systems in place within the University and in particular with regard to the risk management guidelines as set out in the IUA/HEA Code of Governance of Irish Universities 2012.   
3. The Committee reviews the Institutional Risk Register and the key themes emerging from the unit level risk registers.   
4. The committee advises the Governing Authority on risk related matters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Executive                         | 1. Monitors progress in risk management.  
2. Coordination and development of the Risk Management Function.  
3. Supports the Risk Management Function where key decisions are required.  
4. Makes proposals to the Governing Authority on possible risks to be included in the draft Institutional Risk Register.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Risk Advisory Committee           | 1. Advisory role to the Executive on risk matters relating to policy, framework, approach, resources, risk appetite and risk tolerances.  
2. Oversight of the University’s risk management function at an operational level.  
3. Reviews and advises the Executive regarding the draft Institutional Risk Register.  
| Chief Operations Officer          | 1. Responsible for the operations of the Risk Management Function.  
2. Supports the development of the Risk Management Function.  
3. Member of the Executive responsible for risk management.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Risk and Compliance Officer       | 1. Assists all University units in the implementation of the University Risk Management Policy.  
2. Maintains a database of all unit registers and the Institutional Risk Register.  
3. Assists units in preparing & updating their individual risk registers.  
4. Preparation of, and reporting on, risk metrics and risk analysis.  
5. Responsible for University wide communications on risk matters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Senior Management Group           | 1. Performs the initial annual review of unit registers for all units under their control.  
2. Prepares the draft Institutional Risk Register.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Executive Deans, Heads of Schools & Support Units, Directors of Research Centres | 1. Ensure risks are identified and managed on a day to day basis in relation to the units which report to them.  
2. Prepare and maintain unit level risk registers.  
3. Cooperate with the risk management function in the reporting and analysis of risks within their units.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Audit Committee                   | The Audit Committee coordinates with the Governing Authority Risk Committee in respect of its oversight of the University’s risk management function.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Internal Audit                    | The Internal Auditor has observer status at Risk Advisory Committee meetings.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| All staff / employees             | Ensure cooperation with all parties in the implementation of the University risk management process and policy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
Appendix – Overview of the University’s Risk Management Structure