

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

REPORT FROM AUDIT, RISK AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE TO COUNCIL

10 October 2024

For information:

1. MEMBERSHIP

The Chair reported that the membership of Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee for 2024-25 is as below.

Appointed Members:

Bill MacLeod, Chair (2025)
Dr Mike Goodwin (2025)
Marta Phillips OBE (2025)
Mags Scott (2025)
Dr Dean White (2024)
Tom Wooldridge (2027)

2. UPDATE ON SECTOR WIDE AND INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

It was reported that legislation on the Freedom of Information Act had been paused by the current government, and the University would therefore pause implementation of the Code of Practice.

The Office for Students (OfS) had confirmed that Condition of Registration E6: Harassment and sexual misconduct would come into effect on 1 August 2025 and at that time it would be published as part of the OfS regulatory framework. A report on the University's readiness for the new condition prepared by the Changing the Culture Group had been considered by University Executive Board and would be provided to Council at its next meeting on 14 October 2024.

3. FINANCE UPDATES

The Committee received an update from Nick Collins, Chief Financial Officer, Project Scorecards and the Transparent Approach to (TRAC) Report. Anna Munro, Deputy Director of Financial Control, provided an update on Financial Control following recent audit findings.

4. INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATES

Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee received an update from Jess Fogarty, Head of Internal Audit. Progress against the Internal Audit Plan for 2023-24 had completed as expected. The Internal Audit plan for 2024-25 was approved by the Committee and they also endorsed the indicative plans for 2025-26 and 2026-27.

5. NUIT UPDATES

The Committee received a report from Clair Elliot, Director of NUIT, Jason Smith, Cyber Security Programme Director and Jason Bain, Chief Information Security Officer on information security governance and cyber security programme delivery progress.

6. OFFICE FOR STUDENTS

Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee received an update on reportable events submitted by the University and the Committee also received the University's Assurance Framework for the Conditions of Registration.

7. EXTERNAL REVIEW OF AUDIT, RISK AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee received a report from Carol Burns, Advance HE Associate, following the recent external review of the Committee. It was noted the Committee was operating in line with best practice, with a strong and diverse membership, constructively challenging meetings and a culture of openness. The list of 14 recommendations and 14 suggestions would be reviewed for implementation.

Bill MacLeod
Chair of Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee
11 October 2024