

Finance Committee

Date of Meeting	17 September 2025
Paper No.	FC1-H
Agenda Item	4.3
Subject of Paper	Strategic Risk Review
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Drew McGowan Associate Director of Governance and Risk
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Action	For Discussion

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. To discuss the Strategic Risk Register for risks reported to the Committee, agreeing to recommend any changes to the Board of Management for final approval.
- 1.2. To note the Risk Management Action Plans for risks reported to the Committee.

2. Consultation

2.1. All strategic risk owners were consulted during the latest quarterly review.

3. Key Insights

3.1. Risk management is a key component of the College's internal control and governance arrangements and, as such, is an important responsibility of the Board of Management, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and the Senior Management Team (SMT). Final approval of the Strategic Risk register is reserved to the Board and the Audit & Assurance Committee has oversight over the College's risk management approach.

3.2. ELT and SMT members are invited to review the risks they own on a quarterly basis. This is to ensure that the College, our Board and its committees, remain aware of any changes in the risk environment and that our risk management plans remain up-to-date and effective. Committees review the risks that are within their remit and recommend any changes to the Board for final approval.

3.3. The Strategic Risk Register and the MAPs are enclosed for the Committee's consideration and approval of members. Four strategic risks are reported to the Committee. There is one proposed risk score change in this review:

No.	Risk Title	Previous Score	Proposed Score
SR23	Failure to secure a sustainable model/level of funding	● 16 (4 x 4)	● 20 (4 x 5)

4. Impact and Implications

4.1. The effective management, control and mitigation of risks are essential to the College's institutional and financial sustainability, compliance, reputation and future growth.

Appendix 1: Strategic Risk Register

Appendix 2: Risk Management Action Plans

Strategic Risk Register

The Risk			Assessment			Changes		Board
ID	Risk Title	Owner	Impact	Prob.	Net Score	Trend	Updated	Committee
SR1	Failure to support successful student outcomes and progression	VPSE	5	2	10	↔	Aug '25	Learning
SR2	Failure to establish an optimal pedagogical model	VPSE	5	1	5	↔	Aug '25	Learning
SR4	Failure of the College's duty of care to students	VPSE	5	2	10	↔	Aug '25	Learning
SR5	Failure to realise planned benefits of Regionalisation	Pr DPr	3	2	6	↘	Aug '25	Conveners'
SR6	Negative impact upon the College's reputation	VPCDI	3	3	9	↔	Aug '25	Development
SR7	Failure to achieve improved business development with stakeholders	VPCDI	3	3	9	↔	Aug '25	Development
SR8	Failure to manage strategic risks associated with CGI Ltd	VPCDI	5	2	10	↔	Aug '25	Development
SR9	Failure to manage performance and achieve improved performance	DE	5	2	10	↘	Aug '25	Audit
SR10	Failure to attract, engage, and retain suitable staff	VPPCS	4	4	16	↔	Aug '25	People
SR12	Negative impact of statutory compliance failure	DPr ADGR	5	2	10	↔	Aug '25	Audit
SR13	Failure of compliance with Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) duties	DPr ADGR	5	2	10	↔	Aug '25	Audit
SR14	Failure of compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)	DPr	4	2	8	↔	Aug '25	Audit
SR15	Failure of corporate governance	Pr ADGR	5	1	5	↔	Aug '25	Audit
SR16	Failure of business continuity	ADGR	4	2	8	↔	Aug '25	Audit
SR17	Negative impact of industrial action	VPPCS	5	1	5	↘	Aug '25	People
SR18	Failure of IT system security	DIT	5	2	10	↔	Aug '25	People
SR19	Failure to achieve operating surplus	CFO	4	4	16	↔	Aug '25	Finance
SR20	Failure to maximise income via diversification	CFO VPCDI	4	3	12	↔	Aug '25	Development
SR21	Failure to obtain funds from the Foundation for the College's priorities	CFO	4	3	12	↔	Aug '25	Finance
SR23	Failure to secure a sustainable model/level of funding	CFO	4	5	20	↗	Aug '25	Finance
SR24	Failure to secure sufficient capital investment	CFO	4	4	16	↔	Aug '25	Finance
SR27	Failure to prepare for the impact and harness the capabilities of AI	VPSE	3	3	9	↔	Aug '25	Learning
SR28	Failure to manage strategic, physical and digital assets and infrastructure effectively	DPr CFO	4	3	12	↔	Aug '25	Development

Impact and Probability Criteria

Score	Impact	Probability
1	Insignificant: the risk has minimal to no effect on the College's operations, objectives, reputation, stakeholders or financial sustainability.	Highly Unlikely: the likelihood of the risk occurring is minimal. It would be estimated that the risk has a 1-5% chance of happening.
2	Minor: the risk may cause slight disruption or impact on the College's operations, objectives, reputation, stakeholders or financial sustainability.	Unlikely: the likelihood of the risk occurring is unlikely but still possible. It would be estimated that the risk has a 6-25% chance of happening.
3	Moderate: the risk has a noticeable impact or disruption, affecting the College's operations, objectives, reputation, stakeholders or financial sustainability.	Possible: the likelihood of the risk occurring is reasonable. It would be estimated that the risk has a 26-50% chance of happening.
4	Major: the risk has a substantial impact on the College's operations, objectives, reputation, stakeholders or financial sustainability.	Likely: the likelihood of the risk occurring is probable. It would be estimated that the risk has a 51-75% chance of happening.
5	Critical: the risk is a severe threat to the College's operations, objectives, reputation, stakeholders or financial sustainability.	Almost Certain: the likelihood of the risk occurring is highly likely. It would be estimated that the risk has more than a 75% chance of happening.

Key

Pr	Principal & CEO
DPr	Depute Principal & COO
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
VPSE	Vice Principal Student Experience
VPCDI	Vice Principal Corporate Development
VPPCS	Vice Principal People & Corporate Services
ADGR	Associate Director of Governance & Risk
DE	Director of Excellence
DCS	Director of Corporate Support
DSE	Director of Student Experience
DIT	Director of IT

- ↗ New risk or existing risk score has increased since the previous review.
- ↘ Risk score has decreased since the previous review.
- ↔ Risk score has not changed since the previous review.

Risk Matrix

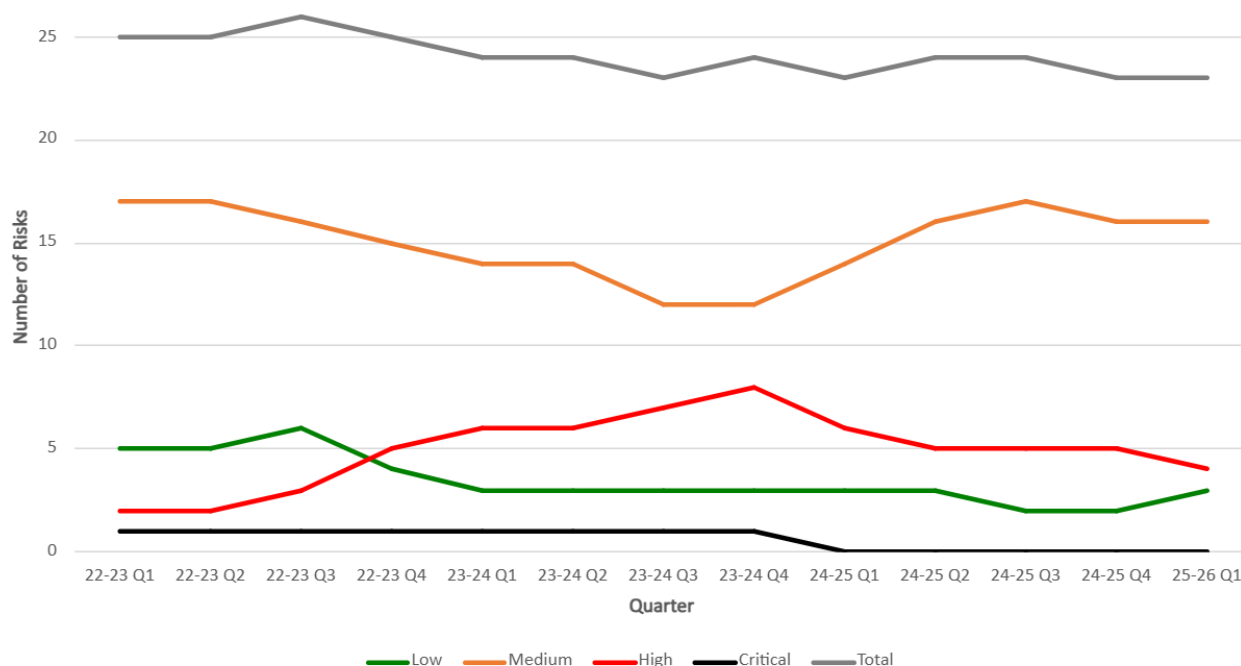
	5	5	10	15	20	25
5	5	10	15	20	25	
4	4	8	12	16	20	
3	3	6	9	12	15	
2	2	4	6	8	10	
1	1	2	3	4	5	
	1	2	3	4	5	

- LIKELIHOOD**
- IMPACT**
- Low (1-5)** Acceptable level of risk subject to periodic review
 - Medium (6-12)** Moderate level of risk subject to regular monitoring and mitigating actions and plans being in place
 - High (15-20)** Unacceptable level of risk requiring immediate actions and plans to prevent or mitigate
 - Critical (25)** Critical level of risk requiring urgent attention and actions to prevent or mitigate

Risk Appetite

Risk Appetite ¹	Risk Categories
Avoid: The College avoids any form of risk, striving to maintain an entirely risk-free approach.	Preparedness
Averse: The College prefers to accept minimal risk, prioritising safe decision-making while recognising potential limitations on innovation and opportunities.	Compliance and Governance
Cautious: The College is willing to accept some low risks while primarily favouring safe decision-making, acknowledging the potential for restricted innovation and limited outcomes.	Financial
Moderate: The College tends to expose itself to moderate levels of risk, aiming for acceptable, though not overly ambitious, outcomes.	Reputation
Open: The College is open to innovative decisions and strategic implementations, prioritising productive outcomes even when accompanied by elevated risk levels.	Change and Development People and Culture
Hungry: The College actively seeks pioneering decisions and strategic implementations, embracing substantial risk to secure highly successful outcomes and benefits.	Education and Student Experience

Score Trend Chart



¹ Full risk appetite statements for each risk category are outlined in the Risk Management Policy.

Risk Management Action Plans

The Risk						Net Score				Gross Score			Changes			
ID	Risk Title	Owner	Risk/Treatment Description	Developments/Commentary	Appetite	Impact	Prob.	Score	Target	Impact	Prob.	Score	Trend	Updated	History	
SR19	Failure to achieve operating surplus	CFO	There is a risk that the College fails to achieve an operating surplus through the control of costs and achievement of income targets. To address this risk, the College employs a comprehensive approach to financial management. Strategies encompass securing SFC funding by meeting credit targets. Vigilant control of course fees, non-SFC fundable income, and other revenue sources are emphasised. Additionally, expenditure is carefully managed through controlling staff costs, optimising staff structures, and closely monitoring operating expenses. Potential impacts of inflation and energy costs are also proactively considered.	Aug' 25 : The updated forecast at Q3 was a deficit of £68k. The improved forecast from £500k budgeted deficit has continued. The Q4 year-end forecast will be reported to the Finance Committee in September 2025. May '25: The updated forecast at Q2 showed a £300k deficit. There has been a continual improvement since the budget was approved. An updated position at Q3 will be provided to the Finance Committee's next meeting in June 2025. Jan '25: The College is still forecasting a small deficit for 2024-25, which is reflected in the current score. The forecast for Q2 is scheduled for the end of January and will be tabled at the next meeting of the Finance Committee.	Cautious	4	4	16	5	5	5	5	25	↔	Aug '25	Nov '24: Score increased from 12 to 16. Sept '24: Score decreased from 20 to 12. Aug '24: Score decreased from 25 to 20. Aug '23: Edited for transfer to new MAP. Sept '22: Score increased from 20 to 25. Feb '22: Score increased from 12 to 20.
SR21	Failure to obtain funds from the Foundation for the College's priorities	CFO	There is a risk that the College may not successfully secure funds from the CoGC Foundation for the College's current priorities and needs, resulting in inadequate resourcing for planned initiatives and improvements. To mitigate this risk, the Terms of Reference for the College Foundation are thoughtfully framed while respecting its independence, with external legal counsel contributing their expertise. This strategic framing enhances the potential for successful funding applications. The College ensures strict adherence to the defined Terms of Reference, guiding the preparation and management of all funding applications. This rigorous approach aims to maximise the chances of securing Foundation funds for planned initiatives, preventing the under-resourcing of crucial projects.	Aug' 25: £1.3m remains in Foundation and the College's plan is to make applications to draw down all funds for capital expenditure in 2025-26 and 2026-27. Mar '25: As reported to the Finance Committee, the CFO has been tasked with developing an investment strategy for the College which will consider future options for arms-length foundation. Jan '25: Two applications referenced below were successful. The College's plan is to make applications for capital projects in 2024-25 and 2025-26, adhering strictly to the TOR. As discussed at a recent meeting of the Finance Committee, with the balance diminishing, the College should soon consider future options.	Cautious	4	3	12	3	5	4	20	↔	Aug '25	Aug '23: Edited for transfer to new MAP. June '23: Score increased from 4 to 12.	

ID	Risk Title	Owner	Risk/Treatment Description	Developments/Commentary	Appetite	Impact	Prob.	Score	Target	Impact	Prob.	Score	Trend	Updated	History
SR23	Failure to secure a sustainable model/level of funding	CFO	There is a risk that an agreed and sustainable model of grant funding for the College may not be achieved. Uncertainties in funding methodologies (e.g., capital, national bargaining, IT) and the impact Covid-19 contribute to the risk. As the proportion of SFC income grows against non-SFC income, the impact of this risk will become greater. To manage this risk, the College focuses on robust curriculum planning and maintains close collaboration with other Glasgow colleges. It actively engages in transparent discussions with the SFC to communicate funding needs effectively. Proactive planning and adaptability are emphasised, allowing the College to navigate changing funding scenarios.	Aug '25: The financial position reported in May 2025 remains unchanged. The new SFC funding model does not materially benefit the College in the way that we hoped. Our price per credit remains the lowest in the sector. May '25: Despite the draft budget 1.8%, the SFC's indicative funding increase was to fund pension cost and lecturer pay rises. Therefore this an actual reduction in funding of 0.2%. The SFC has proposed a new funding model and the College is in discussions with them regarding this to understand long-term implications. Jan '25: The Scottish Government's Draft Budget announced in Dec '24 indicated a 1.8% increase in revenue funding and a 4.9% increase in capital funding. Given the current rate of inflation at circa 3%, this is a further real-terms cut.	Cautious	4	5	20	5	5	5	25	↗	Aug '25	Aug '25: Score increased from 16 to 20. Jan '24: Score increased from 12 to 16. Aug '23: Edited for transfer to new MAP.
SR24	Failure to secure sufficient capital investment	CFO	There is a risk of the College failing to secure sufficient capital investment to replace essential equipment as it reaches the end of its useful life, due to a substantial annual capital funding gap. To manage this risk, the College has developed a capital asset replacement plan, requiring around £3m - £4m annually. However, the current SFC Maintenance and Capital Grant is only approximately £1.3m, resulting in a significant funding gap. The College will actively engage with SFC to secure a substantial increase in annual capital funding. The College also plans to seek assistance from the College Foundation and enhance financial performance to allocate more funds for asset replacement.	Aug '25: In June 2025, the Finance Committee approved capital expenditure for 2025-26. SFC have confirmed the £1.37m grant; however, the College's maintenance needs continue to outstrip the funding provided by the SFC, emphasising the importance of phasing and prioritising expenditure in this way. As outlined in SR21, the Foundation funds will be used to fund capital expenditure in the next two years but it has a diminishing balance. Jan '25: As referenced in SR23, the Draft Budget included a 4.9% increase in capital funding. For the College, this equates to a £60k increase and brings the total grant to £1.37m.	Cautious	4	4	16	3	5	4	20	↔	Aug '25	Oct '23: Score increased from 12 to 16. Aug '23: Edited for transfer to new MAP.