

## Examinations risk management policy

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### I Overview

- I.1 Risk is the possibility that an action or event will adversely affect the ability to operate effectively and/or achieve planned objectives. Risks relate to every area of the Examination Board's functions, both strategic and operational.
- I.2 Some risks are inconsequential and can be easily overcome if they occur, but others pose a more serious threat to the viability of the business and on occasion the health and safety of those involved. Consequently they must be assessed, recorded and reported, so that they can be appropriately and effectively managed.
- I.3 To work effectively, the risk management process requires assignment of responsibilities to relevant staff and allocation of appropriate resources, training, and development of risk awareness. Identifying and reporting risks is the responsibility of every member of staff.
- I.4 As a consequence of managing identified risks:
- planned objectives are more likely to be achieved
  - regulatory compliance is more likely to be maintained
  - risks are less likely to occur
  - when risks occur their impact is reduced
  - optimum operational efficiency and effectiveness can be achieved
  - there will be better anticipation of what may go wrong
  - there can be more efficient allocation of finances and resources
  - there will be better decision-making, planning, and prioritisation
  - teachers, candidates, and staff benefit by increased confidence and enhanced experience of services and/or working practices
- I.5 Key factors which are considered when identifying risks include (but are not limited to):
- financial loss / instability
  - operational inefficiency and confusion
  - drop in customer service standards
  - lack of regulatory compliance
  - inability to meet published deadlines
  - impact on validity of qualifications, particularly unreliable or inconsistent results
  - increased likelihood of malpractice
  - poor staff morale
- I.6 This policy sets out the RAD Examinations Board's approach to risk management. It supports the Academy's corporate approach to risk management which is the ultimate responsibility of the Board

of Trustees. It outlines key aspects of the risk management process, and identifies responsibilities and reporting procedures.

## **2 Risk register**

- 2.1 The Examinations Board risk register and contingency plan is maintained on a continuous basis and formally reviewed once a year along with this policy. Emerging risks are added as required and mitigating actions are updated as appropriate.
- 2.2 The risk register and contingency plan records:
  - identified risks and their likely impact
  - mitigating actions
  - risk ratings, based on a standard matrix of likelihood and impact
  - contingency (action should risk occur)
- 2.3 Actions arising from the risk register are placed on the operational plan (see 3.1 below) and are monitored by the Examinations Strategy and Operations Committee.

## **3 Processes**

The following procedures are in place to help identify and monitor risks:

### **3.1 Business planning**

- 3.1.1 The Examinations Board's operational plan is used to set and monitor objectives, agree action plans, and allocate resources.
- 3.1.2 The content of the operational plan is drawn from the corporate strategic plan, agreed operational activities and actions, and actions arising from the annual regulatory self-assessment exercise.

### **3.2 Financial planning**

- 3.2.1 The annual budgeting process is used to plan financial resourcing during the year. The budget is monitored via reporting to the Finance sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees, attended by the Director of Examinations.

### **3.3 Risk assessments**

- 3.3.1 An annual risk assessment of key functions and operations is undertaken and reported to the Health and Safety Committee.

3.3.2 Risk assessments are also carried out in respect of examination tours when information about a potential issue (e.g. civil unrest, pandemic, travel restriction) is received. The objective of such risk assessments is to determine whether the tour should go ahead. If it is decided that it should go ahead, the examiner is notified so that they can make an informed decision about travel, and where they are unwilling to travel in the circumstances, an alternative examiner is sought. Where it is decided that the tour should not go ahead or when an examiner who is willing to travel cannot be found, policy and procedures are in place to postpone and rearrange the exams.

3.3.3 When undertaking a risk assessment, the following, as applicable, should be considered:

- operational impact
- health and safety
- financial impact
- human resources
- reputation

#### 3.4 Self assessment

3.4.1 In order to comply with the requirements of the regulators in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, a self assessment exercise is carried out annually. Risks identified from the self assessment are placed onto the risk register and all actions are placed on the operational plan.

3.4.2 In order to comply with the requirements of SQA Accreditation, a self-assessment on the basis of continuous improvement is carried out and submitted annually. Actions arising from this exercise are included on the submission and added to the operational plan.

#### 3.5 Risk log

3.5.1 In order for staff to highlight any additional risks which may occur during the year, a risk log is maintained. Risks added to the log can be added to the risk register at the point of the annual review if they are felt to be of sufficient seriousness.

### 4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Director of Examinations is responsible for the development, review and implementation of the risk management strategy.

4.2 The Examinations Business and Customer Service Manager is responsible for the maintenance and review of the risk management policy and the risk register, for co-ordinating the annual risk assessment exercise, and for maintaining the risk log.

4.3 All staff are responsible for identifying risks within their areas of work, providing risk status updates to their managers or directly to the Examinations Business and Customer Service Manager, and for encouraging good risk management practice within their areas of work.

## 5 Monitoring and review

5.1 This policy is monitored and reviewed on an annual basis by the Examinations Strategy and Operations Committee.

5.2 The committee considers the following matters related to risk management:

- identification, evaluation, and management of significant risks
- ensuring that the risk register is current and complete
- ensuring that risks are being actively managed and appropriate controls are in place and working effectively
- review of the Examinations Board's approach to risk management and approval of changes or improvements to its processes and procedures
- ensuring that adequate information, including the status of risks and controls, is provided to the Artistic and Examinations sub-Committee and the Board of Trustees.

5.3 This policy, and the risk register, are signed off by the Director of Examinations.

Policy Adopted: July 2018

Policy Review Date: March 2019

Circulation list:

- RAD website
- National Directors, National and Regional Managers and RAD Representatives
- SQA Accreditation



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