UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MINUTES

The 41st meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee held on Tuesday 24 March 2026

Members Present (in person): John Connors, Stanley Alozie, **Members present (online):** Dr Jackie Grant **In attendance**: Professor Sasha Roseneil, Professor Michael Luck, Jacinda Humphry, Jim Andrews, Laila El Baradei, Maddie Holman (KPMG), David I'Anson (BDO), Matt Scott (until item 7), Amy Rogerson (Secretary) **In attendance (online):** Rosemary Martin, Richard Hewes (KPMG) **By invitation:** Marina Pedreiro-Vilarino (item 8.1)	
1.	**Welcome and Housekeeping**
1.1	The Chair welcomed Committee members and informed them that Matt Scott would be in attendance until the completion of item 7, and that Marina Pedreiro-Vilarino would join the meeting for item 8.1.
1.2	Rosemary Martin, Chair of Council, was in attendance via Teams.
2	**Apologies for absence**
2.1	Apologies were noted for REDACTED: GDPR and DATA PROTECTION
3	**Declaration of new conflicts of interest**
3.1	Nothing was declared.
4	**Minutes**
4.1	The Committee APPROVED the **minutes of Audit and Risk's Committee Meeting** on 25 November 2025.
4.2	REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE
5	**Matters arising from the Minutes not otherwise provided for on the agenda**
5.1	Audit and Risk Committee NOTED **matters brought forward** from the previous Audit and Risk Committee meetings
5.2	All items were confirmed as completed and closed.
6	**Chair's actions**
6.1	Audit and Risk Committee NOTED that no formal action had been taken by the Chair on behalf of the Committee since the previous meeting.

6.2	The Chair noted his attendance at recent sector briefings, which covered a range of common reflections relevant to Audit and Risk Committees across the sector.
6.3	The Chair raised a question regarding whether Audit and Risk Committees elsewhere were taking a role in matters relating to academic quality. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that academic quality is overseen through the University's academic governance structures and sits with Senate and therefore does not generally fall within the remit of the Audit and Risk Committee. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the governance arrangements for universities differ based on their individual histories, for instance, there is a difference between Royal Charter universities and post-1992 universities' governance arrangements.
6.4	The Chair of Council expressed interest in creating further opportunities for Council and Senate members to engage informally, noting the value of enabling constructive dialogue between the two bodies.
7.	**Institutional Risk Register**
7.1	Audit and Risk Committee CONSIDERED the updated **Institutional Risk Register.**
7.2	The Vice-Chancellor provided an overview of the current risk position, noting the inclusion of a new risk – REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE. Members agreed that target dates and rationales should be articulated clearly, and that context for the overall assessment should be strengthened in the accompanying paper.
7.3	Three areas were considered in more depth:
7.3.1	**Cyber Security:** The Committee noted ongoing work REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE. A consolidated action plan will be brought to the Committee in the Summer.
7.3.2	**Financial Sustainability:** The Committee considered the financial outlook REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITVE. The Committee emphasised the importance of clear explanation of assumptions, constraints and dependencies in the risk narrative. It was noted that the Finance, Resources and Performance Committee had also considered this risk at its recent meeting
7.3.3	**Physical and Digital Infrastructure:** The Committee received an update REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE. Members noted the importance of ensuring that risk assessments reflect both current mitigations and longer-term plans.
7.4	REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE. Members also requested that sector practice and contextual factors be made clearer in future iterations.
7.5	REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE
7.6	**ACTION: Cyber Security summary report to be presented to Audit and Risk Committee in the Summer term.**
8	**Compliance Regulation and Assurance**
8.1	Audit and Risk Committee NOTED the **Annual Donations Report** which was presented by Marina Pedreira-Vilarino, Director of Advancement.
8.1.1	REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE.

8.2	Audit and Risk Committee NOTED the **Annual Data Management Report** and that, on the basis of the information provided, the University is compliant with its data protection obligations.
8.2.1	Activity levels were broadly consistent with previous years, with most reported breaches arising from email use.
8.2.2	The Committee noted ongoing work on impact assessments, records management updates, and preparations for changes arising from the new Data Use and Access Act.
8.3	Audit and Risk Committee CONSIDERED the **Interim Office for Students Conditions Compliance Report.**
8.3.1	The Vice-Chancellor advised that the University continues to assess itself as compliant with the OfS Conditions of Registration. REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE.
8.3.2	The Committee noted reportable event activity since the last meeting of the Committee and received an update on work to implement the new subcontracting condition (E10).
8.4	Audit and Risk Committee NOTED there had been no use of external and internal auditors for non-audit activity.
9.	**Policy and Regulation**
9.1	Audit and Risk Committee CONSIDERED the **updated Financial Regulations**, noting that FRPC will recommend them to Council.
9.1.1	The revisions align with the new Scheme of Delegation and faculty structure. A reference indicating Audit and Risk Committee as a recommending body will be corrected.
9.2	Audit and Risk Committee RECOMMENDED the **Purchasing and Procurement policy** for approval by Council.
9.3	Audit and Risk Committee RECOMMENDED **the Policy on the Use of External and Internal Auditors for Non-Audit Activity** for approval by Council
10.	**Internal Audit**
10.1	Audit and Risk Committee CONSIDERED an **update report from the Internal Auditors**, KPMG, on progress of outstanding recommendations.
10.1.1	The Committee noted substantial progress on the UUK Code Compliance Internal Audit follow-up actions, with the majority now completed. The financial statements benchmarking work was also noted and was considered informative in highlighting key financial challenges.
10.2	Audit and Risk Committee CONSIDERED **Internal Audit Reports** REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE
10.2.1	REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE
10.2.2	**ACTION: REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE audit update to be presented to Audit and Risk Committee in the Summer term.**
10.2.3	REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE

10.2.4	The Committee briefly discussed union representation in audits and agreed that this should normally be considered when audit owners were reviewing the scope of each audit.
11.	**Standing item on fraud, litigation or serious incidents**
11.1	Audit and Risk Committee NOTED an oral report that there had been no incidences of fraud or suspected fraud since the last meeting, and no ongoing or prospective litigation since the last meeting. REDACTED: COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE
11.2	Audit and Risk Committee NOTED an oral report confirming that there had been no serious incidences falling within the OfS charities' reporting criteria since the last meeting. It was agreed that, subject to the review of the University Secretary, this item would be removed from the standing items and incorporated into item 11.3, subject to confirmation.
11.2.1	**ACTION: University Secretary to review the inclusion of the oral report on serious incidences falling within the OfS charities' reporting criteria as a standing item.**
11.3	Audit and Risk Committee NOTED an oral report on any events reported to the OfS in line with its "reportable events" criteria and noted that this was covered within the earlier OfS Compliance report item.
11.4	The Committee NOTED that there had been no near misses since the last meeting.
12.	**Any other business**
12.1	The Committee NOTED that the Chair had received an email to Committee Chairs regarding the publication of Committee minutes on Sussex Direct and the Committee web pages. The University Secretary provided an update on the current publication arrangements and confirmed that a new publication framework had been agreed in Autumn 2025.