

Risk Appetite Statements 2024-2025 - Draft for Consideration

Member consultees

Officer consultees

Risk appetite level description

Risk Category	Risk definition	Averse	Minimal	Cautious	Open	Eager
Strategy	<b>Strategy Risk:</b> Risks arising from identifying and pursuing a strategy, which is poorly defined, is based on flawed or inaccurate data or fails to support the delivery of commitments, plans or objectives due to a changing macro-environment (e.g. political, economic, social, technological, environment and legislative change).	Guiding principles or rules in place that limit risk in organisational actions and the pursuit of priorities. Organisational strategy is refreshed at 4+ year intervals	Guiding principles or rules in place that minimise risk in organisational actions and the pursuit of priorities. Organisational strategy is refreshed at 4-5 year intervals	Guiding principles or rules in place that allow considered risk taking in organisational actions and the pursuit of priorities. Organisational strategy is refreshed at 3-4 year intervals	Guiding principles or rules in place that are receptive to considered risk taking in organisational actions and the pursuit of priorities. Organisational strategy is refreshed at 2-3 year intervals	Guiding principles or rules in place that welcome considered risk taking in organisational actions and the pursuit of priorities. Organisational strategy is refreshed at 1-2 year intervals
Governance	<b>Governance Risk:</b> Risks arising from unclear plans, priorities, authorities and accountabilities, and/or ineffective or disproportionate oversight of decision-making and/or performance.	Avoid actions with associated risk. No decisions are taken outside of processes and oversight / monitoring arrangements. Organisational controls minimise risk of fraud with significant levels of resource focused on detection and prevention	Willing to consider low risk actions which support delivery of priorities and objectives. Processes and oversight / monitoring arrangements enable limited risk taking. Organisational controls maximise fraud prevention detection and deterrence through robust controls and sanctions	Willing to consider actions where benefits outweigh risks. Processes, and oversight / monitoring arrangements enable cautious risk taking. Controls enable fraud prevention, detection and deterrence by maintaining appropriate controls and sanctions.	Receptive to taking difficult decisions when benefits outweigh risks. Processes, and oversight / monitoring arrangements enable considered risk taking. Levels of fraud controls are varied to reflect scale of risks with costs.	Ready to take difficult decisions when benefits outweigh risks. Processes, and oversight / monitoring arrangements support informed risk taking. Levels of fraud controls are varied to reflect scale of risk with costs.
Operations	<b>Operations Risk:</b> Risks arising from inadequate, poorly designed or ineffective/inefficient internal processes resulting in fraud, error, impaired customer service (quality and/or quantity of service), non-compliance and/or poor value for money.	Defensive approach to operational delivery - aim to maintain/protect, rather than create or innovate. Priority for close management controls and oversight with limited devolved authority.	Innovations largely avoided unless essential. Decision making authority held by senior management.	Tendency to stick to the status quo, innovations generally avoided unless necessary. Decision making authority generally held by senior management. Management through leading indicators.	<b>Innovation supported, with clear demonstration of benefit / improvement in management control. Responsibility for non critical decisions may be devolved.</b>	Innovation pursued – desire to ‘break the mould’ and challenge current working practices. High levels of devolved authority – management by trust / lagging indicators rather than close control.
Legal	<b>Legal Risks:</b> Risks arising from a defective transaction, a claim being made (including a defence to a claim or a counterclaim) or some other legal event occurring that results in a liability or other loss, or a failure to take appropriate measures to meet legal or regulatory requirements or to protect assets (for example, intellectual property).	Play safe and avoid anything which could be challenged, even unsuccessfully.	<b>Want to be very sure we would win any challenge.</b>	<b>Want to be reasonably sure we would win any challenge.</b>	Challenge will be problematic we are likely to win, and the gain will outweigh the adverse impact.	Chances of losing are high but exceptional benefits could be realised
Property	<b>Property Risks:</b> Risks arising from property deficiencies or poorly designed or ineffective/inefficient safety management resulting in non-compliance and/or harm and suffering to employees, contractors, service users or the public.	Obligation to comply with strict policies for purchase, rental, disposal, construction, and refurbishment that ensures producing good value for money.	Recommendation to follow strict policies for purchase, rental, disposal, construction, and refurbishment that ensures producing good value for money.	<b>Requirement to adopt arrange of agreed solutions for purchase, rental, disposal, construction, and refurbishment that ensures producing good value for money.</b>	<b>Consider benefits of agreed solutions for purchase, rental, disposal, construction, and refurbishment that meeting organisational requirements.</b>	Application of dynamic solutions for purchase, rental, disposal, construction, and refurbishment that ensures meeting organisational requirements.
Financial	<b>Financial Risks:</b> Risks arising from not managing finances in accordance with requirements and financial constraints resulting in poor returns from investments, failure to manage assets/liabilities or to obtain value for money from the resources deployed, and/or non-compliant financial reporting.	Avoidance of any financial impact or loss, is a key objective.	Only prepared to accept the possibility of very limited financial impact if essential to delivery.	<b>Seek safe delivery options with little residual financial loss only if it could yield upside opportunities.</b>	<b>Prepared to invest for benefit and to minimise the possibility of financial loss by managing the risks to tolerable levels.</b>	Prepared to invest for best possible benefit and accept possibility of financial loss (controls must be in place).
Commercial	<b>Commercial Risks:</b> Risks arising from weaknesses in the management of commercial partnerships, supply chains and contractual requirements, resulting in poor performance, inefficiency, poor value for money, fraud, and/or failure to meet business requirements/objectives.	Zero appetite for untested commercial agreements. Priority for close management controls and oversight with limited devolved authority.	<b>Appetite for risk taking limited to low scale procurement activity. Decision making authority held by senior management.</b>	<b>Tendency to stick to the status quo, innovations generally avoided unless necessary. Decision making authority generally held by senior management. Management through leading indicators.</b>	<b>Innovation supported, with demonstration of benefit / improvement in service delivery. Responsibility for non-critical decisions may be devolved.</b>	<b>Innovation pursued – desire to ‘break the mould’ and challenge current working practices. High levels of devolved authority – management by trust / lagging indicators rather than close control.</b>

Initial Risk Appetite Positions

Risk Category	Risk definition	Averse	Minimal	Cautious	Open	Eager
People	<b>People Risks:</b> Risks arising from ineffective leadership and engagement, suboptimal culture, inappropriate behaviours, the unavailability of sufficient capacity and capability, industrial action and/or non-compliance with relevant employment legislation/HR policies resulting in negative impact on performance.	Priority to maintain close management control & oversight. Limited devolved authority. Limited flexibility in relation to working practices. Development investment in standard practices only	Decision making authority held by senior management. Development investment generally in standard practices.	Seek safe and standard people policy. Decision making authority generally held by senior management.	Prepared to invest in our people to create innovative mix of skills environment. Responsibility for noncritical decisions may be devolved.	Innovation pursued – desire to ‘break the mould’ and challenge current working practices. High levels of devolved authority – management by trust rather than close control.
Technology	<b>Technology Risks:</b> Risks arising from technology not delivering the expected services due to inadequate or deficient system/process development and performance or inadequate resilience.	General avoidance of systems / technology developments.	Only essential systems / technology developments to protect current operations.	Consideration given to adoption of established / mature systems and technology improvements. Agile principles are considered.	Systems / technology developments considered to enable improved delivery. Agile principles may be followed.	New technologies viewed as a key enabler of operational delivery. Agile principles are embraced.
Data and Information Mgmt	<b>Data and Information Mgmt Risks:</b> Risks arising from a failure to produce robust, suitable and appropriate data/information and to exploit data/information to its full potential.	Lock down data & information. Access tightly controlled, high levels of monitoring.	Minimise level of risk due to potential damage from disclosure.	Accept need for operational effectiveness with risk mitigated through careful management limiting distribution.	Accept need for operational effectiveness in distribution and information sharing.	Level of controls minimised with data and information openly shared
Security	<b>Security Risks:</b> Risks arising from a failure to prevent unauthorised and/or inappropriate access to the estate and information, including cyber security and non-compliance with General Data Protection Regulation requirements.	No tolerance for security risks causing loss or damage to property, assets, information or people. Stringent measures in place	Risk of loss or damage to property, assets, information or people minimised through stringent security measures	Limited security risks accepted to support business need, with appropriate checks and balances in place	Considered security risk accepted to support business need, with appropriate checks and balances in place	Organisational willing to accept security risk to support business need, with appropriate checks and balances in place
Project/Programme	<b>Project/Programme Risks:</b> Risks that change programmes and projects are not aligned with strategic priorities and do not successfully and safely deliver requirements and intended benefits to time, cost and quality.	Defensive approach to transformational activity - aim to maintain/protect, rather than create or innovate. Priority for close management controls and oversight with limited devolved authority. Benefits led plans fully aligned with strategic priorities, functional standards.	Innovations avoided unless essential. Decision making authority held by senior management. Benefits led plans aligned with strategic priorities, functional standards.	Tendency to stick to the status quo, innovations generally avoided unless necessary. Decision making authority generally held by senior management. Plans aligned with strategic priorities, functional standards.	Innovation supported, with demonstration of commensurate improvements in management control. Responsibility for noncritical decisions may be devolved. Plans aligned with functional standards and organisational governance.	Innovation pursued – desire to ‘break the mould’ and challenge current working practices. High levels of devolved authority – management by trust rather than close control. Plans aligned with organisational governance.
Reputational	<b>Reputational Risks:</b> Risks arising from adverse events, including ethical violations, a lack of sustainability, systemic or repeated failures or poor quality or a lack of innovation, leading to damages to reputation and or destruction of trust and relations.	Zero appetite for any decisions with high chance of repercussion for organisations’ reputation.	Appetite for risk taking limited to those events where there is no chance of any significant repercussion for the organisation.	Appetite for risk taking limited to those events where there is little chance of any significant repercussion for the organisation.	Appetite to take decisions with potential to expose organisation to additional scrutiny, but only where appropriate steps are taken to minimise exposure.	Appetite to take decisions which are likely to bring additional Governmental / organisational scrutiny only where potential benefits outweigh risks