

Paper 1

Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on Thursday 11 September 2025, 11.30am on Campus

Present:

Andy McGoff	Chair/Board Member
Margaret McLean	Board Member
Deepasri Selvam	Internal Audit, BDO
Siobhan Archibald	Internal Audit, Wbg

In attendance:

Ingrid Earp	Board Secretary (Minutes)
Roddy Henry	Principal
Mary Slater	Director of Operations
Deepasri Selvam	Internal Audit, BDO

Apologies for absence:

Aislinn Wood, Board Member
Jeremy Chittleburgh, External Audit, CT

Part A – Opening Business	
1.	Welcome, Apologies and Declaration of Interest The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting, 8 May 2025 (Paper 1) The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record. Action Log (Paper 1a) Margaret had compared the insurance policies and couldn't see reference to the paintings in either of them. Margaret to check if there is a separate policy held by the Trust for these. Action A&R01:A2 Margaret to check if there is a separate policy held by the Trust for the paintings. Insurance renewal and UMAL – ongoing. Action A&R01:B2 Committee Chair to send details of UMAL to the Director of Operations. Procurement Policy and delegated authority moved to agenda for 13 Nov meeting. Anti-Bribery Policy moved to agenda for 13 Nov meeting. Other actions updated as per A&D log.
3.	Matters Arising There were no matters arising not covered in the Action Log.
Part B – For decision	
4.	Appointment of Committee Vice-Chair (Paper 2) Deferred to next meeting when, hopefully, full complement of members will be present.

<p>5.</p>	<p>Internal Audit: Data Protection (Paper 3)</p> <p>The levels of assurance for the audit were limited for design and moderate for effectiveness. There was one high level finding, five medium and two low. The Director of Operations acknowledged the findings in the report and noted that the College has now engaged a Data Protection Officer through HEFESTIS and good progress is being made on the actions.</p> <p>Action A&R01:B5 Dir of Ops to check that old DP policy has been removed from the website.</p> <p>The Committee Chair said that it was a comprehensive audit with constructive action points with a completion date of January 2026 noted.</p> <p>Decision A&R01:B5 Committee approved the internal audit on Data Protection.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Internal Audit: Strategic Planning (Paper 4)</p> <p>The levels of assurance for this audit were moderate for design and substantial for effectiveness. There was one medium level finding. Management have accepted the recommendations, and they have a completion date of November 2025.</p> <p>Decision A&R01:B6 Committee approved the internal audit on Strategic Planning.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Whistleblowing Policy (Paper 5)</p> <p>The Director of Operations introduced this new policy for the College. The Policy was well received with a small number of amendments suggested by the Committee such as making explicit who the Policy applies to and adding a paragraph about sharing information publicly.</p> <p>Action A&R01:B7 Dir of Ops and M McLean to work on the wording of some sections of the Whistleblowing Policy.</p> <p>Decision A&R01:B7 Committee approved the Policy subject to amendments above.</p>
<p>7a.</p>	<p>Internal Audit Plan (Additional late paper)</p> <p>The Internal Audit Plan was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting but too late to be included formally in the agenda. It was agreed to take this item now.</p> <p>S Archibald from Wbg talked through the plan which has changed since from the Internal Audit Plan agreed at the May 2025 meeting when BDO were the internal auditors. It is proposed that there are two internal audits during 2025-26, one on Estates Management which will commence the following week and one on Finance Controls, inc Payroll to be carried out in February 2026 with the follow up work in May 2026.</p> <p>Business Development and Marketing and Staff Wellbeing and Retention are proposed for internal audit in 2026-27.</p> <p>The Chair asked about the timing of the Business Development and Marketing internal audit as it is very much linked to the financial sustainability of the College, the Committee noted that, for now, it could possibly be carried out in 2026-27 for operational reasons.</p> <p>Decision A&R01:B7a Committee approved the internal audit plan as presented to replace that agreed in May 2025.</p> <p>D Selvam left the meeting after the Chair thanked her and BDO for their work on the College internal audits.</p>

Part C – For discussion	
8.	<p>Draft Audit and Risk Committee Report (Paper 6) This will be submitted along with the Annual Accounts and Report to SFC.</p> <p>Action A&R01:C8 Board Secretary to check with Dir of Ops nearer the time but hopefully add that we expect a clean external audit report for 2024-25.</p> <p>Action A&R01:C8 Board Secretary to add note that A Wood was on maternity leave for much of the period of the report.</p> <p>Final report to come to the next meeting.</p>
9.	<p>Risk Register Update (Paper 7) The Principal noted that there have been no changes to the risk ratings although the comments have been amended since the June Board Meeting. The Risk Register and the risk appetite of the Board to be reviewed at the Board Planning and Development Day in November.</p>
10.	<p>Monitoring of Audit Recommendations (Paper 8) The Director of Operations noted that the amendments to policies are being worked through with the revised Student Admissions Policy to be added to the College web site. The Financial Handbook has been updated.</p> <p>Action A&R01:C10 Dir of Ops to circulate Financial Handbook to Committee.</p> <p>The IT support person is working through the cyber security recommendations. Committee Chair noted that there are new lease reporting requirements coming into force next year and suggested the College might want to begin to gather any data in relation to that.</p>
11.	<p>Follow up Audit (Paper 9) External audit is now getting underway, and all seems to be going well to date. The Director's Report requires completion for inclusion in this.</p>
12.	<p>Draft Management Accounts 2024-25 (Paper 10) The Director of Operations reported a positive position at the year end with a surplus being forecast although it was noted that a proportion of this relates to the £150k loan received from SFC around Covid and is no longer repayable and hence is a one-off credit to the accounts. Going forward a review of capital expenditure will take place monthly to reduce any swings in variances.</p> <p>The Chair suggested considering a reduction in pension payments as there will likely be a substantial surplus on the pension valuation, he also suggested that the College consider putting more cash in the deposit account to maximise the interest received.</p> <p>Action A&R01:C12 Director of Operations/Principal to consider reduction in pension payments and increase amount in deposit account.</p>
13.	<p>Committee Self-Evaluation (Paper 11) Only one response was received so a full report was not provided. One Committee Member has been on maternity leave for much of the year and another resigned mid-year.</p> <p>Action A&R01:C13 Chair, M McLean and Board Secretary to meet to discuss the way forward with this and identify any actions required.</p>

	<p>Committee suggested a joint meeting between F&R and A&R at least once a year and internal audit agreed that this would be good practice.</p> <p>Action A&R01:C13 Chair and Board Secretary to build joint meeting into the plan for next AY.</p>
Part D – For information	
14.	<p>Register of Gifts (Verbal) The Principal confirmed that no gifts had been received since the last meeting.</p> <p>Staff should be advised how to declare a gift, given examples of what might be covered and that it is the right thing to declare receipt of a gift.</p> <p>Decision A&R01:D14 Have Register of Gifts as an agenda item for each meeting.</p>
15.	<p>Notifiable Items (Verbal) The Principal said that the College had been subject to a phishing email purporting to be from the Principal asking for money. Fortunately it was spotted by a member of staff and no harm was done. The College had just provided training on this and will continue to do so regularly.</p>
Part E – Closing Business	
16.	<p>Any other Business There were no items of other business.</p>
17.	<p>Date of next meeting: Thursday 13 November 2025 at 11.30am on campus.</p>