

## Risk Appetite Statement

The Board of Governors is responsible for setting and monitoring the University of West London’s risk appetite. Risk appetite is defined as “*the University’s willingness to accept risk in pursuit of its objectives*’. An understanding of risk appetite is part of good risk management and should be embedded in the day-to-day activities and culture of the entire organisation.

The University of West London has a responsible approach to risk management, seeking to recognise and manage exposure to risks. The University is committed to ensuring that no unnecessary or unacceptable risks are taken which might expose the organisation or any of its stakeholders (staff, students and visitors) to potential harm or jeopardise the overall achievement of its strategic aims. However, it is recognised that an overly risk-adverse attitude can lead to failure to maximise opportunities or inability to act decisively in the face of changes in the external environment, which can, in itself, be a threat to long-term sustainability.

The University’s approach is to minimise its exposure to reputational, compliance and financial risk, whilst accepting and encouraging an increased degree of risk in pursuit of its strategic aims. In particular, the University is proactive in seeking opportunities to increase student numbers, develop an academic portfolio relevant to the world of work, develop its estate, increase its enterprise and research activities including its transnational education portfolio.

It recognises that its appetite for risk varies according to the activity undertaken and that the risk taken must be commensurate with the potential reward. Its acceptance of risk is subject always to ensuring that potential benefits and risks are fully understood before developments are approved, and that measures to mitigate risk are established. The University’s appetite for risk across its activities is provided in the following statements

Reputation	It is regarded as critical that the University preserves its high reputation. The University therefore has low appetite for risk in the conduct of any of its activities that puts its reputation in jeopardy, could lead to undue adverse publicity, or could lead to loss of confidence by HEFCE, SLC, OfS, UKVI or other external agency.
Compliance	The University is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, compliance, and ethics. The University has no appetite for any breaches of the law, regulation, professional standards, research ethics, bribery, or fraud.
Financial performance and sustainability	The University has a sound financial base in terms of annual operating surpluses, diversified and growing income streams and effective control of costs and there is no appetite for risk in terms of activities that would disrupt these. However, the University has a moderate appetite for investment risks which will enable it to further grow its income. The University will ensure that potential benefits and risks are fully

	understood before developments are agreed and that appropriate measures to mitigate risk are established.
Education & Student Experience	The University is committed to further development of the student experience including teaching and learning, facilities and support arrangements. There is generally a low-appetite for any risks which threaten the delivery of objectives in this area.
Enterprise	The University is committed to developing its enterprise activities. It prepared to take moderate investment risks to increase its enterprise potential balanced with a low appetite for any compliance risk in this activity.
People and culture	The University aims to value, support, develop and utilise the full potential of our staff to make the University a stimulating and safe place to work. It places importance on a culture of equality and diversity, dignity and respect, annual reviews, the development of staff, and the health and safety of staff, students and visitors. It has low appetite for any deviation from its standards in these areas.
Estates	The University is committed to maintaining and improving its estate. It is prepared to take moderate risks to grow and develop the estate balanced by rigorous due diligence and ensuring that the potential benefits and risks are fully understood before developments are agreed and that appropriate measures to mitigate risk are established.
International development including Trans National Education	The University is committed to developing its international activities including Trans National Education. It is prepared to take moderate investment risks to increase its international reach balanced with a low appetite for any compliance and quality assurance risk in this activity but
Research	The University is committed to improving its research base and is prepared to take moderate investment risks in order to do so. Any investment risks will be balanced with by the need to observe ethical standards and the potential return on investment.
Major change activities	Major change activities are required periodically to develop the University, and to adapt to changes in the regulatory and technological environment and in the nature and conduct of the University's activities. The University expects such changes to be managed according to best practice in project and change management, and has low appetite for deviating from such standards.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the University of West London Risk Management Policy.

Marion Lowe,  
University Secretary and Chief Compliance Officer  
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