DATA ASSURANCE GROUP

DATA RETURNS RISK REGISTER – TEMPLATE[[1]](#footnote-1)

# SECTION A: DESCRIPTION OF THE RETURN

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| 1. **Name of return\*** | **Return made to\*** | **Date of completion of this form\*** | **Person completing this form\*** |
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| 1. **Brief description of the return\*** |
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| 1. **Timing\*** *Please indicate the key dates/periods for return preparation, sign-off and submission* |
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| 1. **Responsibility for completing the return\*** *Please indicate both the section and name of the person responsible* |
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| 1. **Responsibility for signing off the return\*** |
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# SECTION B: RISKS TO THE UNIVERSITY[[2]](#footnote-2)

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| 1. **Financial/reputational impact / risk to the University\***   *Please provide a ‘realistic worst case scenario’ risk assessment in the form of a RAG rating for the financial/reputational impact of an inaccurate data submission (more detail on how to assess the risk can be found in the accompanying Data Returns Risk Assessment Template, Section B).* |
| The gross risk of negative consequences is: high/red  medium/amber  low/green |
| *In addition to the RAG rating, please describe the type of negative impact an inaccurate data submission might have. Particularly relevant would be any financial (such as the loss of grant funding or higher fee income) or reputational impact (including media coverage, league table performance, media coverage etc). Where several risks exist, please focus on the highest risk but also mention any other risks and why they are less significant. Where possible, refer to the impact and likelihood assessments underlying the RAG rating above.* |
| 1. **Onward use of data in league tables (or for other purposes with reputational impact)\*** *Some data included in statutory returns are being used by league table compilers.[[3]](#footnote-3) The way we report data (not just whether they are correct or complete), e.g. assignment to a particular HESA cost centre, may impact on the University’s league table performance which could lead to reputational damage.* |
| *Data in this return are being used by league table compilers:* Yes  No  Not sure  *If yes, is it well understood which data are being used and how to avoid unintentional negative consequences for the University arising from reporting decisions such as the use of HESA cost centres? Please elaborate.* |

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| 1. **Is there anything in the return with respect to data privacy that requires assessment from the information compliance team and/or information security team?\*** *If yes, please elaborate.* |
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# SECTION C: DATA RISK

## Gross Data Risk

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| 1. **This return’s gross data risk: impact and likelihood of error\*** *Assessment of the gross data risk (using the Data Risk Assessment Template, section C, Stages 1 and 2) should not take into account the mitigating controls set out in sections 10-14 below. Please explain any change in the risk level compared to the previous year (if applicable).* |
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## Risk Controls

*In this section, where possible, please indicate which risk dimension from the Risk Assessment Template is reduced by a particular action. The extent of risk controls and the level of detail provided should be proportionate with the level of gross risk.*

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| 1. **Skills, Knowledge and Experience\*** *Please check the relevant boxes below and elaborate on the availability of sufficient skills, knowledge and experience to complete the return in time (referencing key individuals).* |
| *Sufficient resources and knowledge are available to complete the return in time:*  Yes  No  Not sure  *There is a single-point-of-failure risk:* Yes  No |

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| 1. **Procedural Guidelines**   *Please confirm the existence of up-to-date guidance notes and elaborate on the use of procedural guidelines.* |
| *Guidance notes for the completion of the return exist, have been reviewed and, where necessary, updated during the last 12 months:* |

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| 1. **Process to ensure Completeness and Accuracy** *Please elaborate on the process that is in place to ensure the data returned are complete and accurate.* |
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| 1. **Cross-checks with Other Returns** *Please indicate any cross-checks undertaken with other returns for validation purposes.* |
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| 1. **Review, Challenge and Authorisation Process** |
| *Who provides independent challenge on preparation of the return before submission?* |
| *How are the risk controls assessed? Are they working effectively, i.e. reducing the gross data risk?* |
| *If applicable, please indicate when an* ***internal audit*** *of the return completion process has taken place and what the result of this has been (risk rating, findings).* |

## Net Data Risk

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| 1. **This return’s net risk: impact and likelihood of error** *Assessment of the net data risk (using the Data Risk Assessment Template, section C, Stage 4) should take into account the mitigating controls set out in sections 10-14 above. Please explain any change in the risk level compared to the previous year (if applicable).* |
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# SECTION D: DATA ASSURANCE PROCESS

*[Completion of this section is encouraged but not compulsory]*

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| 1. **Recent improvements** *Please identify, where applicable, one issue/area in the data return preparation that has improved over the past 12 months. This could be, for example, about improving data quality, enhancing efficiency, or making the challenge provided more robust.* |
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| 1. **Future improvements** *If you feel that there is a particular area requiring improvement, please set out briefly the issue and how it will be improved over the next 12 months. This could be, for example, about improving data quality, enhancing efficiency, or making the challenge provided more robust. This item is meant to support continuous improvement of data return preparation (please explain briefly if this is not applicable).* |
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| 1. **Usefulness of the data assurance process** *How useful has it been to complete this risk register and risk assessment? Please tick as appropriate.* |
| Very useful  Useful  Not sure  Not useful  Not at all useful |

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| 1. **Suggestions for improvements of the data assurance process run by the DAG** *Do you have any suggestions for improvements of the data assurance process, the templates or guidance provided? Is there anything that could improve your experience of completing the templates and make the most of your time commitment to this exercise?* |
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1. Questions regarding the template can be directed to the secretary of Data Assurance Group, Benjamin Neudorfer ([Benjamin.Neudorfer@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Benjamin.Neudorfer@admin.ox.ac.uk)).

   **\* Asterisks** indicate **compulsory** fields for **all** returns; fields without asterisk are compulsory for returns with a ‘high or ‘medium’ gross risk and can be left blank for ‘low’ gross risk returns. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. When assessing risks to the University and data risks, please consult the guidance and use (and attach) the Data Returns Risk Assessment template available here: <https://sharepoint.nexus.ox.ac.uk/sites/council/prac/DAG/SitePages/Home.aspx>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. If in doubt about the data used by league table compilers, please contact John Parkhill in PACS ([John.Parkhill@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:John.Parkhill@admin.ox.ac.uk)). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)