

Risk Management Framework

Our Approach to Risk

The group faces a number of risks in the normal course of business providing lending, deposit taking, wealth management services and securities trading. To manage these effectively, a consistent approach is adopted based on a set of overarching principles, namely:

- adhering to our established and proven business model;
- implementing an integrated risk management approach based on the concept of “three lines of defence”; and
- setting and operating within clearly defined risk appetites, monitored with defined metrics and limits.

Role of the Board

The board retains overall responsibility for overseeing the maintenance of a system of internal control which ensures that an effective risk management framework and oversight process operates across the group. The risk management framework and associated governance arrangements are designed to ensure a clear organisational structure with distinct, transparent and consistent lines of responsibility and effective processes to identify, manage, monitor and report the risks to which the group is, or may become, exposed.

Risk management across the group is overseen by the Board Risk Committee. The Committee is responsible for reviewing risk appetite, monitoring the group’s risk profile against this and reviewing the day-to-day effectiveness of the risk management framework. In addition, the Committee is responsible for overseeing the maintenance and development of an appropriate and supportive risk culture and for providing risk input into the alignment of remuneration with performance against risk appetite.

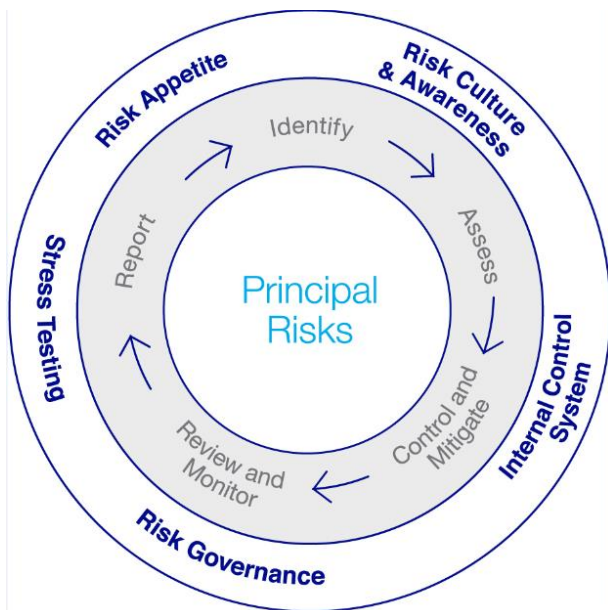
The group closely monitors its risk profile to ensure that it continues to align with its strategic objectives. The board considers that the group’s current risk profile remains consistent with its strategic objectives.

Enterprise Risk Management

The group employs an Enterprise Risk Management Framework to provide the board and senior management with oversight of the organisation’s financial position as well as the risks that might adversely affect it.

The framework details the core risk management components and structures used across the firm, and defines a consistent and measurable approach to identifying, assessing, controlling and mitigating, reviewing and monitoring, and reporting risk – the risk process lifecycle. This sets out the activities, tools, techniques and organisational arrangements that ensure all principal risks facing the group are identified and understood; and that appropriate responses are in place to protect the group and prevent detriment to its customers and colleagues. This enables the group to meet its goals and enhances its ability to respond to new opportunities.

The framework is purposely designed to allow the capture of business opportunities whilst maintaining an appropriate balance of risk and reward within the group’s agreed risk appetite.



Risk Appetite

Risk appetite forms a key component of the group's risk management framework and refers to the sources and levels of risk that the group is willing to assume in order to achieve its strategic objectives and business plan. It is managed through an established framework that facilitates ongoing communication between the board and management with respect to the group's evolving risk profile. This enables key decisions concerning the allocation of group resources to be made on an informed basis.

A well-defined risk appetite is set on a top-down basis by the board with consideration to business requests and executive recommendation. Appetite measures, both qualitative and quantitative, are applied to inform decision making, and monitoring and reporting processes. Early warning trigger levels are also employed to drive required corrective action before overall tolerance levels are reached.

The group conducts a formal review of its risk appetites annually, as part of the strategy-setting process. This aligns risk-taking with the achievement of strategic objectives. Adherence is monitored through the group's risk committees on an ongoing basis with interim updates to individual risk appetites considered as appropriate through the year.

Stress Testing

Stress testing represents another core component of the risk management framework and is employed, alongside scenario analysis, to support assessment and understanding of the risks to which the group might be exposed in the future. As such, it provides valuable insight to the board and senior management, playing an important role in the formulation and pursuit of the firm's strategic objectives.

Stress testing activity within the group is designed to meet two principal objectives:

1. Inform capital and liquidity planning – including liquidity and funding risk assessment contingency planning and recovery and resolution planning; and
2. Supporting ongoing risk and portfolio management – including risk appetite calibration, strategic decisioning, risk/reward optimisation and business resilience planning.

To support these objectives, stress testing is designed to cover the group's most material risks, with activity conducted at various levels, ranging from extensive firm-wide scenario analysis to simple portfolio sensitivity analysis.

Stress testing also represents a critical component of both the firm's ICAA and ILAA processes with scenario analysis additionally employed as part of the group's Recovery Plan.

Risk Governance

The group's risk management approach is underpinned by a strong governance framework that it considers appropriate to both the size and strategic intentions of its businesses.

The framework is founded on a "three lines of defence" model, as set out below:

The key principles underlying this approach are that:

- business management owns all the risks assumed throughout the group and is responsible for their management on a day-to-day basis to ensure that risk and return are balanced;
- the board and business management together promote a culture in which risks are identified, assessed and reported in an open, transparent and objective manner;
- the overriding priority is to protect the group's long-term viability and produce sustainable medium to long-term revenue streams;
- risk functions are independent of the businesses and provide oversight of and advice on the management of risk across the group;
- risk management activities across the group are proportionate to the scale and complexity of the group's individual businesses;
- risk mitigation and control activities are commensurate with the degree of risk; and
- risk management and control supports decision-making.

Three Lines of Defence

First line of defence	Second line of defence	Third line of defence
The Businesses	Risk and Compliance	Internal Audit
Group Risk and Compliance Committee (Reports to the Risk Committee)	Risk Committee (Reports to the board)	Audit Committee (Reports to the board)
<p>Chief executive delegates to divisional and operating business heads day-to-day responsibility for risk management, regulatory compliance, internal control and conduct in running their divisions or businesses.</p> <p>Business management has day-to-day ownership, responsibility and accountability for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying and assessing risks; • managing and controlling risks; • measuring risk (key risk indicators/early warning indicators); • mitigating risks; • reporting risks; and • committee structure and reporting. <p>Key Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes a strong risk culture and focus on sustainable risk-adjusted returns. • Implements the risk framework. • Promotes a culture of adhering to limits and managing risk exposures. • Promotes a culture of customer focus and appropriate behaviours. • Ongoing monitoring of positions and management and control of risks. • Portfolio optimisation. • Self-assessment. 	<p>Risk Committee delegates to the group chief risk officer day-to-day responsibility for oversight and challenge on risk-related issues.</p> <p>Risk functions (including compliance) provide support, assurance and independent challenge on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the design and operation of the risk framework; • risk assessment; • risk appetite and strategy; • performance management; • risk reporting; • adequacy of mitigation plans; • group risk profile; and • committee governance and challenge. <p>Key Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overarching "risk oversight unit" takes an integrated view of risk (qualitative and quantitative). • Supports through developing and advising on risk strategies. • Facilitates constructive check and challenge – "critical friend"/"trusted adviser". • Oversight of business conduct. 	<p>Audit Committee mandates the head of group internal audit with day-to-day responsibility for independent assurance.</p> <p>Internal audit provides independent assurance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first and second lines of defence; • appropriateness/effectiveness of internal controls; and • effectiveness of policy implementation. <p>Key Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws on deep knowledge of the group and its businesses. • Provides independent assurance on the activities of the firm, including the risk management framework. • Assesses the appropriateness and effectiveness of internal controls. • Incorporates review of culture and conduct.

Aligned to these core principles, the governance framework operates through various delegations of authority from the board downwards. These cover both individual authorities as well as authorities exercised via the group's risk committee structure.

Risk Committee Structure



Risk Committee Overview

Group Risk and Compliance Committee	Provides oversight of the group's risk profile, alignment to risk appetite and effectiveness of the risk management and compliance framework.
Model Governance Committee	Provides oversight of the group's exposure to model risk through the review, approval and monitoring of all high materiality models.
Capital Adequacy Committee	Monitors group and bank capital adequacy, incorporating capital planning, stress testing, governance, processes and controls.
Asset and Liability Committee	Provides oversight of risk management and internal control for the bank and its subsidiaries across liquidity, funding and market risk.
Credit Risk Management Committee	Monitors the group's credit risk profile, examining current performance and key portfolio trends, ensuring compliance with risk appetite.
Group Credit Committee	Reviews material credit transactions and exposures from a credit, reputational, funding structure and business risk perspective.
Impairment Adequacy Committee	Governs the bank's impairment process, reviewing the financial position relating to impairment and ensuring adequate coverage is held across the portfolio.
Operations and Technology Risk Committee	Monitors and oversees group-wide operational resilience, including technology, security, supplier and operational risk appetite, examining industry, regulatory and technical risks.
Divisional Risk and Compliance Committees	Provide oversight of risk profile, alignment to risk appetite and effectiveness of the risk management and compliance framework at a divisional or business level.

Together, these committees facilitate an effective flow of key risk information, as well as functioning to support effective risk management at each stage of the risk process lifecycle. They also provide an effective escalation channel for any risks or concerns, supporting the maintenance of an effective risk culture.

Over the past 12 months the group has continued to strengthen its risk governance framework and specifically the organisation's risk and compliance committees, both at a group and divisional level. These continue to work efficiently and effectively.

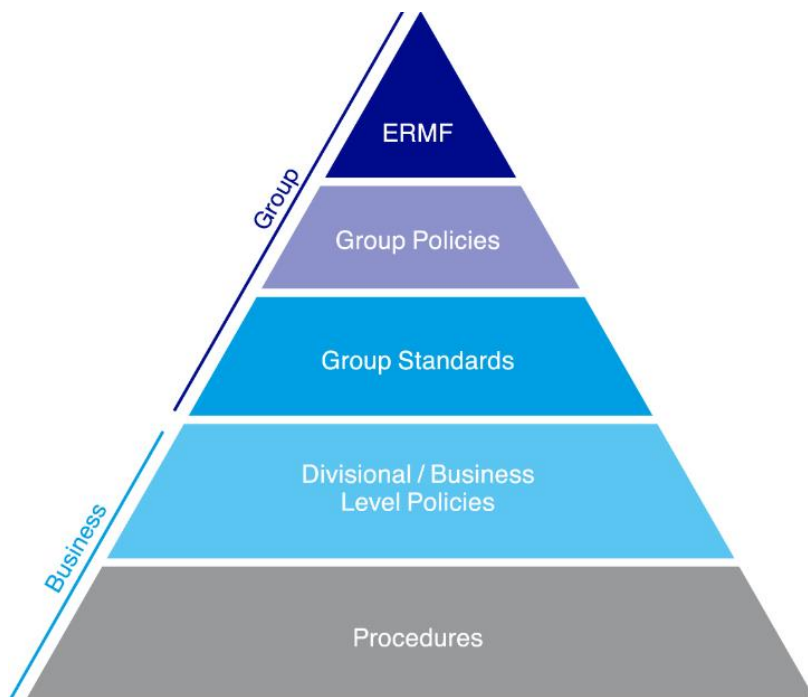
Internal Control System

Aligned to the risk governance framework, risk control and oversight across the group is supported by the maintenance of a range of internal controls. These cover risk and financial management and reporting and control processes and are designed to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the firm's financial information and reporting.

The main features of these controls include consistently applied accounting policies, clearly defined lines of responsibility and processes for the review and oversight of disclosures within the Annual Report. These controls are overseen by the Audit Committee.

The accounting policies form part of a broader policy framework, overseen by the board, that supports the foundation of a strong risk management structure. Group Policies are supported by Group Standards, Divisional/Business-level Policies and Procedures which, together, outline the way in which policy is implemented and detail the process controls in place to ensure compliance. Policies and Standards relating to the group's principal risks are fully covered within the framework, and include specific documents relating to financial crime compliance (e.g. anti-money laundering/anti-bribery and corruption) and whistleblowing.

Group Policy Framework



This structure establishes a link between group strategy and day-to-day operations in a manner consistent with agreed risk appetite, while simultaneously facilitating board and executive-level oversight and assurance as to the application of said strategy via conformance with underlying policy and standard requirements.

Throughout the year, the board, assisted by the Risk Committee and the Audit Committee, monitors the group's risk management and internal control systems and reviews their effectiveness. This covers all material controls, including financial, operational and compliance controls. The board also reviews the effectiveness of both committees on an annual basis. Based on its assessment throughout the year, and its review of the committees' effectiveness, the board considers that, overall, the group has in place adequate systems and controls with regard to its profile and strategy.

Risk Culture and Awareness

Maintenance of an effective risk management culture is integral to the group meeting its regulatory conduct requirements and assisting the accomplishment of key strategic goals.

The risk culture:

- supports the group and its directors to meet their legal and regulatory obligations, particularly with respect to the identification and management of risks and the need for a robust control environment;
- underpins the group's purpose, strategy, cultural attributes and divisional values;
- provides enhanced awareness of risk in business operations by highlighting strengths and weaknesses and their materiality to the business and, in turn, facilitating informed decision making;
- optimises business performance by facilitating challenge of ineffective controls and improving the allocation of resources;
- ensures allocation of capital for operational risk is proportionate for the risks identified;
- improves the group's control environment; and

- assists in the planning and prioritisation of key projects and initiatives.

Risk Culture



Managers actively promote a culture in which risks are identified, assessed, managed and reported in an open, transparent and objective manner, and where appropriate staff conduct is viewed as critical.

All members of staff are responsible for risk identification and reporting within their area of responsibility and are encouraged to escalate risks and concerns where necessary, either through line or business management or by following the provisions of the Group Whistleblowing Policy.

Group Risk Management operates independently of the business, providing oversight and advice on the operation of the risk framework, and assurance that agreed processes operate effectively and that a risk and conduct culture is embedded within the business.

The relationship between risk and reward is also a key priority with all staff evaluated on an ongoing basis against qualitative and quantitative criteria. This encourages long-term, stewardship behaviours together with a strong and appropriate risk and conduct culture.