



# RISK REGISTER

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## Foreword

Having in place a Sector wide Risk Register is a fundamental requirement of the HESF (Threshold Standards).

AGE is cognisant of the importance of the document and the associated process of review and adjustment.

Considerable effort has been put into the development of the Register. In addition, the focus on Risk Management has been explored in considerable detail – see – Risk Management at AGE (2025)-

[https://www.guildmusic.edu.au/files/uqd/87330e\\_d0b8fd8a2fd94bc586d6c725e357fec0.pdf](https://www.guildmusic.edu.au/files/uqd/87330e_d0b8fd8a2fd94bc586d6c725e357fec0.pdf)

On behalf of AGE, I would like to thank **Shashi Mathew** for his work and leadership developing a Sector wide Risk Register that puts AGE in good stead to monitor and mitigate risk in its various forms. Thank you also to **Emeritus Professor Jim Mienczakowski** for his support and input.



**Emeritus Professor Greg Whateley**

Chief Executive Officer and Executive Dean

May 2025

## 1 Introduction

Best-practice governance and prudent management require an institution's leadership to regularly monitor potential risks to its operations and develop strategies to mitigate those risks. To that end, the *Australian Guild of Education (AGE)* has created a Risk Register to systematically identify, analyse, evaluate, monitor, and mitigate risks that may impact the institution's mission and operations.

This Risk Register is an integral part of AGE's planning and review cycle, ensuring that major risks are understood and appropriately managed using a clear framework.

This document focuses on eight priority risk areas for AGE –

- **Reputational Standing**
- **Financial Safeguards and Viability**
- **Academic and Corporate Governance**
- **Academic Quality and Integrity**
- **Management and Human Resources (HR)**
- **Responsibilities to the Student Body**
- **Quality of the Curriculum**
- **Information Technology (IT)**

Both current and, where applicable, emerging/potential risks are included (with *Emerging* risks labelled as such). For each risk, we-

Assess the **Impact** and **Probability** using a standardized rating system

Determine an overall **Risk Level** (with colour-coding)

Outline key **Mitigation Actions**, **Responsible Parties**, and **Review Dates** for ongoing monitoring.

## 2 Risk Management Approach

At AGE a risk management-based approach is incorporated into *all* planning and decision-making processes. Risks can arise from either internal or external sources.

We acknowledge that it is not possible to have a completely risk-free environment, but through careful management AGE aims to reduce the impact of risks to acceptable levels. We do this by identifying major risks and evaluating them based on the *likelihood* of occurrence and the *impact* of adverse consequences. Appropriate *mitigation* strategies are then implemented to minimize exposure to these risks.

Risks are reviewed on a regular basis (separately noted for each risk) by the responsible parties in the organisation. Higher-level risks are reviewed more frequently (quarterly) than lower-level risks (annually).

This iterative review process ensures that emerging risks are captured and that mitigation plans remain effective and up to date. The Board of Directors and relevant standing committees oversee the risk management process to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

### 3 Risk Rating Criteria

AGE adopts the rating system utilised by many in the Sector<sup>1</sup> to help evaluate the **Probability of Occurrence** of a risk and the **Impact of Adverse Consequences** were that risk to materialize. This provides us with a consistent framework for risk assessment. These constructs are described below - and we have adopted a colour scheme as shown in the legend –

#### Probability of Occurrence:

- **Rare** – The event may occur only in exceptional circumstances (highly unlikely).
- **Unlikely** – The event is not expected but could occur at some time.
- **Possible** – The event might occur at some time (moderate chance).
- **Likely** – The event will probably occur in many circumstances.
- **Almost Certain** – The event is expected to occur in most circumstances (highly likely).

#### Impact of Adverse Consequences:

- **Insignificant** – Negligible impact; no significant disruption to operations or objectives.
- **Minor** – Minor impact; manageable without major intervention.
- **Moderate** – Noticeable impact on operations or objectives; would require management effort to address.
- **Major** – Substantial impact; could threaten the achievement of key objectives or cause serious consequences (e.g. financial loss, reputational damage).
- **Critical** – Severe impact; potentially catastrophic consequences that could threaten the viability of the institution.

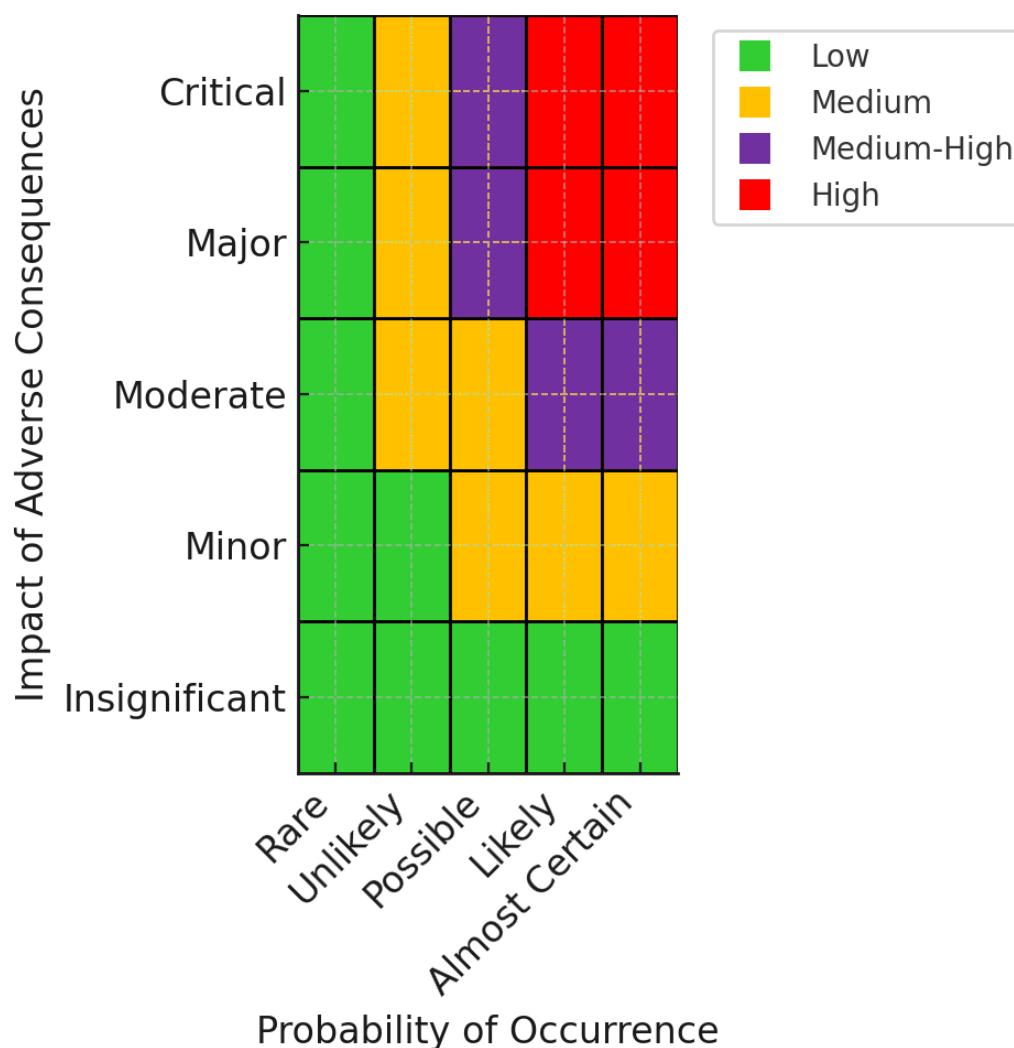
Using these scales, each risk is rated for **Impact** and **Probability**. The two dimensions are then combined to determine an overall **Risk**.

Risks are categorized as **Low, Medium, Medium-High, or High** risk. Generally, a *Low* risk (green) has low impact and likelihood, a *Medium* Risk (yellow) has moderate impact/likelihood, a *Medium-High* Risk (orange) has considerable impact and/or probability, and a *High* Risk (red) has both high impact and high likelihood of occurring.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the document ASTRA Risk Management Plan – [www.astra.edu.au](http://www.astra.edu.au)

Risk Heat



Matrix: The colour-coded matrix above illustrates how the combination of Impact and Probability determines the overall risk level. (Green = Low, Yellow = Medium, Orange = Medium-High, Red = High).

Each identified risk in the register is presented with its Impact and Probability ratings (per the above criteria) and the resulting Risk Level (colour category). In the tables that follow **mitigation actions** are specified for each risk, along with the **responsible party** (risk owner) and the scheduled **review date** or review frequency. *Emerging* risks (potential risks on the horizon) are marked accordingly. The register is organized by the eight priority risk areas mentioned earlier.

## 4 Reputational Standing

*Risks that could impact AGE's reputation, public image, and stakeholder trust.* This includes risks from public communications, media exposure, ethical conduct, and stakeholder satisfaction. Maintaining a strong reputation is critical for student recruitment and regulatory standing, so these risks are monitored closely. Note that the *Risk (ID)* which is identified only with a letter and number (e.g., R3) is explained in the paragraphs immediately below the table.

Risk (ID)	Impact	Probability	Risk Level	Mitigation Actions	Responsible	Review Date
R1	Moderate	Unlikely	Medium	Regularly review all marketing materials for accuracy and legal compliance.	Admissions Officer	Annual (Next review: Jan 2026)
R2	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Establish proactive media engagement and crisis communication plans for negative publicity.	CEO	Quarterly (Next review: Jul 2025)
R3	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Enforce a strict Code of Conduct and provide regular ethics training to all staff.	CEO	Quarterly (Next review: Jul 2025)
R4	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Implement a social media policy and monitor channels to respond swiftly to issues.	Marketing Manager	Quarterly (Next review: Jul 2025)
R5	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Enhance stakeholder engagement via regular forums and feedback surveys to address concerns.	CEO	Bi-annual (Next review: Dec 2025)

**R1. Marketing practices and compliance:** Inaccurate or misleading marketing could damage AGE's reputation. *Mitigation:* All marketing and promotional materials are regularly reviewed for accuracy and compliance with the HESF Threshold Standards and the National Code. The Admissions Officer is responsible for this review, which occurs at least annually.



**R2. Negative media coverage:** Unfavourable news or social media coverage (e.g. about student outcomes or controversies) could harm public perception. *Mitigation:* AGE's CEO leads the development of proactive media engagement and crisis communication plans to quickly address any negative publicity. This risk is reviewed quarterly to ensure readiness.

**R3. Ethical breaches or misconduct:** Any unethical behaviour or misconduct by staff or students (e.g. academic dishonesty scandals or improper staff conduct) could severely damage AGE's standing. *Mitigation:* A strict **Code of Conduct** is enforced. CEO monitors adherence and the Code of Conduct is reviewed quarterly. Swift disciplinary action and transparent communication strategies are in place should a breach occur.

**R4. Social media backlash:** Negative posts or campaigns on social media can quickly escalate and harm AGE's image. *Mitigation:* The Marketing Manager and other staff as assigned by the CEO monitors social channels and can respond or correct issues swiftly. Guidelines are in place for consistent, professional engagement online.

**R5. Stakeholder dissatisfaction (word-of-mouth):** If students or stakeholders are dissatisfied and spread negative word-of-mouth, it can erode AGE's reputation over time. *Mitigation:* The CEO sponsors an ongoing stakeholder engagement program including daily, weekly, monthly updates; feedback surveys; and an open-door policy for concerns. Feedback is tracked and addressed promptly to prevent minor issues from growing.

## 5 Financial Safeguards and Viability

Risks affecting AGE's financial health, stability, and regulatory financial compliance. This covers internal financial controls, reporting compliance, cash flow management, external economic influences, and emerging financial challenges. Ensuring financial viability and integrity is essential for AGE's sustainability.

Risk (ID)	Impact	Probability	Risk Level	Mitigation Actions	Responsible	Review Date
F1	Moderate	Unlikely	Medium	Conduct regular financial audits and ensure compliance with reporting standards.	Finance Officer	Annual (Next review: Jul 2025)
F2	Major	Likely	High	Maintain strict cash flow monitoring, budgeting, and emergency reserve funds.	Finance Officer	Monthly (Next review: May 2025)
F3	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Implement strong internal controls and periodic audits to prevent and detect fraud.	Finance Officer	Bi-annual (Next review: Dec 2025)
F4	Major	Possible	Medium High	Diversify revenue streams and enhance marketing to counter enrolment and revenue declines.	CEO	Quarterly (Next review: Jul 2025)
F5 (Emerging)	Major	Possible	Medium High	Closely monitor government policy changes (e.g., visas, funding) and adjust recruitment and budget plans accordingly.	CEO	Quarterly (Continuous monitoring)

**F1. Financial reporting compliance:** Inaccurate financial reports or failure to meet Corporations Act 2001 / ASIC financial standards could result in legal penalties and loss of stakeholder confidence. *Mitigation:* The Finance Officer ensures regular financial audits (internal and external) and strict adherence to accounting standards. Comprehensive financial policies are in place, and the Finance Committee reviews compliance annually.

**F2. Cash flow management:** Inadequate cash flow management could lead to liquidity issues, inability to meet obligations, or even insolvency. *Mitigation:* AGE maintains strict cash flow monitoring and budgeting. The Finance Officer reviews cash flow monthly (or more frequently if needed), ensuring sufficient liquidity and emergency reserve funds for unforeseen expenses. Early warning indicators (e.g. low cash reserves) trigger immediate management action. The fact that we have a parent company that is financially thriving greatly, in our opinion, mitigates this risk.

**F3. Fraud or financial mismanagement:** Weak financial controls could allow fraud, theft, or significant errors, directly impacting finances and trust. *Mitigation:* AGE has implemented strong internal controls (segregation of duties, approval limits, etc.) and conducts periodic independent audits to detect any irregularities. Staff in finance receive training on fraud awareness. The Finance Officer and Finance Standing Committee review controls and audit findings twice a year.

**F4. Enrolment shortfall or economic downturn:** Adverse external conditions – such as increased competition leading to lower student enrolment, an economic downturn, changes in laws limiting the number of foreign students, or inflation driving up costs – could reduce revenue and threaten financial viability. *Mitigation:* The CEO and the Executive Management Committee work to diversify revenue streams (e.g. introducing new programs or services) and enhance marketing efforts to maintain student intake and not only rely on external agents to funnel students in. Financial forecasts should be stress-tested against economic scenarios. This risk and the effectiveness of mitigation (e.g. enrolment figures vs. targets) are reviewed quarterly.

**F5. (Emerging) Government policy changes:** Changes in government policies – for example, stricter student visa regulations, funding cuts, or changes to tuition fee policies – could negatively impact AGE's student numbers or funding. *Mitigation:* The CEO closely monitors policy developments and engages with industry bodies for early warning. Recruitment and budgeting strategies are adjusted proactively in response to policy changes (for instance, diversifying target markets if one country's visa rules tighten). This emerging risk is continuously monitored, with formal checks each quarter.

## 6 Academic and Corporate Governance

Risks related to the effectiveness of governance structures and processes, both academic and corporate. This encompasses how well AGE's Academic Board and corporate Board of Directors function and comply with governance standards. Strong governance ensures accountability, regulatory compliance, and alignment between academic goals and corporate strategy.

Risk (ID)	Impact	Probability	Risk Level	Mitigation Actions	Responsible	Review Date
G1	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Improve integration of academic governance with corporate strategy through regular joint meetings and reporting.	Academic Board Chair & CEO	Bi-annual (Next review: Dec 2025)
G2	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Regularly review Board and committee performance and ensure compliance with governance standards.	Academic Board Chair	Annual (Next review: Jan 2026)
G3 (Emerging)	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Monitor regulatory developments (e.g., TEQSA requirements) and update governance processes as needed.	CEO	Quarterly (Continuous monitoring)

**G1. Academic governance alignment:** If academic governance (Academic Board decisions on curriculum, quality, etc) is not well aligned with corporate governance and institutional goals, there may be conflicting priorities or gaps in oversight. *Mitigation:* The Academic Board Chair and CEO have instituted regular joint meetings between the Academic Board and Executive Management Committee to ensure academic plans align with corporate strategy. Academic governance reports are integrated into Board of Directors meetings. This alignment is reviewed twice a year to ensure academic objectives support overall institutional goals.

**G2. Corporate governance effectiveness:** Ineffective oversight by the Board of Directors or governance committees (e.g., lack of expertise, poor oversight of management, or non-compliance with governance codes) could lead to strategic missteps or regulatory breaches.

*Mitigation:* The Board Chair leads an annual review of Board and committee performance, including governance training for directors. AGE adheres to governance best practices (e.g. clear roles, conflict of interest policies) and compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) Section 6.2. Any governance issues identified are promptly addressed to maintain robust oversight.

**G3. (Emerging) Changing regulatory expectations:** Evolving higher education regulations or standards could impose stricter governance requirements (for example, new TEQSA guidance on academic governance or corporate risk management). *Mitigation:* The CEO will monitor regulatory developments continuously. Governance policies and charters are updated as needed in response to any changes (e.g., adjusting committee structures or processes to meet new standards). This emerging risk is under quarterly review, with proactive adjustments to governance processes to remain compliant with any new requirements.

## 7 Academic Quality and Integrity

Risks that could compromise academic standards, quality of education, or academic integrity at AGE. These include threats to the quality of teaching and learning processes as well as risks of academic misconduct. Maintaining high academic standards and integrity is vital for accreditation and the value of qualifications awarded.

Risk (ID)	Impact	Probability	Risk Level	Mitigation Actions	Responsible	Review Date
AI1	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Enforce academic integrity policies and use plagiarism detection tools, plus training on academic honesty.	Executive Dean	Bi-annual (Next review: Dec 2025)
AI2	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Strengthen quality assurance processes (regular curriculum review, teaching evaluations, student feedback analysis).	Executive Dean	Quarterly (Next review: Jul 2025)
AI3 (Emerging)	Major	Almost Certain	High	Monitor new cheating methods (e.g., AI-generated content) and adapt assessment design and integrity measures accordingly.	Executive Dean	Quarterly (Continuous monitoring)

**AI1. Academic integrity breaches:** Plagiarism, cheating, or other academic misconduct by students (or staff) can undermine the integrity of AGE's qualifications and academic reputation. *Mitigation:* AGE enforces strict academic integrity policies. All assessments are subject to plagiarism detection software (e.g., Turnitin), and faculty and students receive training on academic honesty and how to avoid misconduct. The Executive Dean oversees integrity violation reports, which are reviewed each semester, and ensures consistent penalties and improvement of integrity measures.

**AI2. Inadequate academic quality control:** If there are weaknesses in quality assurance – for example, ineffective curriculum design, poor teaching practices, or lack of course review – academic standards could slip, leading to subpar learning outcomes and potential non-compliance with accreditation standards. *Mitigation:* The Executive Dean has strengthened quality assurance processes. This includes regular curriculum reviews, systematic teaching evaluations, peer observation of classes, and analysis of student feedback and outcomes. Identified issues prompt action plans (additional faculty training, curriculum adjustments, etc.). Academic quality metrics are reviewed quarterly by the Academic Board and the Executive Dean.

**AI3. (Emerging) New forms of academic misconduct (technology-assisted):** The rise of new technologies (e.g., AI tools that can generate essays or answers) presents emerging risks to academic integrity, as students may use them to cheat in ways that are harder to detect. *Mitigation:* AGE stays vigilant about emerging cheating methods. The Executive Dean, with IT support, continuously evaluates new anti-plagiarism tools and updates assessment designs (e.g., more oral exams, in-person assessments, or AI-detection software) to mitigate AI-assisted cheating. This risk is monitored continuously, and policies are updated proactively each quarter as new challenges emerge.

## 8 Management and Human Resources (HR)

*Risks related to institutional management and human resources, including staff performance, compliance with employment laws, and workplace culture. Effective management and a skilled, motivated workforce are crucial for AGE's success. This section addresses risks such as talent retention, staff compliance, and training.*

Risk (ID)	Impact	Probability	Risk Level	Mitigation Actions	Responsible	Review Date
HR1	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Adopt competitive hiring practices and retention strategies (e.g., development opportunities, incentives).	CEO	Quarterly (Next review: Jul 2025)
HR2	Moderate	Unlikely	Medium	Maintain open communication and fair grievance resolution processes to foster a positive workplace culture.	CEO	Quarterly (Next review: Jul 2025)
HR3	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Regularly update HR policies and train staff to ensure compliance with Fair Work and workplace safety laws.	CEO	Annual (Next review: Jan 2026)
HR4	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Provide ongoing staff training and conduct performance reviews to ensure staff skills and performance meet institutional needs.	CEO	Annual (Next review: Jan 2026)



**HR1. Talent acquisition and retention:** Difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified faculty and staff could lead to skill shortages or operational disruptions. *Mitigation:* The CEO has implemented competitive recruitment and retention strategies. This includes offering attractive working conditions, clear career development and promotion pathways, ongoing professional development opportunities, and appropriate incentives/remuneration to retain high-performing staff. This risk is reviewed quarterly by examining staff turnover rates and recruitment outcomes.

**HR2. Employee relations and morale:** Poor communication, unresolved staff grievances, or a negative workplace culture could result in low morale or disputes, impacting productivity and student experience. *Mitigation:* AGE's CEO currently maintains open communication channels between management and staff on a regular and consistent basis. There is a clear, fair grievance resolution process and an emphasis on a positive, inclusive workplace culture. Regular meetings, feedback surveys, and team-building activities are conducted to gauge and improve morale. The Office of the CEO monitors this risk quarterly, addressing issues before they escalate.

**HR3. Compliance with employment and OHS laws:** Failure to comply with Fair Work Act requirements (e.g., employee rights, contracts) or Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) legislation could lead to legal penalties and harm to staff. *Mitigation:* The CEO regularly updates HR policies in line with current labour laws and safety regulations. Mandatory training is provided to staff and managers on key topics (e.g., anti-discrimination, workplace safety). Compliance audits are conducted annually to ensure all employment practices (contracts, work hours, leave, etc.) and workplace safety protocols meet legal standards.

**HR4. Inadequate staff development or performance management:** If staff are not adequately trained or their performance is not managed, their effectiveness may decline, impacting student outcomes and operations. *Mitigation:* AGE provides ongoing training and professional development programs for faculty and administrative staff who request it, to ensure their skills remain up to date. A performance appraisal system is in place to set goals, provide feedback, and address performance issues constructively. This ensures staff performance aligns with institutional needs. The CEO reviews training uptake and performance evaluation results annually to identify further improvement areas.

## 9 Responsibilities to the Student Body

Risks associated with meeting AGE's responsibilities to students, including student support, welfare, and satisfaction. These risks involve ensuring student needs are met in compliance with regulatory requirements (e.g. ESOS and National Code for international students) and maintaining a safe, supportive learning environment. Student-centric risk management helps uphold AGE's reputation and educational outcomes.

Risk (ID)	Impact	Probability	Risk Level	Mitigation Actions	Responsible	Review Date
ST1	Major	Possible	Medium High	Expand academic and personal support services (e.g., tutoring, counselling) to better assist students.	Student Services Manager	Quarterly (Next review: Jul 2025)
ST2	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Regularly audit compliance with student welfare obligations (ESOS, support services, grievance procedures).	CEO	Bi-annual (Next review: Dec 2025)
ST3	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Implement clear, responsive student complaint and feedback processes, and communicate them widely.	CEO	Bi-annual (Next review: Dec 2025)
ST4	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Ensure a safe campus environment and provide health and mental well-being programs for students.	CEO	Annual (Next review: Jan 2026)

**ST1. Inadequate student support services:** If academic support (e.g. tutoring, study skills) or personal support (counselling, mentoring) for students are insufficient, students may struggle academically or personally, leading to lower success and satisfaction. *Mitigation:* The Student Services Manager is expanding academic and personal support services. This includes more tutoring sessions, academic skills workshops, readily available counselling services, and mentorship programs. Service utilization and student success indicators are reviewed quarterly to ensure support services meet student needs.

**ST2. Non-compliance with student welfare regulations:** Failure to meet obligations under the ESOS Act and the National Code (for international students) or other student welfare standards (grievance handling, support for underperforming students, etc.) could result in regulatory sanctions and harm students. *Mitigation:* The Registrar audits student welfare compliance bi-annually. This audit covers checking that international student support requirements are met (orientation, progress monitoring, adequate staff for support), that grievance processes follow National Code standards, and that any required student services are provided. Compliance reports are reviewed by the CEO, and any gaps are promptly addressed.

**ST3. Poor handling of student complaints or feedback:** If student complaints are not taken seriously or resolved promptly, dissatisfaction can grow, and reputational damage can occur. *Mitigation:* AGE has implemented a clear and responsive complaint resolution process. Students are informed on how to lodge complaints or feedback, and these are tracked and resolved in a timely manner per a defined procedure. The CEO reviews complaint logs twice a year to identify any systemic issues and ensure responses meet policy timelines. Student feedback mechanisms (such as SFU surveys) are also utilized to catch issues early.

**ST4. Student health and safety issues:** An unsafe campus or lack of support for student health (including mental health) could lead to student harm or well-being problems, with serious consequences. *Mitigation:* AGE works to ensure a safe campus environment through proper security, facilities maintenance, and compliance with health and safety standards. Additionally, student health and well-being programs will be implemented. The CEO oversees campus safety measures and the availability of health resources, reviewing these annually and after any incident or student feedback that indicates a concern.

## 10 Quality of the Curriculum

*Risks related to the quality, relevance, and compliance of AGE's curriculum and programs.* These risks concern whether curriculum content remains up to date with academic and industry developments, meets accreditation standards, and continues to align with student and employer expectations. Curriculum quality is necessary for academic excellence and graduate success.

Risk (ID)	Impact	Probability	Risk Level	Mitigation Actions	Responsible	Review Date
QC1	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Conduct regular curriculum reviews with industry and academic input to keep content current	Executive Dean	Annual (Next review: Jan 2026)
QC2	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Ensure all programs meet HESF and accreditation standards through Academic Board oversight and periodic external review.	Academic Board Chair/Executive Dean	Annual (Next review: Jan 2026)
QC3 (Emerging)	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Monitor emerging education trends (e.g., micro-credentials, online learning) and adapt curriculum offerings as needed.	Executive Dean	Quarterly (Next review: Jul 2025)

**QC1. Outdated curriculum content:** If course content is not regularly updated, it may become outdated or misaligned with current industry practices and academic knowledge, reducing the value of the education provided. *Mitigation:* The Executive Dean conducts regular curriculum reviews for all programs. These reviews (at least annually) involve faculty experts and industry advisors to incorporate current research, technology, and industry trends into the curriculum. Syllabi are updated and initiatives introduced as needed to keep content fresh and relevant.

**QC2. Curriculum not meeting standards:** Courses must meet the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) and any professional accreditation standards. A failure in curriculum design (e.g., missing key learning outcomes, insufficient rigor) could lead to accreditation issues or graduates lacking required competencies.

*Mitigation:* The Academic Board provides oversight to ensure all programs meet or exceed HESF and accreditation standards. This includes mapping curriculum to required learning outcomes and engaging in periodic external reviews or accreditation assessments. Any recommendations from TEQSA or accrediting bodies are implemented promptly. The Academic Board Chair leads an annual review of compliance with academic standards across all programs.

**QC3. (Emerging) New educational delivery models:** The higher education landscape is evolving (e.g., growth of micro-credentials, online learning, competency-based education). If AGE's curriculum does not adapt to these trends, the institution could lose competitive advantage or fail to meet student expectations. *Mitigation:* The Executive Dean monitors emerging education trends and student demands. AGE is exploring flexible curriculum offerings (such as short courses or online modules) to complement traditional programs. This is an emerging strategic risk – and as such the academic team reviews it quarterly, considering pilot programs or partnerships that could incorporate new learning models without compromising quality.

## 11 Information Technology (IT)

Risks related to IT systems, data security, and technological infrastructure. In a modern educational institution, IT underpins academic delivery and administration. Key risks include cybersecurity threats, system downtime, data privacy compliance, outdated technology, and insufficient disaster recovery, all of which can significantly disrupt operations if not managed.

Risk (ID)	Impact	Probability	Risk Level	Mitigation Actions	Responsible	Review Date
IT1	Major	Rare	Low	Risks to be introduced when we migrate to other systems and possibly in the use of new software.	IT Support	Quarterly (Next review: Jul 2025)
IT2	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Perform regular system maintenance and keep backup systems to minimize downtime from IT failures.	IT Support	Monthly (Next review: May 2025)
IT3	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Train staff and regularly review data handling practices to ensure compliance with privacy laws.	IT Support	Annual (Next review: Jan 2026)
IT4	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Conduct periodic technology reviews and upgrade or replace systems that are becoming obsolete.	IT Support	Annual (Next review: Jan 2026)
IT5	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Maintain and regularly test an IT disaster recovery and business continuity plan.	IT Support	Annual (Next review: Jan 2026)

**IT1. Cybersecurity threats and data breaches:** A cyber-attack or data breach (e.g., hacking, ransomware, or loss of sensitive student data) could disrupt operations and compromise confidential information, leading to financial and reputational damage as well as potential legal penalties under privacy laws. *Mitigation:* At AGE we currently utilise Google as our major provider of IT services, including but not limited to email, document management and software tools for everyday work, all hosted in the Google cloud. This risk is thus greatly mitigated. Separately to this, staff are trained in cybersecurity awareness (e.g., phishing prevention). In the unlikely case that an attack is successful, response plans we have a team in place to react to this breach. While it is possible that new software being utilised can introduce risks most of the software adopted by AGE, if not hosted in the Google cloud, are also cloud hosted so we maintain that risks are minimal and rare.

**IT2. IT system failures/downtime:** Failure of critical IT systems (such as the learning management system, student records system, or network infrastructure) could halt classes or administrative processes. *Mitigation:* AGE currently utilises Google cloud for all its major IT systems and infrastructure. There are redundant systems and backups in place for internet to take over if primary systems fail. The IT support team monitors system performance and has protocols for rapid response to outages. Currently IT risk in this area is possible but unlikely.

**IT3. Data protection and privacy compliance:** Handling of student and staff data must comply with the Privacy Act 1988 and other data protection regulations. A failure here (such as improper storage of personal data or not obtaining necessary consents) could result in legal violations and loss of trust. *Mitigation:* The IT support team ensures that data handling practices are regularly reviewed for compliance. Staff who handle personal data receive training on privacy obligations. Policies govern data access, retention, and disposal. Privacy impact assessments are done when implementing new IT systems or collecting new types of personal data. Compliance is audited annually, and any weaknesses are addressed immediately.

**IT4. Technology obsolescence:** If IT hardware or software becomes outdated, it may no longer be supported or efficient, leading to increased risk of failures and inability to support new educational needs. *Mitigation:* The IT support team will conduct periodic technology reviews (annually). An inventory of all systems is maintained with lifecycle plans for upgrades or replacements. Each year, aging equipment and software are identified and budgeted for update. By proactively upgrading technology (e.g., replacing old servers, updating software licenses), AGE ensures its IT environment remains current and capable of supporting modern teaching methods (such as online learning) and operations.

**IT5. Inadequate disaster recovery/business continuity:** In the event of a major incident (cyberattack, natural disaster, etc.) that disables IT systems, lacking a robust disaster recovery plan could result in prolonged disruption and data loss. *Mitigation:* AGE currently utilises Google cloud which has robust and industry standard Disaster Recovery plans in place. Nevertheless, an annual Review and Continuous Improvement report should be done by the IT support team to identify any areas that may have inadequate disaster recovery that may impact business continuity.

## 12 Conclusion

This Risk Register is a *living document* and as such, all risks and their mitigation strategies are reviewed regularly, and this is captured in the various tables in this document. When significant changes occur in AGE's operating environment, new and emerging risks will be added to the register as needed, and mitigation plans will be adjusted in response to internal audit findings, incidents, or changes in best practices.

The AGE CEO, Executive Management Team, Academic Board and Board of Directors will review the overall risk management plan regularly ensuring that the risk ratings, priorities, and actions remain appropriate.

By continuously monitoring and updating this Risk Register, AGE aims to foster a risk-aware culture and maintain resilience in achieving its academic and operational objectives.