



ENCONTROS
DA RIQUAL
Qualidade, Investigação e Desenvolvimento

Risk Management for Higher Education Institutions

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The context

Higher education institutions (HEIs):

- ▶ operate as **complex systems** linked with **societal dynamics**
- ▶ presence of **multicultural students** with **unique needs** and **expectations**
- ▶ **people centre** organizations with **high mobility** and **concentrated events**
- ▶ **diverse risk factors** - often do not manifest simultaneously
- ▶ **data** can be transformed into **actionable knowledge**, enhancing the **ability** of HEIs to **anticipate** and **manage risks**

The context

Engaging complementary systems in risk management can ensure:

- ▶ **continuous flow of information**, enhancing organizational **understanding of past, present, and future risks**

A comprehensive shared taxonomy of risks is essential for effective risk management in higher education institutions

The challenge

- ▶ **Collaboration** with similar institutions can be beneficial in **identifying** and **addressing** both **potential** and **realized risks**.
- ▶ Establishing a **cooperative network** characterized by **openness, voluntarism, confidentiality,** and a **no-blame culture** can create a valuable repository of data.
- ▶ **Repository of data** - actionable knowledge, enhancing the ability of HEIs to **anticipate** and **manage risks**
- ▶ **Increasing** their **resilience** and maintaining their **focus** on educational **excellence** and **improvement**.

One way forward

- ▶ Budget Allocation
- ▶ Revenue Generation
- ▶ Funding and Budgeting

- ▶ Market Position
- ▶ Regulatory Compliance
- ▶ Reputation Management



- ▶ Accreditation
- ▶ Research

- ▶ Facilities Management
- ▶ Information Technology
- ▶ Academic Community Health and Safety
- ▶ Crisis Management

One way forward

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- ▶ Budget Allocation
- ▶ Revenue Generation
- ▶ **Funding and Budgeting**

▶ University funding

“ The rector of the University of Lisbon finds it ‘incomprehensible’ that the funding formula does not include performance indicators for higher education institutions ”

Semanário Expresso
14-08-2023

One way forward

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▶ Accreditation

▶ Research

▶ **Loss of accreditation due to failure to meet educational standards**

“ *City College of San Francisco nearly lost accreditation due to financial and administrative issues.* ”

Inside Higher Ed
19-01-2024

One way forward



▶ Accreditation

▶ Research

▶ **Research misconduct leading to loss of grant funding and damage to institution's reputation**

“ *Duke University settled research misconduct case for \$112.5 million over falsified data in grant applications.* ”

Science
25-03-2019

One way forward

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- ▶ **Facilities Management**
- ▶ Information Technology
- ▶ Academic Community
- ▶ Health and Safety
- ▶ Crisis Management

▶ **Active shooter, security risk**

“ *Active shooter at Faculty of Sciences,
University of Lisbon* ”

Rádio Renascença
11-02-2022

One way forward

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- ▶ Facilities Management
- ▶ **Information Technology**
- ▶ Academic Community
- ▶ Health and Safety
- ▶ Crisis Management

▶ Cyber attack

“
*Cyber-attack on Universidad
Complutense de Madrid and possible
compromised/exposed personal data*
”

”

El País

10-05-2024

One way forward

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- ▶ Facilities Management
- ▶ Information Technology
- ▶ **Academic Community**
Health and Safety
- ▶ Crisis Management

▶ Mercury contamination

“ Building of the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Lisbon contaminated with mercury to be demolished ”

Público
06-11-2015

One way forward

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- ▶ Facilities Management
- ▶ Information Technology
- ▶ Academic Community
- ▶ Health and Safety
- ▶ **Crisis Management**

▶ Social protests at universities

“ Students arrested during pro-Palestinian protest at the University of Lisbon ”

CNN Portugal
10-05-2024

One way forward

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- ▶ **Market Position**
- ▶ Regulatory Compliance
- ▶ Reputation Management

- ▶ **Decline in enrolment due to competition from nearby universities offering similar programs**

“ University of Maine System experienced a significant enrolment drop due to competition and demographic changes.

”

The Maine Campus
18-09-2023

One way forward

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- ▶ Market Position
- ▶ Regulatory Compliance
- ▶ **Reputation Management**

▶ Alleged harassment and abuse of power

“ Abuse of power and harassment at the Centre for Social Studies (CES) of the University of Coimbra.”

Semanário Expresso
13-03-2024



Conclusions

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- ▶ Just the "**tip of the iceberg**"
- ▶ **underlying problems, systemic issues**, or the **root causes** of events
- ▶ This approach enables us to address:
 - ▶ **near misses**
 - ▶ **risks with fast onsets**
 - ▶ **small, slow moving and low impact risks**
- ▶ that can **accumulate** without **acknowledge** of the stakeholders

Conclusions

Shared knowledge among HEIs, including sharing data on potential underlying causes, is crucial for risk management

An effectively manage risks in higher education institutions need to:

- ▶ **Implement Robust Risk Management Frameworks** – regular risk assessments, monitoring, and mitigation strategies
- ▶ **Conduct Root Cause Analysis** – to address systemic issues
- ▶ **Enhance Transparency and Reporting** – to stakeholders with detailed analyses and action plans
- ▶ **Strengthen Oversight and Accountability** – strong governance structures and clear mechanisms
- ▶ **Promote a Culture of Compliance and Ethics** – prioritizes compliance, ethics, and continuous improvement



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