

Grampian Valuation Joint Board

Annual Audit Plan 2018/19



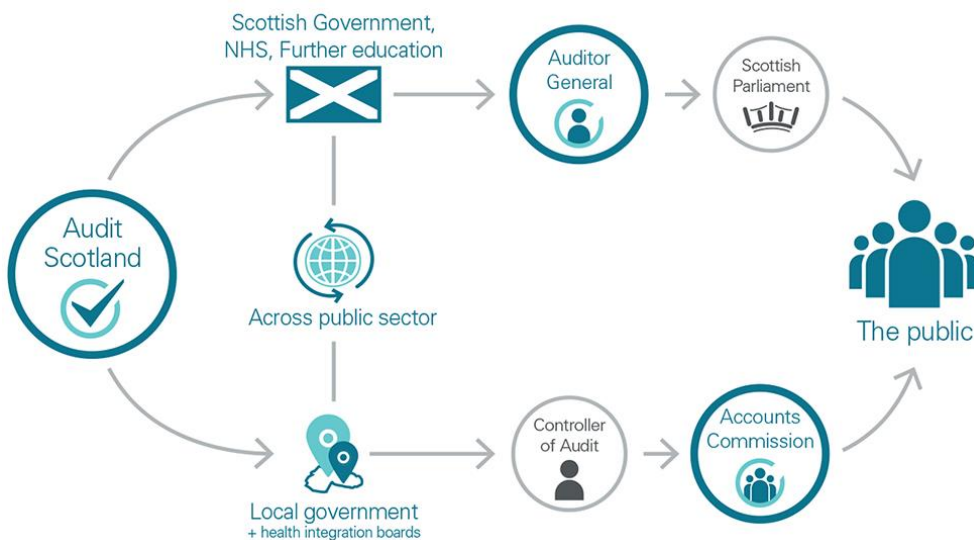
 AUDIT SCOTLAND

Prepared for Grampian Valuation Joint Board
January 2019

Who we are

The Auditor General, the Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland work together to deliver public audit in Scotland:

- the Auditor General is an independent crown appointment, made on the recommendation of the Scottish Parliament, to audit the Scottish Government, NHS and other bodies and report to Parliament on their financial health and performance
- the Accounts Commission is an independent public body appointed by Scottish ministers to hold local government to account. The Controller of Audit is an independent post established by statute, with powers to report directly to the Commission on the audit of local government
- Audit Scotland is governed by a board, consisting of the Auditor General, the chair of the Accounts Commission, a non-executive board chair, and two non-executive members appointed by the Scottish Commission for Public Audit, a commission of the Scottish Parliament.



About us

Our vision is to be a world-class audit organisation that improves the use of public money.

Through our work for the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission, we provide independent assurance to the people of Scotland that public money is spent properly and provides value. We aim to achieve this by:

- carrying out relevant and timely audits of the way the public sector manages and spends money
- reporting our findings and conclusions in public
- identifying risks, making clear and relevant recommendations.

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Risks and planned work

1. This annual audit plan contains an overview of the planned scope and timing of our audit and is carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs), the [Code of Audit Practice](#), and any other relevant guidance. This plan sets out the work necessary to allow us to provide an independent auditor's report on the financial statements and meet the wider scope requirements of public sector audit.

2. Paragraph 53 of the Code requires the full wider scope of audit to apply to all bodies unless the auditor judges that it is not appropriate due to the size, nature and risks of the body. As a result of our initial planning work and in recognition of the Grampian Valuation Joint Board's (the Joint Board) size and value and the nature of transactions being processed, we intend to adopt a small body audit approach to the financial statements audit. Consequently, our wider scope work will focus on the appropriateness of the disclosures in the governance statement and financial sustainability of the Joint Board over the medium to longer term.


Adding value


3. We aim to add value to the Joint Board through our external audit work by being constructive and forward looking, by identifying areas for improvement and by recommending and encouraging good practice. In so doing, we intend to help the Joint Board promote improved standards of governance, better management and decision making and more effective use of resources.


Audit risks

4. Based on our discussions with staff, attendance at Board meetings and a review of supporting information we have identified the following main risk areas for the Joint Board. We have categorised these risks into financial risks and wider dimension risks. The key audit risks, which require specific audit testing, are detailed in [Exhibit 1](#).

Exhibit 1 2018/19 key audit risks

 Audit Risk	Source of assurance	Planned audit work
Financial statements issues and risks		
1 Risk of management override of controls ISA 240 requires that audit work is planned to consider the risk of fraud, which is presumed to be a significant risk in any audit. This includes consideration of the risk of management override of controls to change the position disclosed in the financial statements.	Owing to the nature of this risk, assurances from management are not applicable in this instance.	Detailed testing of journal entries. Review of accounting estimates. Focused testing of accruals and prepayments. Evaluation of significant transactions that are outside the normal course of business.

	Audit Risk	Source of assurance	Planned audit work
2	Estimation and judgements There is a significant degree of subjectivity in the measurement and valuation of the pension liability and non-current asset values included in the annual accounts. This subjectivity represents an increased risk of misstatement in the accounts.	Use of professional actuaries appointed by the Pension Fund to value pension adjustments required by IAS19. Professionally qualified valuers prepare non-current asset valuations.	Assessment of the scope, independence and competence of the professionals engaged in providing estimates. Assessment of the appropriateness of the actuarial assumptions. Establish officers' arrangements for assessing the impact of any movement in fund values between the IAS19 valuation date and the year end. Focussed testing of IAS19 disclosures.
3	Related party returns and registers of interest Our 2017/18 Annual Audit Report highlighted that improvements were required to procedures to ensure that related party returns are completed and up to date registers of interest are maintained for all elected members and senior officers. There is a risk that related party transactions are not all detected and disclosed within the annual accounts as required by the 2018/19 Code.	A review of procedures for identifying related parties' disclosures within the annual accounts will be undertaken during February 2019. Registers of interest will be prepared for senior officers.	Review of updated policies and procedures. Inspection of registers of interest of members and senior officers. Focussed testing of related party disclosures within the annual accounts.
Wider dimension issues and risks			
4	Medium to long term financial planning The Joint Board's budgets are prepared and approved on an annual basis and include indicative budgets for the following two years. Scenario planning is not used to model the impact of different funding levels. Without medium to longer term financial planning, there is a risk that the Joint Board is not fully prepared for potential changes in its funding levels and that opportunities and risks may not be fully realised/mitigated.	A report showing indicative financial plans for different scenarios and setting out the operational issues facing the Assessor & ERO will be prepared and used to underpin the budget paper for 2019/20. A medium term (5 years) financial strategy will also be prepared.	Review the 2019/20 budget paper and five-year financial strategy. Comment on financial sustainability within our annual audit report.

 Audit Risk	Source of assurance	Planned audit work
<p>5 Governance documents</p> <p>In previous years we have highlighted that a number of key governance documents are overdue for review and update. In response, the Assessor developed a timetable for the review of these policies but progress against this was limited during 2017/18. Without regular review and update, there is a risk that the Joint Board's policies and procedures do not reflect current regulations and/or best practice.</p>	A revised timetable has been prepared for review of the key governance documents.	<p>Obtain a revised timetable and monitor progress against this.</p> <p>Comment on governance arrangements within our annual audit report.</p>

Source: Audit Scotland

Reporting arrangements

5. Audit reporting is the visible output for the annual audit. All annual audit plans and the outputs as detailed in [Exhibit 2](#), and any other outputs on matters of public interest will be published on our website: www.audit-scotland.gov.uk.

6. Matters arising from our audit will be reported on a timely basis and will include agreed action plans. Draft management reports will be issued to the relevant officer(s) to confirm factual accuracy.

7. We will provide an independent auditor's report to the Joint Board and the Accounts Commission setting out our opinions on the annual accounts. In addition, we will provide the Treasurer and the Accounts Commission with an annual report on the audit containing observations and recommendations on significant matters which have arisen during the audit.

Exhibit 2 2018/19 audit outputs

Audit Output	Target date	Joint Board date
Annual Audit Report	15 August 2019	23 August 2019
Independent Auditor's Report	23 August 2019	N/A

Source: Audit Scotland

Audit fee

8. The agreed fee for the 2018/19 audit of the Joint Board is £7,280 (prior year: £7,080). In determining the audit fee we have taken account of the risk exposure of the Joint Board, the planned management assurances in place and the level of reliance we plan to take from the work of internal audit. Our audit approach assumes receipt of the unaudited annual accounts, with a complete working papers package on 31 May 2019.

9. Where our audit cannot proceed as planned through, for example, late receipt of unaudited annual accounts or being unable to take planned reliance from the work of internal audit, a supplementary fee may be levied. An additional fee may also be required in relation to any work or other significant exercises out with our planned audit activity.

Responsibilities

Joint Board and Treasurer

10. Audited bodies have the primary responsibility for ensuring the proper financial stewardship of public funds, compliance with relevant legislation and establishing effective arrangements for governance, propriety and regularity that enable them to successfully deliver their objectives.

11. The audit of the annual accounts does not relieve management or the Joint Board, as those charged with governance, of their responsibilities.

Appointed auditor

12. Our responsibilities as independent auditors are established by the 1973 Act for local government and the Code of Audit Practice (including supplementary guidance) and guided by the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard.

13. Auditors in the public sector give an independent opinion on the financial statements and other information within the annual accounts. We also review and report on the arrangements within the audited body to manage its performance, regularity and use of resources. In doing this, we aim to support improvement and accountability.

Audit scope and timing

Annual accounts

14. The annual accounts, which include the financial statements, will be the foundation and source for most of the audit work necessary to support our judgements and conclusions. We also consider the wider environment and challenges facing the public sector. Our audit approach includes:

- understanding the business of the Joint Board and the associated risks which could impact on the financial statements
- assessing the key systems of internal control, and establishing how weaknesses in these systems could impact on the financial statements
- identifying major transaction streams, balances and areas of estimation and understanding how the Joint Board will include these in the financial statements
- assessing the risks of material misstatement in the financial statements
- determining the nature, timing and extent of audit procedures necessary to provide us with sufficient audit evidence as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

15. We will give an opinion on whether the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view in accordance with applicable law and the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19 (the 2018/19 Code) of the state of affairs of the Joint Board as at 31 March 2019 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- have been properly prepared in accordance with IFRSs as adopted by the European Union, and interpreted and adapted by the 2018/19 Code; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, The Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.



characteristics



responsibilities



£
principal activities



risks



governance
arrangements

Other information in the annual accounts

16. We also review and report on other information published within the annual accounts including the management commentary, annual governance statement and the remuneration report. We give an opinion on whether these have been compiled in accordance with the appropriate regulations and frameworks in our independent auditor's report.

17. We also read and consider any information in the annual accounts other than the financial statements and audited part of the remuneration report and report any uncorrected material misstatements.

Materiality

18. We apply the concept of materiality in planning and performing the audit. It is used in evaluating the effect of identified misstatements on the audit, and of any uncorrected misstatements, on the financial statements and in forming our opinions in the independent auditor's report.

19. We calculate materiality at different levels as described below. The calculated materiality values for the Joint Board are set out in [Exhibit 3](#).

Exhibit 3

2018/19 materiality values

Materiality	Amount
Planning materiality – this is the calculated figure we use in assessing the overall impact of audit adjustments on the financial statements. It has been set at 2% of gross expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2019 based on the revenue budget for 2018/19.	£89,000
Performance materiality – this acts as a trigger point. If the aggregate of errors identified during the financial statements audit exceeds performance materiality this would indicate that further audit procedures should be considered. Using our professional judgement, we have calculated performance materiality at 70% of planning materiality.	£62,000
Reporting threshold (i.e., clearly trivial) – we are required to report to those charged with governance on all unadjusted misstatements more than the 'reporting threshold' amount. This has been calculated at 5% of planning materiality.	£4,000



Source: Audit Scotland

Timetable

20. To support the efficient use of resources it is critical that a timetable is agreed with us for the preparation and audit of the annual accounts. We have included an agreed timetable at [Exhibit 4](#).

Exhibit 4

Annual accounts timetable

 Key stage	 Date
Latest submission date of unaudited annual accounts with complete working papers package	31 May 2019
Consideration of unaudited annual accounts by those charged with governance	21 June 2019
Latest date for final clearance meeting with Treasurer	26 July 2019
Agreement of audited unsigned annual accounts; and issue of Annual Audit Report to those charged with governance	15 August 2019
Independent auditor's report signed	23 August 2019

Internal audit

21. Internal audit is provided by the Moray Council's internal audit section. As part of our planning process we carry out an annual assessment of the internal audit function to ensure that it operates in accordance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

22. In our 2017/18 audit report we noted that an external assessment against the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) had not yet taken place and so internal audit cannot demonstrate full compliance with these Standards. Plans are in place for the assessment to take place in February 2019. We will review the findings and report the results in our Annual Audit Report.

Using the work of internal audit

23. Auditing standards require internal and external auditors to work closely together to make best use of available audit resources, and so we seek to rely on the work of internal audit wherever possible to avoid duplication. We do not plan to place any formal reliance on the work of internal audit in 2018/19 as we intend to use a substantive approach for the audit of the Joint Board's financial statements. We will consider internal audit's work on corporate governance as part of our wider dimension audit responsibilities.

Audit dimensions

24. Our standard audits are based on four audit dimensions that frame the wider scope of public sector audit requirements. These are: financial sustainability, financial management, governance and accountability and value for money.

25. As noted at paragraph 2, the Code of Audit Practice includes provisions relating to the audit of small bodies. Where the application of the full wider audit scope is judged by auditors not to be appropriate to an audited body then the annual audit work can focus on the appropriateness of the disclosures in the governance statement and the financial sustainability of the body and its services. In the light of the volume and lack of complexity of the financial transactions, we plan to apply the small body provisions of the Code to the 2018/19 audit of the Joint Board.

Independence and objectivity

26. Auditors appointed by the Accounts Commission or Auditor General must comply with the Code of Audit Practice and relevant supporting guidance. When auditing the financial statements auditors must also comply with professional standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council and those of the professional accountancy bodies. These standards impose stringent rules to ensure the independence and objectivity of auditors. Audit Scotland has robust arrangements in place to ensure compliance with these standards including an annual "fit and proper" declaration for all members of staff. The arrangements are overseen by the Director of Audit Services, who serves as Audit Scotland's Ethics Partner.

27. The engagement lead (i.e. appointed auditor) for the Joint Board is Maggie Bruce, Senior Audit Manager. Auditing and ethical standards require the appointed auditor to communicate any relationships that may affect the independence and objectivity of audit staff. We are not aware of any such relationships pertaining to the audit of the Joint Board.

Quality control

28. International Standard on Quality Control (UK and Ireland) 1 (ISQC1) requires that a system of quality control is established, as part of financial audit procedures, to provide reasonable assurance that professional standards and regulatory and legal requirements are being complied with and that the independent auditor's report or opinion is appropriate in the circumstances.

29. The foundation of our quality framework is our Audit Guide, which incorporates the application of professional auditing, quality and ethical standards and the Code of Audit Practice (and supporting guidance) issued by Audit Scotland and approved by the Auditor General for Scotland. To ensure that we achieve the required quality standards Audit Scotland conducts peer reviews and internal quality reviews. Additionally, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS) have been commissioned to carry out external quality reviews.

30. As part of our commitment to quality and continuous improvement, Audit Scotland will periodically seek your views on the quality of our service provision. We welcome feedback at any time and this may be directed to the engagement lead.

Grampian Valuation Joint Board

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