

East of Scotland European Consortium

Annual Audit Plan 2018/19



 AUDIT SCOTLAND

Prepared for East of Scotland European Consortium
March 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. The wider scope of public audit contributes to assessments and conclusions on financial management, financial sustainability, governance and transparency and value for money.

Adding value

3. We aim to add value to the East of Scotland European Consortium 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 East of Scotland European Consortium 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 committee meetings and a review of supporting information we have identified the following main risk areas for the East of Scotland European Consortium. 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		
<p>1 Risk of management override of controls</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Owing to the nature of this risk, assurances from management are not applicable in this instance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Wider dimension issues and risks		
<p>2 Financial sustainability</p> <p>The Consortium has reserves to cover the next three years if it continues to</p>	<p>A three-year reserves plan/budget is being drafted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with officers. • Review of Policy Board papers.

	Audit Risk	Source of assurance	Planned audit work
	<p>operate at the same level. The Consortium is budgeting for a £15,537 deficit in 2018/19, which will be funded by reserves.</p> <p>The ongoing use of reserves to cover expenditure is not sustainable, and the Consortium needs to plan for what happens as its reserves are exhausted.</p> <p>In addition, although plans are being made to replace EU funding with that of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the Consortium's role following the UK's withdrawal from the EU is unclear and there is no guarantee that the member councils will continue their membership beyond 2019/20.</p>	<p>Member councils are required to give at least one financial year's notice of withdrawal of membership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Consortium's financial planning and reserves plan/budget.

Source: Audit Scotland

Reporting arrangements

- 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.
- 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.
- We will provide an independent auditor's report to the East of Scotland European Consortium and the Accounts Commission setting out our opinions on the annual accounts. We will provide the East of Scotland European Consortium and the Controller of Audit 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	Committee Date
Annual Audit Plan	31 March 2019	Policy Board April 2019 (date TBC)
Annual Audit Report	30 September 2019	Policy Board September 2019 (date TBC)
Independent Auditor's Report	30 September 2019	Policy Board September 2019 (date TBC)

Source: Audit Scotland

Audit fee

8. The proposed audit fee for the 2018/19 audit of the East of Scotland European Consortium is £4,590 (2017/18 £4,460). In determining the audit fee we have taken account of the risk exposure of the East of Scotland European Consortium, 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 30 June 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

Policy 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 the Treasurer or the Policy 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 East of Scotland European Consortium 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 East of Scotland European Consortium 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 of the state of affairs of ESEC 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, as interpreted and adapted by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19
- have been properly 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 and annual governance statement. 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 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 East of Scotland European Consortium are set out in [Exhibit 3](#).

Exhibit 3 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 1% of gross expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2018 based on the latest audited accounts for 2017/18.	£690
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 75% of planning materiality.	£520
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 1% of planning materiality.	£35

Source: Audit Scotland

Timetable

20. To support the efficient use of resources it is critical that the annual accounts timetable is agreed with us to produce the unaudited accounts. We have included an agreed timetable at [Exhibit 4](#).

Exhibit 4 Annual accounts timetable

 Key stage	 Date
Consideration of unaudited annual accounts by those charged with governance.	By 31 August 2019
Latest submission date of unaudited annual accounts with complete working papers package	30 June 2019
Latest date for final clearance meeting with officers (This may change depending on the date set for the September Policy Board meeting)	13 September 2019
Issue of Letter of Representation and proposed independent auditor's report	16 September 2019
Agreement of audited unsigned annual accounts	16 September 2019
Issue of Annual Audit Report to those charged with governance	By 30 September 2019
Independent auditor's report signed	By 30 September 2019

Internal audit

21. Internal audit is provided by the Internal Audit section of Dundee City Council. 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). The scope of our work assesses aspects of PSIAS compliance, but it does not equate to full EQA review of internal audit. ISA 610 requires an assessment on whether the work of the internal audit function can be used for the purposes of external audit. This includes:

- the extent to which the internal audit function's organisational status and relevant policies and procedures support the objectivity of the internal auditors
- the level of competence of the internal audit function
- whether the internal audit function applies a systematic and disciplined approach, including quality control.

22. We have placed reliance on the assessment of Dundee City Council's Internal Audit section carried out by the Dundee City Council external audit team in early 2019. This concluded that Internal Audit has sound documentation standards and reporting procedures in place and complies with the main requirements of PSIAS.

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. We seek to rely on the work of internal audit wherever possible to avoid duplication. However, internal audit does not have any 2018/19 planned audit activity directly relating to ESEC.

Audit dimensions

24. Our audit is based on four audit dimensions that frame the wider scope of public sector audit requirements as shown in [Exhibit 5](#).

Exhibit 5 Audit dimensions



Source: Code of Audit Practice

25. 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.

26. 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 East of Scotland European Consortium.

Independence and objectivity

27. 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.

28. The engagement lead (i.e. appointed auditor) for the East of Scotland European Consortium is Rachel Browne, Senior Audit Manager. Auditing and ethical standards require the appointed auditor Rachel Browne 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 East of Scotland European Consortium.

Quality control

29. 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.

30. 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 Accounts Commission and 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.

31. 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.

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