

Standards Commission for Scotland

Annual Audit Plan 2019/20



 AUDIT SCOTLAND

Prepared for Standards Commission for Scotland

December 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 which is carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs), the [Code of Audit Practice](#), and [guidance on planning the audit](#). This plan sets out the work necessary to allow us to provide an independent auditor's report on the annual accounts 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 Standards Commission for Scotland (SCfS) 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 Standards Commission for Scotland 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 significant risks for the Standards Commission for Scotland. We have categorised these risks into financial statements risks and wider dimension risks. The key audit risks, which require specific audit testing, are detailed in [Exhibit 1](#).

Exhibit 1 2019/20 Significant audit risks

 Audit Risk	Source of assurance	Planned audit work
Financial statements risks		
<p>1 Risk of material misstatement caused by management override of controls</p> <p>Auditing Standards require that audits are planned to consider the risk of material misstatement caused by fraud, which is presumed to be a significant risk in any audit. This includes the risk of management override of controls that results in fraudulent financial statements.</p>	Owing to the nature of this risk, assurances from management are not applicable in this instance.	<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.
<p>2 Risk of material misstatement caused by fraud in expenditure</p>	Substantive audit work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytical procedures on expenditure streams. Detailed testing of

 Audit Risk	Source of assurance	Planned audit work
<p>Practice Note 10 extend this risk of fraud over income as set out in ISA 240, to fraud over expenditure in public entities. There is a risk that expenditure may be misstated resulting in a material misstatement in the financial statements.</p> <p>The risk of fraud over expenditure applies to the SCfS due to the low degree of segregation of duties. The assertion risks that are applicable are occurrence and completeness.</p>		expenditure transactions.
Source: Audit Scotland		

5. As set out in ISA 240 there is a presumed risk of fraud in the recognition of income. There is a risk that income may be misstated resulting in a material misstatement in the financial statements. We have rebutted the risks of material misstatement caused by fraud in income recognition in 2019/20 because Standards Commission for Scotland has a straightforward income stream with its only source of income are funds drawn down from the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body.

6. The nature of Procurement in SCfS is such that expenditure relates mostly to providing support to members and conducting hearings; in line with 2019/20 guidance on planning the audit, we will review the procurement process.

7. Public Sector bodies should be able to demonstrate how they are fulfilling the general equality duty under the Equalities Act 2010. As part of our wider dimensions audit work, we will consider and update our understanding on the work on equalities that Standards Commission for Scotland has done to ensure compliance with the equalities legislation.

Reporting arrangements

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. We will provide an independent auditor's report to SCfS, Scottish Parliament and the Auditor General for Scotland. Setting out our opinions on the annual accounts. We will provide the Accountable Officer and Auditor General for Scotland with an annual report on the audit containing observations and recommendations on significant matters which have arisen during the audit.

Exhibit 2 2019/20 Audit outputs

Audit Output	Target date	Committee Date
Annual Audit Plan		20 January 2020

Audit Output	Target date	Committee Date
Annual Audit Report including ISA 260		20 July 2020
Independent Auditor's Report		27 July 2020

Source: Audit Scotland

Audit fee

11. The proposed audit fee for the 2019/20 audit of Standards Commission for Scotland is £2,730 [2018/19 £2,690]. In determining the audit fee we will take account of the risk exposure of the SCfS, 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 1 June 2020.

12. Where our audit cannot proceed as planned through, for example, late receipt of unaudited annual accounts, 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

Audit and Assurance Committee and Accountable Officer

13. 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.

14. The audit of the annual accounts does not relieve management or the audit and Assurance Committee as those charged with governance, of their responsibilities.

Appointed auditor

15. Our responsibilities as independent auditors are established by the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and the Code of Audit Practice (including supplementary guidance) and guided by the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard.

16. 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

17. 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 SCfS and the associated risks which could impact on the financial statements
- identifying major transaction streams, balances and areas of estimation and understanding how ScfS 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.

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

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the SCfS as at 31 March 2020 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with IFRSs as interpreted and adapted by the 2019/20 FReM;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by Scottish Ministers

Other information in the annual accounts

19. We also review and report on other statutory information published within the annual report and accounts including the performance report, annual governance statement and the remuneration and staff 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.

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

Materiality

21. 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.

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



characteristics



responsibilities



principal activities



risks



governance arrangements

Exhibit 3

Materiality values

Materiality	Amount
Planning materiality – This is the figure we calculate to assess 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 20 based on the latest budget for 2019/20 (rounded to the nearest thousand)	£5,000
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 75% of planning materiality.	£3,750
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.	£250

Source: Audit Scotland

Timetable

23. 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
Latest submission date of unaudited annual report and accounts with complete working papers package	1 June 2020
Latest date for final clearance meeting with Business manager	15 June 2020
Issue of Annual Audit Report including ISA 260 to those charged with governance	6 July 2020
Independent Auditor's Report Signed	27 July 2020

Internal audit

24. Internal audit is provided by the Head of Internal Audit and Risk management of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB). As part of our planning work for SPCB we carried out an annual assessment of the internal audit function to ensure that it operates in accordance with the main requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). We concluded that internal audit operates in accordance with the main requirements of PSIAS.

Using the work of internal audit

25. 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. We plan to consider

the findings of the work of internal audit as part of our planning process to minimise duplication of effort and to ensure the total resource is used efficiently or effectively.

Audit dimensions

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 2019/20 audit of the SCfS.

Financial sustainability

27. As auditors we consider the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting as part of the annual audit. We will also comment on financial sustainability in the longer term. We define this as medium term (two to five years) and longer term (longer than five years) sustainability. We will carry out work and conclude on:

- the effectiveness of financial planning in identifying and addressing risks to financial sustainability in the short, medium and long term
- the appropriateness and effectiveness of arrangements in place to address any identified funding gaps

Governance and transparency

28. Governance and transparency is concerned with the effectiveness of scrutiny and governance arrangements, leadership and decision – making and transparent reporting of financial and performance information. We will review, conclude and report on:

- whether SCfS can demonstrate that the governance arrangements in place are appropriate and operating effectively
- whether there is effective scrutiny, challenge and transparency on the decision-making and finance and performance reports.
- the quality and timeliness of financial and performance reporting.

Independence and objectivity

29. 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.

30. The engagement lead (i.e. appointed auditor) for SCfS is Stephen Boyle, Audit Director. Auditing and ethical standards require the appointed auditor Stephen Boyle 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 SCfS.

Quality control

31. 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.

32. 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.

33. 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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Audit Scotland, 4th Floor, 102 West Port, Edinburgh EH3 9DN
T: 0131 625 1500 E: info@audit-scotland.gov.uk
www.audit-scotland.gov.uk