

# Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer

Annual Audit Plan 2021/22



 AUDIT SCOTLAND

Prepared for the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer

3 March 2022

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# Introduction

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## Summary of planned audit work

1. This document summarises the work plan for our 2021/22 external audit of the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (QLTR). The main elements of our work include:

- an audit of the annual report and accounts and provision of an Independent Auditor's Report
- an audit opinion on regularity and other statutory information published within the annual report and accounts including the Performance Report, the Remuneration and Staff Report and the Governance Statement
- consideration of arrangements in relation to the audit dimensions: financial management, financial sustainability, governance and transparency and value for money that frame the wider scope of public sector audit.

## Impact of Covid-19

2. The coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic has had a significant impact on public services and public finances, and the effects will be felt well into the future.

3. The Auditor General for Scotland, the Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland continue to assess the risks to public services and finances from Covid-19 across the full range of our audit work, including annual audits and the programme of performance audits. The well-being of audit teams and the delivery of high-quality audits remain paramount. Changes in our approach may be necessary and where this impacts on annual audits, revisions to this Annual Audit Plan may be required.

## Adding value

4. We aim to add value to the QLTR 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 will help the QLTR promote improved standards of governance, better management and decision making and more effective use of resources. Additionally, we attend meetings of the Audit and Risk Committee and actively participate in discussions.

## Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the QLTR

5. The [Code of Audit Practice \(2016\)](#) sets out in detail the respective responsibilities of the auditor and the QLTR. Key responsibilities are summarised below.

## Auditor responsibilities

**6.** 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.

**7.** Auditors in the public sector give an independent opinion on the financial statements and other information within the annual report and 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.

## QLTR responsibilities

**8.** The QLTR is responsible for maintaining accounting records and preparing financial statements that give a true and fair view. The QLTR has 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 deliver their objectives.

## Managing the transition to 2022/23 audits

**9.** Audit appointments are usually for five years but were extended to six years due to Covid-19. 2021/22 is the final year of the current appointment and we will work closely with our successors to ensure a well-managed transition.

# Financial statements audit planning

## Materiality

**10.** Materiality is an expression of the relative significance of a matter in the context of the financial statements as a whole. We are required to plan our audit to determine with reasonable confidence whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement. The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgement over both the amount and the nature of the misstatement.

### Materiality levels for the 2021/22 audit

**11.** We assess materiality at different levels. The materiality values for the QLTR are set out in [Exhibit 1](#).

## Exhibit 1

### 2021/22 Materiality levels for the QLTR

Materiality	Amount
<b>Planning materiality</b> – 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 receipts for the year ended 31 March 2022 based on the latest audited financial statements for 2020/21.	£158,000
<b>Performance materiality</b> – 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 assessed performance materiality at 75% of planning materiality.	£119,000
<b>Reporting threshold (i.e. clearly trivial)</b> – We are required to report to those charged with governance on all unadjusted misstatements more than the 'reporting threshold' amount.	£8,000

Source: Audit Scotland

## Significant risks of material misstatement to the financial statements

**12.** Our risk assessment draws on our cumulative knowledge of the QLTR, its major transaction streams, key systems of internal control and risk management

processes. Also, it is informed by our discussions with management, meetings with internal audit, attendance at committees and a review of supporting information.

**13.** Based on our risk assessment process, we identified the following significant risks of material misstatement to the financial statements. These are risks which have the greatest impact on our planned audit procedures. [Exhibit 2](#) summarises the nature of the risk, the sources of assurance from management arrangements and the further audit procedures we plan to perform to gain assurance over the risk.

## Exhibit 2

### 2021/22 Significant risks of material misstatement to the financial statements

Significant risk of material misstatement	Sources of assurance	Planned audit response
<p><b>1. Risk of material misstatement due to fraud caused by the management override of controls</b></p> <p>As stated in International Standard on Auditing (UK) 240, management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of management's ability to override controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively.</p>	<p>Owing to the nature of this risk, assurances from management are not applicable in this instance</p>	<p>Make inquiries of individuals involved in the financial reporting process about inappropriate or unusual activity relating to the processing of journal entries and other adjustments.</p> <p>Test journals at the year-end and post-closing entries and focus on significant risk areas.</p> <p>Consider the need to test journal entries and other adjustments during the period.</p> <p>Evaluate significant transactions outside the normal course of business.</p> <p>Assess the adequacy of controls in place for identifying and disclosing related party relationship and transactions in the financial statements.</p> <p>We will assess any changes to the methods and underlying assumptions used to prepare accounting estimates compared to the prior year.</p> <p>Substantive testing of income and expenditure transactions</p>

Significant risk of material misstatement	Sources of assurance	Planned audit response
		to confirm they are accounted for in the correct financial year.

Source: Audit Scotland

**14.** As set out in International Standard on Auditing (UK) 240: *The auditor's responsibilities relating to fraud in an audit of financial statement*, there is a presumed risk of fraud over the recognition of revenue. There is a risk that revenue may be misstated resulting in a material misstatement in the financial statements. We have rebutted this risk as the QLTR are not required to meet financial targets and do not need to set a budget, thus reducing the incentives or pressures on management to fraudulently report income.

**15.** In line with Practice Note 10: *Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom*, as most public-sector bodies are net spending bodies, the risk of material misstatement due to fraud related to expenditure recognition may in some cases be greater than the risk relating to revenue recognition. We have rebutted this risk for QLTR because there is no requirement to meet financial targets as it is a demand-led service thus reducing the pressure on management to misstate expenditure. The QLTR operate a receipts and payments account on the basis of cash accounting, thus reducing the risk of expenditure being incorrectly allocated.

**16.** We have not, therefore, incorporated specific work into our audit plan in these areas over and above our standard audit procedures.

### Audit risk assessment process

**17.** Audit risk assessment is an iterative and dynamic process. Our assessment of risks set out in this plan may change as more information and evidence becomes available during the progress of the audit. Where such changes occur, we will advise management and where relevant, report them to those charged with governance.

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# Audit dimensions and Best Value

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## Introduction

18. The [Code of Audit Practice](#) sets out the four dimensions that frame the wider scope of public sector audit. The Code of Audit Practice requires auditors to consider the adequacy of the arrangements in place for the audit dimensions in audited bodies.

## Audit dimensions

19. The four dimensions that frame our audit work are shown in [Exhibit 3](#).

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### Exhibit 3

#### Audit dimensions



Source: Code of Audit Practice

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20. In summary, the four dimensions cover the following:

- **Financial management** – financial management is concerned with financial capacity, sound budgetary processes and whether the control environment and internal controls are operating effectively.
- **Governance and transparency** – 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.

- **Value for money** – value for money refers to using resources effectively and continually improving services.

**21.** 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 2021/22 audit of the QLTR.

### **Audit dimension risks**

**22.** We have not identified any further audit risks with regards to the audit dimensions for QLTR.

# Reporting arrangements, timetable, and audit fee

## Reporting arrangements

**23.** Audit reporting is the visible output for the annual audit. All Annual Audit Plans and the outputs, as detailed in [Exhibit 4](#), and any other outputs on matters of public interest will be published on our website: [www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk).

**24.** 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 officers to confirm factual accuracy.

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

**26.** [Exhibit 4](#) outlines the target dates for our audit outputs, and we aim to issue the independent auditor's report by the statutory deadline of 31 October 2022. We acknowledge this will be challenging due to the ongoing pressures and uncertainties caused by Covid-19.

## Exhibit 4 2020/21 Audit outputs

Audit Output	Target date	Audit and Risk Committee Date
Annual Audit Plan	3 March 2022	3 March 2022
Independent Auditor's Report	24 August 2022	24 August 2022
Annual Audit Report	24 August 2022	24 August 2022

Source: Audit Scotland

## Timetable

**27.** To support an efficient audit, it is critical that the timetable for producing the annual report and accounts for audit is achieved. We have included a proposed timetable for the audit at [Exhibit 5](#) that has been discussed with management.

**28.** Covid-19 has had a considerable impact on the conduct and timeliness of the audit. We recognise that it is in the best interests of public accountability to get the reporting of audited accounts back to pre-pandemic timelines. To this end, 2021/22 is a transition year with the reporting deadline brought forward by one month relative to the two prior years. We are identifying ways to work more efficiently to expedite the 2021/22 audits whilst at the same time maintaining high standards of quality.

**29.** We will continue to work in close partnership with management with clarity over timescales and the requirement for high quality unaudited accounts and supporting working papers. Progress will be discussed with management and finance officers over the course of the audit.

## Exhibit 5

### Proposed annual report and accounts timetable

Key stage	Provisional Date
Consideration of the unaudited annual report and accounts by those charged with governance	25 May 2022
Latest submission date for the receipt of the unaudited annual report and accounts with complete working papers package.	30 May 2022
Latest date for final clearance meeting with the Director of Finance and Procurement	1 August 2022
Issue of Letter of Representation and proposed Independent Auditor's Report	8 August 2022
Agreement of audited and unsigned annual report and accounts	8 August 2022
Issue of Annual Audit Report to those charged with governance.	24 August 2022
Signed Independent Auditor's Report	24 August 2022

Source: Audit Scotland

## Audit fee

**30.** The proposed audit fee for the 2021/22 audit of the QLTR is £4,250 (2020/21: £4,160). In determining the audit fee, we have taken account of the risk exposure of the QLTR, the planned management assurances in place and the level of reliance we plan to take from the work of internal audit.

**31.** Where our audit cannot proceed as planned through, for example, late receipt of unaudited annual report and accounts, the absence of adequate supporting working papers, 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.

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# Other matters

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## Internal audit

**32.** International standards on Auditing (UK) 610: *Considering the work of internal audit* requires us to:

- consider the activities of internal audit and their effect on external audit procedures;
- obtain an understanding of internal audit activities to inform our planning and develop an effective audit approach that avoids duplication of effort;
- perform a preliminary assessment of the internal audit function when there is scope for relying on internal audit work which is relevant to our financial statements' responsibilities; and
- evaluate and test the work of internal audit, where use is made of that work for our financial statements responsibilities to confirm its adequacy for our purposes.

**33.** Internal audit is provided by the Scottish Government Internal Audit Directorate. From our initial review of the internal audit plan, internal audit is not planning any specific work on the QLTR during 2021/22. Therefore, we do not plan to place formal reliance on internal audit's work for our financial statements' responsibilities.

## Independence and objectivity

**34.** Auditors appointed by the Auditor General for Scotland or Accounts Commission 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.

**35.** The engagement lead (i.e. appointed auditor) for the QLTR is Esther Scoburgh, 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 QLTR.

## Quality control

**36.** International Standard on Quality Control (UK) 1 (ISQC1) requires a system of quality control to be 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.

**37.** 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.

**38.** 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.

# Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer

## Annual Audit Plan 2021/22

Audit Scotland's published material is available for download on the website in a number of formats. For information on our accessibility principles, please visit:

[www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/accessibility](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/accessibility)

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