

Scotland Excel Joint Committee

Annual Audit Plan 2017/18



 AUDIT SCOTLAND

Prepared for Scotland Excel Joint Committee
March 2018

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.

Contents

Risks and planned work	4
Audit risks	4
Reporting arrangements	6
Audit fee	6
Responsibilities	7
Audit scope and timing	8
Financial statements	8
Materiality	8
Internal audit	10
Audit dimensions	10
Independence and objectivity	11
Quality control	12
Adding Value	12

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 identifies our audit work to provide an opinion on the financial statements and related matters and meet the wider scope requirements of public sector audit.

2. The wider scope of public audit contributes to conclusions on the appropriateness, effectiveness and impact of corporate governance, performance management arrangements and financial sustainability.

Audit risks

3. 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 Scotland Excel Joint Committee (Scotland Excel). 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

2017/18 Key audit risks

Audit Risk	Source of assurance	Planned audit work
Financial statement 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 in order 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>	<p>Detailed testing of journal entries.</p> <p>Review of accounting estimates.</p> <p>Focused testing of accruals and prepayments.</p> <p>Evaluation of significant transactions that are outside the normal course of business.</p>
<p>2 Risk of fraud over income</p> <p>Scotland Excel has a number of funding sources which includes income generation. The extent of income means that, in accordance with ISA 240, there is an inherent risk of fraud that requires an audit response.</p>	<p>Income is closely monitored and discussed at budget monitoring meetings. Significant differences from actuals compared to projected income are investigated.</p>	<p>Analytical procedures on income streams.</p> <p>Detailed testing of revenue transactions focusing on the areas of greatest risk.</p>
<p>3 Risk of fraud over expenditure</p> <p>ISA 240 presumes a risk of fraud</p>	<p>Expenditure is closely monitored and discussed at</p>	<p>Analytical procedures on expenditure streams.</p>

Audit Risk	Source of assurance	Planned audit work
<p>over income which is expanded to include fraud over expenditure in the public sector by the Code of Audit Practice</p> <p>The risk of fraud over expenditure applies due to the variety and extent of expenditure incurred by Scotland Excel in delivering services.</p>	<p>budget monitoring meetings. Significant differences from actuals compared to projected expenditure are investigated.</p>	<p>Detailed testing of expenditure transactions focusing on the areas of greatest risk.</p>
Wider dimension risks		
<p>4 Financial sustainability</p> <p>The approved 2018/19 budget includes the flexible use of resources being brought forward from a projected underspend in 2017/18. The budget report also indicated a requirement for Scotland Excel to make significant savings over the medium term to remain financially sustainable. There is limited capacity to utilise reserves to address financial targets, nor is this a sustainable solution. Scotland Excel is exploring options to address this issue through revised governance and funding structures. However, until these are fully developed there remains a risk to financial sustainability.</p>	<p>The Joint Committee agreed the 2018/19 budget in December 2017, and also noted the requirement to achieve recurring savings over the medium term. Scotland Excel is actively exploring ways to achieve savings and grow the income base through alternative funding sources over council requisition income.</p>	<p>Review of budget monitoring reports during the year and comment on the financial position within the annual audit report.</p>
<p>5 General Data Protection Regulation</p> <p>The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) becomes enforceable from May 2018. The regulation makes changes to data protection laws and the ways in which entities address data protection compliance. Failure to comply with the regulation can result in significant sanctions.</p> <p>Ensuring compliance with the regulation is resource intensive and will require a designated Data Protection Officer (DPO). Scotland Excel needs to ensure that it is prepared for GDPR and has the necessary arrangements in place for the enforcement date.</p>	<p>A member of staff within Scotland Excel attends the Information Governance working group.</p> <p>Renfrewshire Council will provide support to the Joint Committee for GDPR.</p>	<p>Attendance at Joint Committee meetings and review of Joint Committee meeting papers.</p> <p>Discussions with management to monitor and discuss developments.</p>
<p>6 Business Continuity Planning</p> <p>Scotland Excel has been working on developing business</p>	<p>A formal continuity plan will be developed and integrated into the wider Renfrewshire Council</p>	<p>Attendance at Joint Committee meetings and review of Joint Committee meeting papers.</p>

Audit Risk	Source of assurance	Planned audit work
<p>continuity arrangements. However, these are still at an early stage of development and further work needs to be done to ensure the arrangements in place are adequate.</p> <p>There is a risk that Scotland Excel may not be able to sufficiently deal with events if the arrangements are not fully developed.</p>	business continuity plan.	Discussions with management to monitor and discuss developments.

Reporting arrangements

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. We will provide an independent auditor's report to the Joint Committee and Accounts Commission setting out our opinions on the annual accounts. We will provide the Joint Committee and Accounts Commission with an annual report on the audit containing observations and recommendations on significant matters which have arisen in the course of the audit.

Exhibit 2

2017/18 Audit outputs

Audit Output	Target date	Executive Sub-committee date
Annual Audit Plan	12 February 2018	23 March 2018
Annual Audit Report	10 September 2018	28 September 2018
Independent Auditor's Report	10 September 2018	N/A

Audit fee

7. The proposed audit fee for the 2017/18 audit of Scotland Excel is £5,700 (2016/17: £5,620). In determining the audit fee we have taken account of the risk exposure of Scotland Excel, 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 financial statements, with a complete working papers package on 30 June 2018.

8. Where our audit cannot proceed as planned through, for example, late receipt of unaudited financial statements 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 Committee and Treasurer

9. 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.

10. The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or the joint committee as those charged with governance, of their responsibilities.

Appointed auditor

11. Our responsibilities as independent auditor are established by the 1973 Act for local government, and the Code of Audit Practice (including supplementary guidance) and guided by the auditing profession's ethical guidance.

12. Auditors in the public sector give an independent opinion on the financial statements and other specified information accompanying the financial statements. 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

Financial statements

13. The statutory financial statements audit will be the foundation and source for the majority 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 Scotland Excel 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 Scotland Excel 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.

14. We will give an opinion on the financial statements as to whether they:

- give a true and fair view in accordance with applicable law and the 2017/18 code state of affairs of Scotland Excel as at 31 March 2018 of its deficit on the provision of services for the year ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with IFRSs as adopted by the European Union, as interpreted and adapted by the 2017/2018 code
- 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

Materiality

15. 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 opinion in the auditor's report.

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



Exhibit 3

Materiality values

Materiality level	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 2017 based on the audited accounts for 2016/17.	£41,000
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.	£31,000
Reporting threshold (i.e. clearly trivial) – We are required to report to those charged with governance on all unadjusted misstatements in excess of the 'reporting threshold' amount.	£1,000

Source: Audit Scotland



17. We review and report on other information published with the financial statements including the management commentary, annual governance report and the remuneration report. Any issue identified will be reported to the Joint Committee.

Timetable

18. To support the efficient use of resources it is critical that a financial statements timetable is agreed with us for the production of the unaudited accounts. An agreed timetable is included at [Exhibit 4](#) which takes account of submission requirements and planned Joint Committee dates:

Exhibit 4

Financial statements timetable

 Key stage	 Date
Consideration of unaudited financial statements by those charged with governance	29 June 2018
Latest submission date of unaudited annual accounts with complete working papers package	30 June 2018
Latest date for final clearance meeting with Treasurers/Officers	27 July 2018
Agreement of audited unsigned annual accounts	10 September 2018
Issue of Annual Audit Report including ISA 260 report to those charged with governance	10 September 2018
Independent auditor's report signed	29 September 2018

Internal audit

19. 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 and as part of our planning process we carry out an assessment of the internal audit function. Internal audit is provided by the internal audit section of Renfrewshire Council.

Adequacy of Internal Audit

20. A review of the internal audit function at Renfrewshire Council will be carried out by the Renfrewshire Council audit team in early 2018. This will provide assurance over whether the internal audit function operates in accordance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and has sound documentation and reporting procedures in place.

Audit dimensions

21. Our audit is based on four audit dimensions that frame the wider scope of public sector audit requirements as shown in [Exhibit 5](#). Due to the nature and size of Scotland Excel, we have assessed the extent of wider dimensions work and concluded that a reduced scope, as outlined in paragraph 53 of the Code of Audit Practice, can be applied.

Exhibit 5

Audit dimensions



Source: Code of Audit Practice

22. In the local government sector, the appointed auditor's annual conclusions on these four dimensions will help contribute to an overall assessment and assurance on best value.

Financial sustainability

23. 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 the Scotland Excel's 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
- whether Scotland Excel can demonstrate the affordability and effectiveness of funding and investment decisions it has made.

Financial management

24. Financial management is concerned with financial capacity, sound budgetary processes and whether the control environment and internal controls are operating effectively. We will review, conclude and report on:

- whether Scotland Excel has arrangements in place to ensure systems of internal control are operating effectively
- whether Scotland Excel can demonstrate the effectiveness of budgetary control system in communicating accurate and timely financial performance
- how Scotland Excel has assured itself that its financial capacity and skills are appropriate
- whether Scotland Excel has established appropriate and effective arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption.

Governance and transparency

25. 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 Scotland Excel 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.

Value for money

26. Value for money refers to using resources effectively and continually improving services. We will review, conclude and report on whether:

- Scotland Excel can provide evidence that it is demonstrating value for money in the use of its resources
- Scotland Excel can demonstrate that there is a clear link between money spent, output and outcomes delivered
- Scotland Excel can demonstrate that outcomes are improving
- there is sufficient focus on improvement and the pace of it.

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 in place robust arrangements 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 for Scotland Excel is Mark Ferris, 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 Scotland Excel.

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 relevant 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, internal quality reviews and is currently reviewing the arrangements for 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.

Adding Value

32. Through our audit work we aim to add value to Scotland Excel. We will do this by ensuring our Annual Audit Report provides a summary of the audit work done in the year together with clear judgements and conclusions on how well Scotland Excel has discharged its responsibilities and how well it has demonstrated the effectiveness of its arrangements. Where it is appropriate we will recommend actions that support continuous improvement and summarise areas of good practice identified from our audit work.

Scotland Excel

Annual Audit Plan 2017/18

If you require this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us to discuss your needs: 0131 625 1500 or info@audit-scotland.gov.uk

For the latest news, reports and updates, follow us on:



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