

Internal Audit Consortium

Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme (QAIP)



Introduction

The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require that the Head of Internal Audit develops and maintains an improvement programme that covers all aspects of the internal audit activity.

A quality assurance and improvement programme (QAIP) is designed to enable an evaluation of the internal audit activity's conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and an evaluation of whether internal auditors apply the Code of Ethics. The programme also assesses the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal audit activity and identifies opportunities for improvement.

The quality assurance and improvement programme must include both internal and external assessments.

Internal assessments must include:

- Ongoing monitoring of the performance of the internal audit activity.
- Periodic self-assessments or assessments by other persons within the organisation with sufficient knowledge of internal audit practices.

External assessments must be conducted at least once every five years by a qualified, independent assessor or assessment team from outside the organisation.

This QAIP covers: -

- 1) Internal Assessments
- 2) External Assessments
- 3) Staff qualifications / experience
- 4) Training
- 5) Other elements

1) Internal Assessments

Internal assessments consist of the following: -

- An annual assessment against the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards by the Head of the Internal Audit Consortium. This was undertaken in May 2023 and the review confirmed that there were no significant areas of non-compliance.
- Reviews of working papers – All audit working papers are reviewed by the Head of Internal Audit or a Senior Auditor to ensure that they meet required standards and support the findings of the review. These reviews are documented.
- Review of audit reports – The Head of Internal Audit reviews all reports for quality and consistency before they are formally issued.

- Key performance indicators – these are reported to each Audit Committee in the annual report.
- Customer feedback – Customer satisfaction surveys are issued with every report and the results monitored. Based on the customer satisfaction survey forms returned (8 for NEDDC), the average score was 97% for customer satisfaction during 2022/23.
- The client Officer annual satisfaction survey resulted in a score of 97%.
- All staff completed a declaration of personal interests statement in September 2022

2) External Assessments

An external review of internal audit took place in May 2021 the results of which concluded “Current services are assessed to “generally conform” with the PSIAS and compare favourably with peers, there are no areas where the service does not comply with the Standards”.

The results of the external assessment were fully reported to each Audit Committee and to the Joint Board.

An action plan was developed from the points arising in the 2021 external review and has been used to further drive improvement.

3) Audit Staff qualifications / experience

The table below summarises the qualifications and experience of the Internal Audit Consortium staff as at May 2023.

<u>Post</u>	<u>Qualification</u>	<u>Experience</u>
Head of Internal Audit	CIPFA	25 plus years
Senior Auditor	-	15 years
Senior Auditor	CIPFA	25 plus years
Senior Auditor	AAT	25 plus years
Auditor	AAT / studying for IIA	8 years
Auditor	AAT	1 year
Auditor		7 months
Auditor	AAT	25 plus years
Auditor		4 years
Auditor		Starting 30 th October 23

Training Undertaken in 2022/23

Training records are maintained to monitor both professional and ad hoc training received by staff.

Training is delivered via webinars, team meetings, professional journals etc. All staff undertake CPD.

During 2022/23 training included: -

- Introduction to internal audit (new Auditors)
- Fraud webinars
- Levelling up
- Accident and investigation
- Climate change
- Valuing individuals and performance
- Stress and absence management

Other Elements

- A spreadsheet is populated by members of the audit team with ideas for improvement. The ideas are discussed at team meetings and actions agreed accordingly.
- Performance Development Reviews – All staff had a performance development review. These reviews set and monitor the achievement of objectives and identify any training requirements.
- 1:1's – All staff have 1:1 meetings with their manager at least monthly.
- The Internal Audit Manual is a comprehensive record of audit procedures and requirements and is updated at least every 2 years.
- Declarations of Business Interest – Staff are required to complete a declaration of business interests form on an annual basis and cannot undertake audits where there is a potential conflict of interest.
- Team meetings – Monthly team meetings are held which discuss points of practice, audit findings, information sharing and include elements of training and brainstorming.